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# The Leiden Glossary

Rolf H. Bremmer Jr and Kees Dekker

## The manuscript and the glossary

The Leiden Glossary is so-called, because it is contained in a manuscript, Vossianus Latinus in Quarto (VLQ) 69, held by the Leiden University Library. As the shelf number indicates, the manuscript was once part of the huge book collection of the Dutch philologist and historian Isaac Vossius (1618–1689), which the university acquired posthumously from his heirs in 1690 (Balsem 2020: 103–19). The manuscript is a composite, made up of six codicological units written at different times and clearly not originally belonging together. Part 5, a list of abbots of St Gall, Switzerland, up to 1521, was certainly produced at St Gall (De Meyier 1973–1984: 2.158; Bremmer and Dekker 2006). Part 2 is a booklet of forty-one leaves, arranged into five quires of four bifolia and one of six bifolia, with some leaves missing. Its contents were most probably penned down at St Gall, around 802 (Griffith 2010), except for the text on fols 46<sup>v</sup>–47<sup>v</sup>, Charlemagne’s correspondence with Alcuin, which was added later in a hand that can be dated to the close of the ninth century. Several scribes have been at work on Part 2, in a hand that has been described as ‘pre-caroline “Ale-mannic” minuscules’ (Lowe 1934–1971: x, no. 1585; Bischoff 1998–2014: II, no. 2222). Textually, Part 2 is made up of seven items, they themselves often consisting of multiple smaller texts (for a detailed analysis, Bremmer 2010: 22–50). The Leiden Glossary (= LdGl), fols 20<sup>r</sup>/1a–36<sup>r</sup>/35a, is the sixth item, composed of forty-eight chapters, or ‘batches’. These chapters are arranged as *glossae collectae*, on a selection of texts, varying from canons, the Benedictine Rule, books of the Old and the New Testaments, and hagiography, to a whole range of late classical and early Christian authors, such as Augustine, Cassian, Cassiodorus, Eucherius, Gregory, Isidore, Jerome, the historians Orosius and Rufinus/Eusebius, the grammarians Donatus and Phocas, and the sixth-century British monk Gildas. The chapters are usually marked by short titles, if not always correctly. For example, Chapter 1 is headed ‘Glosae uerborum de can-onibus’. The chapters appear in two columns per page in the following line-up (see Image 20, here provided with modern titles together with the number of lemmata per chapter:



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- i. Various church canons and papal decre-  
tals (133 lemmata)
- ii. *Regula S. Benedicti* (193)
- iii. Sulpicius Severus, *Vita S. Martini* and  
*Dialogi*; Athanasius, *Vita S. Antonii* in  
Evagrius's Latin translation (66)
- iv. Rufinus's Latin translation of Eusebi-  
us's *Historia ecclesiastica* (120)
- v. Another collection of glosses from Rufi-  
nus's Eusebius translation (32)
- vi. Gildas, *De excidio Britanniae* (31)
- vii–xxv. Glosses to biblical books, includ-  
ing Chronicles (vii; 9), Proverbs (viii; 21),  
Ecclesiastes (ix; 6), Song of Songs (x; 26),  
Wisdom (xi; 16), Ecclesiasticus (xii; 48),  
Isaiah (xiii; 61), Jeremiah and Lamenta-  
tions (xiv; 36), Ezekiel and Hosea (xv; 48),  
Daniel (xvi; 32), minor prophets (xvii; 21),  
Hosea again (xviii; 4), Job (xix; 65), Tobias  
(xx; 12), Judith (xxi; 20), Esther (xxii; 19),  
Esdras and Nehemiah (xxiii; 20), Matthew  
(xxiv; 18), and Mark, Luke and John (xxv;  
15)
- xxvi. Isidore, *De ecclesiasticis officiis* (13)
- xxvii. Isidore, *De natura rerum* (33)
- xxviii. Athanasius, *Vita S. Antonii* in Eva-  
grius's Latin translation; Cassiodorus,  
*Expositio psalmorum* (88)
- xxix. Jerome, *Commentarii in euangelium  
Matthei* (73)
- xxx. Jerome, *De viris illustribus* (96)
- xxxi–xxxii. *De ponderibus* (source  
unknown; Epiphanius and Jerome are  
cited) (41, 11)
- xxxiii. *De ponderibus* and *De mensuris*, two  
sections from Eucherius, *Instructiones* (31)
- xxxiv. Cassian, *De institutis coenobiorum*  
(55)
- xxxv. More glosses from Rufinus's transla-  
tion of Eusebius (306)
- xxxvi. Orosius, *Historiae adversum paganos*  
(22)
- xxxvii. Augustine, *Sermones* (20)
- xxxviii. Pseudo-Clement, *Recognitiones* in  
Rufinus's Latin translation (45)
- xxxix. Gregory, *Dialogi* and *Regula pasto-  
ralis*; further glosses from canons (73)
- xl. More glosses from Gildas, *De excidio*  
(22)
- xli. More glosses from canons; names of  
precious stones from Revelations XXI.19–  
20; Sulpicius Severus, *Dialogi* (21)
- xlii. Sulpicius Severus, *Dialogi* and *Vita S.  
Martini*; anonymous *Vita S. Eugeniae* (27)
- xliii. Donatus, *Ars maior* (56)
- xliv. More glosses from Isidore, *De natura  
rerum* (29)
- xlv. Phocas, *Ars de nomine et verbo* (31)
- xlvi. More glosses from Phocas, *Ars de  
nomine et verbo* (43)
- xlvii. *Hermeneumata Pseudodositheana*  
(103)
- xlviii. More glosses from Cassian, *De  
institutis* (74)

As can be seen, some texts have been included with more than one batch of glosses: Gildas's *De excidio*, Isidore's *De natura rerum*, Cassian's *De institutis* and Phocas's grammar make two appearances, Rufinus's translation of Eusebius's *Historia ecclesiastica* even three. The forty-eight chapters vary considerably in length, ranging from a mere four to 306 lemmata, totaling in all to about 2585 lemmata. The Leiden Glossary has been edited several times, whether *in toto* (Glogger 1901–1908; Hessels 1906), or partly (Goetz 1888–1923: v, 410–25; Vaciago 2004: 75–94, only Bible glosses). Entries usually consist of a lemma, or headword, followed by an interpretamentum, i.e. a definition often including a Latin or vernacular synonym. Occasionally, though, an interpretamentum can

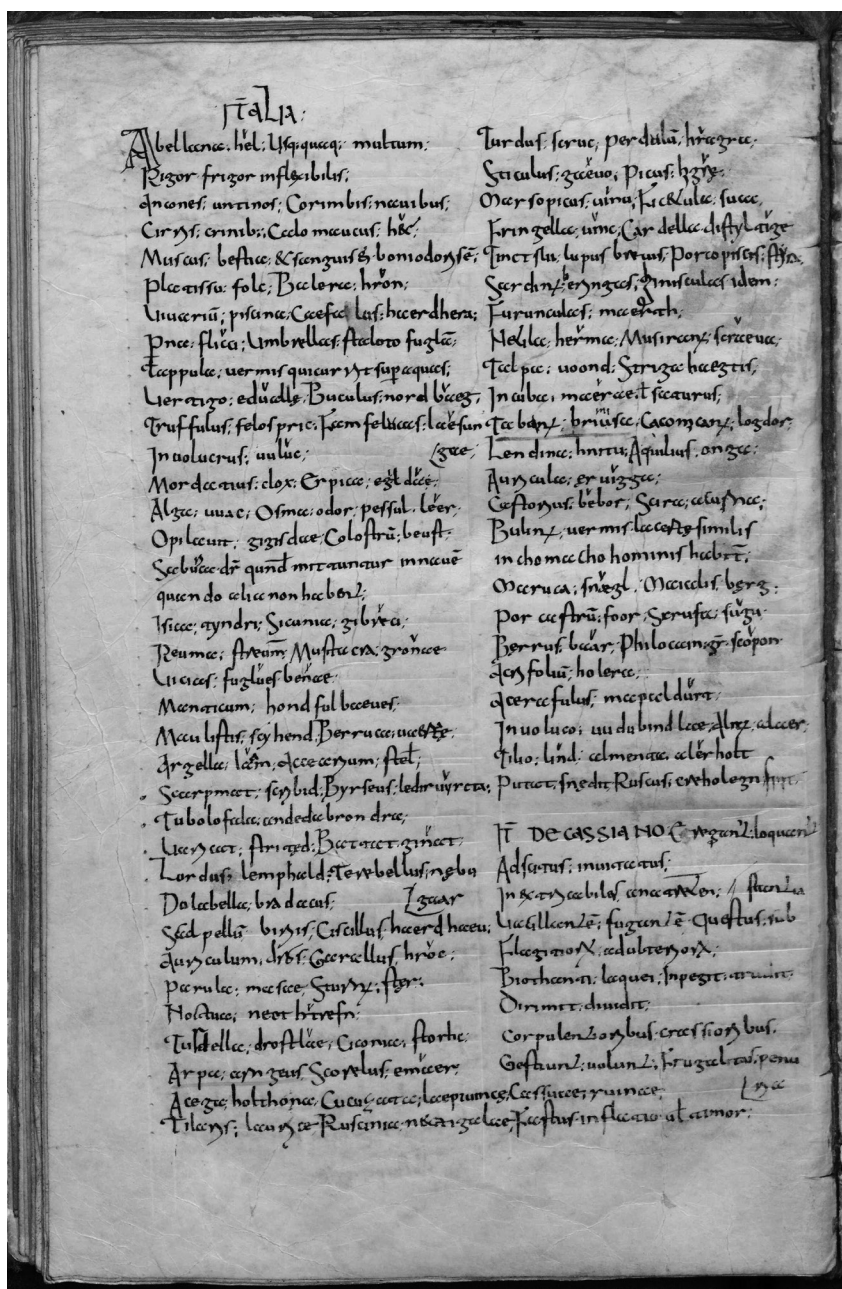


Image 20: Chapter xlvii *Item alia* from the Leiden Glossary (Leiden, UL, MS VLQ 69, fol. 35v). Reproduced by permission of Leiden University Libraries.



be quite long, attaining almost encyclopaedic dimensions, such as that of *Iani porte* ‘the gates of Janus’ (Orosius, LdGl xxxvi.1), which is glossed as follows: *idest porte templi iane dei paganorum que ante patebant unaqueque ad gentem suam quando contraria fuit romanis nomine gentis ipsius scribta super porta*.<sup>1</sup> Such longer explanations transgress the genre of a gloss and resemble that of a scholion (Wieland 1998: 59; cf. Bischoff and Lapidge 1994: 173, n. 170; → WISDOM TEXTS). Just under 260 of the lemmata in the Leiden Glossary, notably in Chapters xlv and xlvi, contain Old English and/or, occasionally, Old High German interpretamenta (Bergmann and Stricker 2005: 811–15). The scribe marked these vernacular glosses either by writing a horizontal, sometimes waving stroke above them or an isolated *v*, most likely to be interpreted as a short notation of *vernacule* (Hessels 1906: xxxii–xxxiv). The glosses in these chapters usually follow the order of the text they gloss instead of being presented alphabetically. This last sequence is applied to the glosses only in the first two chapters, which are arranged according to their initial letter, in so-called *a*-order. It would seem, therefore, that these two chapters were based on pre-existing glossaries, or alternatively, that someone, perhaps the scribe of VLQ 69, had started to alphabetize the chapters (Lapidge 1986: 56).

### The Leiden Glossary and the school of Theodore and Hadrian in Canterbury

Even though it was entrusted to parchment in the abbey of St Gall, as for its ultimate origin the Leiden Glossary has long been connected to England. An English connection can be accounted for, above all on account of the Old English interpretamenta, which already in the nineteenth century were recognized as showing a pristine form of Old English. Hence, Sweet (1885: 111–21) included the Leiden Glossary lemmata that were provided with Old English interpretamenta in his collective edition of *The Oldest English Texts*. A conspicuous feature revealing the early date is orthographic: double vowels are written to indicate length, e.g. *aad* ‘pyre’ (LdGl xxxv.158, *brooc* ‘breeches’, LdGl xlvi.55; for further phonological, morphological and word-formational evidence, summing up and extending previous scholarship, see Lapidge 2015: 649–52).

As for the date of its composition, a *terminus ante quem* is easier to establish for the Leiden Glossary than a *terminus post quem*. The former is determined by the date of the manuscript, i.e. c. AD 800; the latter can be related to Isidore of Seville, who died 636. Isidore’s works started to be disseminated quickly afterwards (Tizzoni 2019) and had reached Canterbury before the end of the seventh century (Di Sciacca 2008: 55–68). Not only is Isidore

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1 ‘That is, the gates of the temple of Janus, a god of the pagans; they formerly both lay open to their own people; when a foreign people was at war with the Romans, the name of the people was written above the gate’ (trans. Lapidge 2018: 478). The Leiden Glossary is here quoted from the edition by Hessels 1906, with reference to chapter and item number.

present with batches keyed to two of his works, *De ecclesiasticis officiis* (Chapter xxvi) and *De natura rerum* (Chapters xxvii and xlv), also glosses from an epitome of his major work, the *Etymologies*, have abundantly been quarried for lemmata used in many of the chapters, some 180 in all (Porter 2014).

The Leiden Glossary is not an incidental glossary. Sweet (1885: 13–14) recognized it to be related somehow to other glossaries, notably to the → ÉPINAL-ERFURT GLOSSARY and the Second Corpus Glossary (ed. Hessels 1890). About half of the circa 260 Old English glosses in the Leiden Glossary also occur in Épinal-Erfurt, besides a modest number of all-Latin items which are shared by both Leiden Glossary and Épinal-Erfurt or correspond to Old English items in Épinal-Erfurt (Pheifer 1974: xliii). Lindsay (1921b: 2) consequently surmised that the source of these various glossaries was a collection of *glossae collectae* compiled in the course of the seventh century.

As for the place of origin of the Leiden Glossary, the obvious way of assessment is to establish the dialect in which the Old English glosses appeared. This turns out to be Anglian, more precisely Mercian, with a possible sprinkling of Kentish and West-Saxon forms (Dietz 2001; Lapidge 2015: 651). This is as close as linguistic evidence can get. A better road to its place of origin was found in the nature of the texts that were glossed. For the closely related Épinal-Erfurt Glossary, Pheifer surmised a relation, quoting Ernst Curtius, with ‘the new Christian culture of England, which arose between 650 and 680 after the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons [...] in which not only Irish and Roman but also Græco-Oriental (Theodore of Tarsus and the African Hadrian) influences mingled with British and Anglo-Saxon native culture’ (Pheifer 1974: lvii). Still, Pheifer did not want to venture a definitive answer to the question of where and when Épinal-Erfurt was compiled. Theodore had already been tentatively linked to the Leiden Glossary by Glogger, one of its first editors. LdGl xii.40, a gloss to Ecclesiasticus 39. 20, reads: *Cyneris, nablis, id est citharis longiores quam psalterium nam psalterium triangulum fit. Theodorus dixit.*<sup>2</sup> In a comment Glogger (1903: p. 26, at 20/9–11) wonders who this Theodore was, listing Theodore of Heraklea, Theodore of Mopsuestia, or Theodore of Canterbury, or perhaps even a fourth. According to Hessels (1906: 90, s.v. ‘cyneris’), with a reference to Glogger’s suggestion, ‘it is difficult to say who “Theodorus” was’. Later, Glogger (1907: p. 18, at 20/9–11) suggested that this Theodore most likely was the archbishop of Canterbury (d. 695), but ‘beweisen läßt es sich nicht’ (‘it is impossible to prove this’). About three decades later, Baesecke (1933: 10) pointed out that a glossary closely related to the Leiden Glossary, viz. the late eighth-century Karlsruhe, BLB, MS Aug. IC, from Reichenau, not only contained Theodore’s explanation, if without Theodore’s name, but also referred to Hadrian in a batch of glosses on II Chron.: *Ualuas muros in templi circuitu Adrianus dicit.*<sup>3</sup> Baesecke

2 ‘*Cyneris* or *nablis*, that is, with harps that are longer than a psaltery, for a psaltery is triangular. Theodore said so’.

3 ‘Hadrian says that these are the walls surrounding the temple’.



furthermore pointed out that Hadrian was also mentioned in a gloss with two Old English interpretamenta on Leviticus xi. 16 in St Gall, StiB, MS 913 (Steinmeyer and Sievers 1879–1922: iv, 460, no. 52; cf. Bischoff and Lapidge 1994: 534–41, at 535; → *VOCABULARIUS SANCTI GALLI*; → ANIMAL GLOSSARIES): *larum. hragra. Hadrianus dicit meum esse* (‘*larum* “heron”. Hadrian says it is a “mew”’). Only in 1986, in a ground-breaking article, did Lapidge establish with certainty that the Leiden Glossary and related Continental glossaries originated from the school, established at Canterbury in the second half of the seventh century by Theodore of Tarsus, archbishop of Canterbury, and Hadrian, abbot of St Paul’s and St Peter’s (later St Augustine) in Canterbury. These two learned foreigners — Theodore was a Greek from Asia Minor and Hadrian a Latin-and-Greek speaking North-African — had brought with them a selection of exegetical commentaries, saints’ lives, ecclesiastical histories as well as books of essential secular learning, such as grammatical treatises, that they used in their class room, as reported by Bede (*HEGA* IV.2). Aldhelm (c. 639–709), abbot of Malmesbury and bishop of Sherborne, was perhaps their best-known student. The books glossed in the Leiden Glossary reflect the breadth and width of their instructions, which at regular intervals stand out for their speaking from Theodore and Hadrian’s personal experience with Classical and Mediterranean culture, in contrast to later, ninth-century Frankish biblical glosses, which tend to be more technical (Contreni 2003: 25; cf. Lapidge 2018). The Canterbury origin for the Leiden Glossary has not gone unchallenged. McKitterick (2012a: 63–67), assuming the role of *advocatus diaboli*, made a concerted effort to argue that it was more likely to have been compiled in the Abbey of St Gall, because by far most of the glossed books in the Leiden Glossary were available in the abbey library. In addition, St Gall produced or acquired an impressive number of glossaries in the course of the eighth century. The presence of Old English glosses, thus McKitterick, should be attributed to the presence of an Anglo-Saxon scribe in the abbey. Not much later, Lapidge (2015) marshalled an array of arguments, especially philological evidence, to reject McKitterick’s arguments. Seiler (2017: 155, n. 8), in turn, pointed out that the Épinial Glossary contained a substantial portion of the Leiden material, if arranged in an alphabetical manner, so that the Épinial compiler must have employed an ancestor of the Leiden Glossary which could not have been produced in St Gall. As matters stand, therefore, the Canterbury origin for the Leiden Glossary is still the most plausible.

### The ‘Leiden Family’

Painstaking research stretching for well over a century has made clear that the Leiden Glossary is the oldest representative of a whole family of *glossae collectae*, often referred to as the ‘Leiden Family’ or sometimes, in German studies, as the ‘Rz Family’, after the affiliated glossary in the Reichenau manuscript, BLB, MS Aug. IC (Seebold and others 2001–2008: i, 44, n. 1). Pheifer (1974: xxviii–xxxix) discusses seven English manuscripts with related glossaries, while

Lapidge (1986) lists no fewer than twenty-seven Continental manuscripts with glossaries that to a greater or lesser extent are all derived from a Canterbury corpus of *glossae collectae* compiled in the seventh century. More such kindred glossaries may come to light, as illustrated by the discovery of a set of mainly biblical *glossae collectae* in Leiden, UB, MS VLF 24, fols 105<sup>vb</sup>–110<sup>vd</sup> (Bremmer and Dekker 2016b, with preliminary edition on 262–77; cf. Pelle 2018: 808).

Remarkably, chapters are missing from the Leiden Glossary that present glosses for the Old Testament books from Genesis up to and including 1–2 Kings. Comparison with related glossaries make clear, however, that these chapters had been compiled (Pheifer 1997). It has been suggested therefore that these chapters were not available to the St Gall scribe (Lapidge 1986: 56). However, the scribe may have omitted them for other reasons. Immediately following the Leiden Glossary in VLQ 69, a number of short texts occur, one of which begins with *mulierem habentem phitonem*, explaining how the word *phyton* ‘snake’ acquired the meaning ‘divining spirit’ (Bremmer 2010: 31–33). The initial three words were taken from 1 Samuel 28. 7, making it possible that this brief text found its origin in a glossary or commentary on Samuel. Indeed, the explanation is found almost verbatim in the collection of biblical *glossae collectae* from BLB, Aug. IC, 42<sup>v</sup>–43<sup>r</sup> (ed. Vaciago 2004: II, 34). Its inclusion in pages immediately following the glossary in VLQ 69 shows that at least the chapter of glosses on Samuel was present at St Gall at the time of the compilation of the manuscript.

