

Semitisms in the Gothic translation of the New Testament

Artemij Keidan, Sapienza University of Rome*

English abstract. This paper presents an analysis of Gothic renderings of New Testament Semitisms. NT Greek deviates from the Greek language of the Classical canon in many respects, including morphology, syntax, and lexicon. Some of these deviations are explicable as Semitisms resulting from the substratum interference of the Semitic varieties — Hebrew and Aramaic — on which the Holy Scriptures are based. The analysis addresses the degree to which the Gothic translator of the Bible was aware of these peculiarities of NT Greek and his strategy for dealing with them. I begin by offering basic definitions and then proceed to a survey of the relevant passages in Gothic. The final assessment of the data supports the conclusion that the Gothic translator displays the skills of a refined intellectual of his time rather than being a writer capable only capable of slavishly rendering the original Greek into Gothic.

Keywords: Gothic, Greek, New Testament, Septuagint, Semitisms, Translation studies

Abstract in italiano. L'articolo analizza le rese gotiche dei semitismi presenti nel greco del Nuovo Testamento. Il greco neotestamentario si discosta del canone classico per vari aspetti morfologici, sintattici e lessicali. Alcune di queste deviazioni dallo standard sono spiegabili come semitismi risultanti dal *substratum interference* delle varietà semitiche — ebraico e aramaico — che sottostanno alla versione greca della Bibbia. Si cerca di determinare fino a che punto il traduttore gotico della Bibbia fosse consapevole di tali peculiarità del greco neotestamentario, nonché di individuare le sue strategie traduttive. Dopo le definizioni dei concetti base, si procede all'analisi dei passaggi rilevanti in gotico. La valutazione finale dei dati induce a concludere che il traduttore gotico fosse un intellettuale raffinato e non un pedissequo traduttore dell'originale greco.

Parole chiave: gotico, greco, Nuovo Testamento, Septuaginta, semitismi, translation studies

I. On Semitisms in the Greek Bible and in Gothic

I.1 Some definitions

In the context of Biblical philology, *Semitisms* are lexical, grammatical, syntactic, and stylistic phenomena that are attested for the first time, or even exclusively, in the Septuagint, or the New Testament (NT) and can be explained with reference to the substratum interference of Hebrew and Aramaic. In the case of the Septuagint, the interference occurred during the translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew to Greek in Alexandria for the local Hellenized Jewish community. In the New Testament, the interference may have occurred already in the drafting of the earliest accounts of the deeds of Jesus by Semitic speakers who had an imperfect command of *koinē* Greek or spoke a local, already Semitized, variant of *koinē*. The *Septuagintisms*, i.e., NT passages that intentionally quote or imitate the style and wording of the Septuagint for the sake of solemnity, thus incorporating some of the Semitic features already contained therein, constitute a special class of Semitisms.

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In the present paper, I use the term *indirect Semitisms* to refer generally to the linguistic features of Semitic origin that the subsequent translations of the Bible into other languages of antiquity — including Coptic, Armenian, and Slavic — inherited from the Greek Bible rather than borrowing them directly from a Hebrew or Aramaic original.¹ In some cases, such as Jerome’s Latin Bible (the Vulgate), both direct and indirect Semitisms may be attested in the same text. The present paper offers a preliminary survey of the indirect Semitisms attested in the surviving parts of the Gothic Bible.²

1.2 Source of the data

Apart from lexical borrowings (which are not considered here), all of the Semitisms are loan translations, i.e., morphological, syntactic, or semantic calques of the original Hebrew or Aramaic wordforms, phrases, or meanings (see MANCINI 1998: 369). The rich literature on Biblical Semitisms includes HOGETERP and DENAUX 2018, D. BLACK 1988, WILCOX 1984, PAYNE 1970, and M. BLACK 1954, to name just a few relatively recent works, while the earliest studies on this topic date back to the XVII cent.³ Nevertheless, an exhaustive list of the Semitisms attested in the Greek Bible has remained a desideratum. The main obstacle to constructing such a list has been the lack of formalizable distinctive features identifying the Semitisms.

On the one hand, some constructions that can be explained as Semitisms were also grammatically possible, albeit, perhaps, rare, in standard *koinē* Greek, with the Semitic substrate explaining the increase in their frequency but not their origin. One such example is the sentence construction with subordinate infinitives — rather than finite clauses — governed by the main verb. It is claimed that “the construction with the infinitive [...] has been greatly extended in the NT and is used with greater freedom than in Attic, partly due to the influence of Hebrew” (BLASS 1961: 199). It is, however, difficult to determine whether the primary cause of this development was a natural evolution of Greek or, rather, the Semitic influence.

On the other hand, regarding the identification of Semitisms, some alleged instances are a matter of interpretation in that they presuppose a specific semantic reading of the text. An example is the term νόμος, usually translated as ‘law’ (see the discussion in BLACK 1988: 221). The Greek tradition interpreted the law as something codified by custom or convention, but the Septuagint uses νόμος to translate the Hebrew term *tôrāh*, literally ‘instruction’, that is, ‘God’s commandment’. In the Jewish tradition, then, ‘law’ meant divine instruction imparted through Moses, rather than a codified custom. Of course, the precise interpretation to be read, as it were, between the lines of a sacred text is by nature difficult to establish objectively. Therefore, νόμος is a Semitism only to the extent that the Semitic reading of it is accepted.

Nevertheless, there is no doubt that many grammatical features of Biblical Greek trace back to Semitisms. Since the aim of the present paper is primarily to collect and survey all of the

¹ Here, the term “indirect Semitisms” is a synonym of MANCINI’s (1998: 366) “direct Christianisms”.

² In my analysis, I necessarily abstain from a detailed investigation of some important theoretical issues, such as the linguistic and stylistic variability within the NT Greek, the diatopic variability within *koinē* Greek, the distinction between the two Semitic substratum languages (Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic), and the degree to which the Gothic translator may have drawn on preexisting translations of the Bible (such as the *Vetus Latina*, Vulgate, and Syriac *Peshitta*).

³ Namely, J. Vorst’s *De Hebraismis Novi Testamenti* (Amsterdam, 1665).

relevant data regarding the Gothic renderings of the Greek Semitisms, I have prepared a “convenience list” of Semitisms. The basis for the list is the set of linguistic features mentioned in the *Index of Subjects* provided by F. Blass and A. Debrunner in their *Greek Grammar of the New Testament* under the entries “Semitisms” and “Septuagintisms” (see BLASS 1961: 273), which includes around sixty Semitisms. This set of Semitisms has been reduced in the present study for the following circumstances.

- i. Some features only occur in parts of the NT that are not preserved in Gothic. In fact, only about three-fourths of the New Testament in Gothic survives to the present day. The parts that did not survive include, unfortunately, the specific books of the Greek NT that are known to be the richest in Semitisms, i.e., Acts, Revelations, and the Epistle to the Hebrews.
- ii. Some of the Semitisms listed by Blass are highly questionable (either because they are also explainable as *koinē* innovations or because they strongly rely on the semantic reading of the text) and, therefore, I have excluded them from this survey.
- iii. Some Greek Semitisms cannot be detected in Gothic because the latter language lacks the grammatical category involved in the phenomenon under consideration. Thus, I have excluded almost all alleged Semitisms related to the use of the article in Greek because the status of the article in Gothic is highly debated. Also, the so-called “dramatic aorist”, which is used in place of the perfect to render the Hebrew stative perfective (see WALLACE 1996: 565), has no Gothic parallels because Gothic has only one past tense.
- iv. In some cases, I have concluded that features distinguished by Blass are, in fact, attributable to the same phenomenon.
- v. I excluded purely lexical borrowings from the analysis.
- vi. I excluded some very general syntactic Semitisms from the analysis, such as the verb-initial sentence structure, since they are so overrepresented that collecting all of the examples would be impractical.⁴

In light of these considerations, the list of Semitic features with at least one occurrence in the Gothic NT numbers around three dozen.⁵ With respect to the occurrences mentioned in Blass and Debrunner’s *Index*, I have included some additional examples supplied by other scholars, i.e., DALMAN (1902), WILCOX (1984), BLACK (1988), BLACK (1954), and WALLACE (1996). In the present paper, then, I have sought to present all of the relevant passages in the Gothic NT. However, I have not searched systematically for Semitisms besides those indicated by my sources (though I do identify one, #23 below). I have divided these features into thematic groups, sometimes arbitrarily, to facilitate the generalizations that I make in the conclusion.

In quoting the passages, I use the Greek and Gothic texts in STREITBERG’s (2000) edition. As is well known, Streitberg arbitrarily included in his Greek *Vorlage* all of the variant readings necessary to approximate the Gothic wording. Such arbitrariness is inconsistent with good

⁴ Thus, one of the most common Semitisms in NT Greek is the sentence construction with the conjunction ‘and’ recurring repeatedly in the initial position (see BLACK 1988: 217). In fact, *jah* ‘and’ is the most frequent word in the Gothic corpus, accounting for 6.5% of all occurrences (see TOLLENAERE & JONES 1976: 335). Therefore, the scope of the paper precludes listing all of the relevant data. For a brief survey of this feature, see PIRAS (2009: §31).

⁵ As of this writing, the two existing studies of the Semitisms in the Gothic Bible are those of WOLFE (2018) and PIRAS (2009). The former discusses only four features, though; and, while the latter includes a list that is longer (and similarly based on grammars of Greek NT), it is less comprehensive and explicitly defined than the list in the present paper.

philological practice, but the resulting edition serves the goal of analyzing the Gothic translation quite well. I have cross-checked all of the passages against Nestle and Aland's critical edition of the Greek NT (28th edition, hereafter "NA28"). I used the KJV as the basis for the English translations, modifying the text where necessary to correspond to the Gothic text (which may differ from the Greek original), and to update archaisms.

1.3 The Gothic renderings of the Semitisms in the New Testament

An eternal question related to Gothic is the extent to which the Gothic Bible is a faithful attestation of the real language rather than a slavish calque of the Greek original. Since the Gothic text appears to be an almost a word-by-word translation preserving as much of the Greek linguistic structure as Gothic grammar permits, the passages in which the Gothic version more or less significantly departs from the Greek original are of major diagnostic importance for the study of Gothic (cf. already STREITBERG 1920: §234). The supposition is that the translator departs from his usual literalist approach at the exact points where the rules of his native language could not be stretched any further for the sake of imitating the Greek wording. Notably, "departure from the Greek original" in this context means that there is, as far as is known, no Greek manuscript variant of which the Gothic text would be a literal translation.

It is natural to ask whether the Gothic translator was aware of the stylistic peculiarity of the Biblical *Sondersprache*, including its typical Semitisms, with respect to the canons of classical literature. The notion of "Semitisms" is obviously a modern one, but an intellectual of the III–IV cent. would have easily perceived the contrast between the Classical Greek literary canon and the style of the Christian sacred scriptures. Indeed, the language of the Bible originated in the speech of either Aramaic-speaking fishermen and shepherds or the members of the Hellenized Jewish community, who spoke a local variety of *koinē* Greek (see NORDEN 1958: 508), rather than in an intellectual milieu. Many Church Fathers readily acknowledged this peculiarity of the Bible. For this reason — as the collation of the NT manuscripts shows — the scribes attempted to improve the text in accordance with the classical canon on many occasions.

The goal of the present paper is to determine whether the Gothic translator perceived the stylistic alterity of the NT Greek text and, moreover, whether he considered its Semitisms among the peculiarities worthy of being preserved in translation as a distinctive feature of the new Christian literary canon.⁶

In these respects, the textual evidence may be informative to varying degrees. Consequently, I distinguish the following ***translational strategies*** in the Gothic text in terms of their usefulness for my purposes here.

1. Literal translations of Semitisms are of little use since they indicate simply that the imperative of preserving the literal wording of the sacred scriptures had prevailed over any stylistic concern.
2. Non-literal and inconsistent (i.e., varying) translations of the same Semitism may be interpreted as evidence that the translator was aware of the oddity of a certain feature of

⁶ Indeed, the Biblical style gradually became a new literary canon. Already Augustine (*De Doctrina Christiana* II.14.21) affirms that those who have been nurtured on the study of the Holy Scripture consider classical Latin authors' Latin less pure than Jerome's.

the NT Greek but considered it a sort of “barbarism” to be smoothed out rather than a valuable feature to be preserved.

3. Non-literal and consistent (i.e., non-varying), translations of the same Semitism may be interpreted as evidence that the translator was fully aware of the exceptional nature of a certain feature of NT Greek and considered it worthy of being reproduced in the translation with a persistent grammatical shape.

The third strategy presupposes a skillful and erudite translator, and this may well have been the case. Though the attribution of the Gothic translation of the Bible to Wulfila has been questioned,⁷ whoever did accomplish this enterprise must have belonged to the elite of the Arian community of the IV century, which is known to have flourished intellectually.⁸ It is therefore not unrealistic to imagine a highly cultivated Gothic translator dealing with such stylistic challenges and crafting specific strategies in order to overcome them. My analysis of the data confirms this hypothesis.

II. Survey of the material

II.1 Semitisms related to the use of prepositions

Prepositions, as well as conjunctions and other grammatical “particles”, do not, of course, have referential meanings of the sort that nouns and verbs have. Instead, they function as “operators”, connecting other words in a sentence.⁹ A preposition, in other words, serves to link words under certain conditions rather than to convey referential content. However, in many traditional grammatical accounts, the prepositions are granted a certain semantic value (e.g., local, temporal, instrumental, or causal). The arbitrariness of such values becomes clear in the context of efforts to establish translational equivalencies between the prepositions of two languages. The translation of a preposition involves rendering a relationship rather than a word. Therefore, the prepositions may vary in a seemingly unpredictable manner in translation. For the purpose of illustration, Table 1 presents two verses from the Vulgate and the corresponding English renderings from various translations of the Bible.¹⁰ It turns out that Latin *post* becomes *after*, *behind*, *within*, or *beyond* in English, while *cum* becomes *upon*, *toward*, *on*, *to*, or *with* or is even left untranslated.

⁷ Wulfila was indisputably a figure of the highest intellectual rank, the “apostle of the Goths”, who, the Arian historian Philostorgius reports, was called ὁ ἐφ’ ἡμῶν Μωσῆς ‘our Moses’. However, the earliest account of Wulfila’s life, written by his foster-son Auxentius of Durostorum, does not even mention the translation of the Bible into Gothic, though this would obviously have been a major accomplishment (for more on this problem, see WIENER 1915).

⁸ For more detail, see KEIDAN (2005: §2.2). The intellectualism of the Arians was often used against them. Thus, Gregory of Nazianzus accused Eunomius of Cyzicus, the defender of the anomoean Arianism, of having stolen ῥήματα καὶ σχήματα from Isocrates, a pagan writer (see CASSIO 1998: 1008).

⁹ On the logical analysis of prepositions, see POLIVANOVA (2022: Ch. 8).

¹⁰ The acronyms are those used on <https://www.biblegateway.com>.

Heb. 9:3 <i>post velamentum autem secundum</i>	after the second veil (KJV)
	behind the second curtain (NIV)
	within the second veil (NMB)
	beyond the second curtain (TLV)
Lk. 1:58 <i>magnificavit Dominus misericordiam suam cum illa</i>	the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her (KJV)
	the Lord had magnified his mercy towards her (ASV)
	the Lord had shown great mercy on her (AMPC)
	the Lord had shown \emptyset her his great mercy (CSB)
	how kind the Lord had been to her (CEV)
the Lord magnified His mercy with her (DLNT)	

Table 1. English translational equivalents of Latin prepositions

The inconsistent rendering of prepositions is of importance in the analysis of the Biblical Semitisms in the context of the translation of Hebrew prepositions into Greek. It is well-known that Semitic languages are poor in “primary” prepositions (see HARDY 2022: 32). Therefore, each Hebrew preposition subsumes many functions that, in languages such as Greek and Latin, are expressed by several prepositions. In fact, some of the most typical biblical Semitisms originated because the Greek translators established arbitrary yet binding translational equivalencies between certain Hebrew and Greek prepositions without reference to the usage in Classical Greek. This process readily generated non-classical prepositional phrases. Another typical feature of the Semitic substratum is the grammaticalization of frozen prepositional or nominal phrases used as “secondary prepositions” to compensate for the lack of specific “primary” prepositions. These constructions are also considered Semitisms when translated overly literally into Greek.

#1. In Hebrew, the nominal component of a copular expression is preceded by the enclitic particles *l-* (usually ‘for, to’) or *k-* (usually ‘how’). Biblical Greek sometimes calques this construction as “copula + εἰς + N_{Acc}” (see BLASS 1961: §§145, 157.5; WALLACE 1996: 47–48). This construction occurs also as a Septuagintism (cf. Lk. 20:17, which quotes Ps. 118(117):22). The Gothic rendering is usually “copula + *du* + N_{Dat}” (see Lk. 20:17 and Jn. 16:20 below; likewise, Lk. 3:5, Mk. 10:8, 1Cor. 14:22, 2Cor. 6:18).¹¹ Other solutions are found in 1Thess. 3:5 (with an adverb) and 1Cor. 4:3 (with “*in* + N_{Dat}”).

Jn. 16:20

ἡ λύπη ὑμῶν εἰς χαρὰν γενήσεται
so saurga izwara du fahedai wairþiþ
‘your suffering into joy will be transformed’

Lk. 20:17 (= Mk. 12:10)¹²

οὗτος ἐγενήθη εἰς κεφαλὴν γωνίας
sah warþ du haubida waihstins
‘and this turned into a cornerstone’

1Thess. 3:5

εἰς κενὸν γένηται ὁ κόπος ἡμῶν
sware wairþai arbaiþs unsara
‘vain would our work become’

1Cor. 4:3

ἐμοὶ δὲ εἰς ἐλάχιστόν ἐστιν ἵνα [...]
aþþan mis in minnistin ist ei [...]
‘but to me it is a very small thing that [...]

¹¹ Notably, Gothic has a very similar construction, in which “*du* + N_{Acc}” translates a predicative noun governed by a transitive verb (see examples in BERNHARDT 1882: 8); similar constructions are not uncommon, including in other Germanic languages (cf. MILLER 2019: 243).

¹² Cf. εἰς κεφαλὴν γωνίας = *larōʿš pinnâh* in Ps. 118(117):22.

#2. The Hebrew enclitic preposition *b-* is consistently rendered by the NT Greek preposition *έν*, regardless of the function that it fulfills in specific contexts, which include an instrumental meaning. Classical Greek *έν* has no such meaning, so this instrumental usage can only be explained as a Semitism (see BLASS 1961: §§195, 219).¹³ One famous construction with *b-* is the formula *bəšēm yhw̄h* ‘in the name of God’ (and similar formulas). The intended meaning of its Semitic prototype was ‘by [means of] the name of God’ (as has been known since the study by BOEHMER 1898). This calque is so widely attested in the Greek Bible that, though preserving a certain sacred flavor, it effectively became a standard construction on its own. Through the intermediation of the Latin calque “*in nomine + N_{Gen}*”, it has entered many European languages (cf. Luther’s *im Namen des Herrn*).

In several passages, the instrumental *έν* is rendered with the Gothic construction “*in + N_{Dat}*”. It remains unclear whether the translator understood the intended instrumental meaning. At other times, the Gothic translation is more interpretative, as when the interrogative *έν τίνι* ‘with what?’ is rendered by the adverb *hve* ‘by what means’, which is a petrified instrumental form of *has* ‘what’ (see Lk. 14:34 below). The relevant passages are Mt. 6:7, 9:34, 11:6; Lk. 3:16, 14:34; Mk. 9:50; Col. 1:16; and Gal. 5:4. The following are representative examples.

Mt. 9:34

έν τῷ ἄρχοντι τῶν δαιμονίων ἐκβάλλει τὰ δαιμόνια

in fauramaþlja unhulþono usdreibiþ unhulþons

‘He casts out devils by the force of the prince of the devils’

Mt. 11:6

ὃς μὴ σκανδαλισθῆ έν ἐμοί

saei ni gamarzjada in mis

‘who will not be offended by me’

Col. 1:16

έν αὐτῷ ἐκτίσθη τὰ πάντα

in imma gaskapana waurþun alla

‘by him were all things created’

Lk. 14:34 (similarly to Mk. 9:50)

ἐάν δέ και τὸ ἄλας μωρανθῆ έν τίνι ἀρτυθήσεται;

iþ jabai salt baud wairþiþ hve gasupoda?

‘but if the salt turns insipid, with what will it be seasoned?’

#3. The use of *έν τούτῳ* with the meaning of ‘because’ or ‘therefore’ is likewise based on the instrumental function of Semitic *b-* in the phrase *bəḵēn* ‘thus’ (cf. BLASS 1961: §219.2). The Gothic translator uses two alternative renderings, *bi þamma*, lit. ‘by that’, and *in þamma*, lit. ‘in that’. The difference between these solutions could reflect semantic details that, unfortunately, cannot be recovered. The relevant passages are Jn. 13:35, 15:8, 16:30; 1Cor. 4:4, 11:22; 2Cor. 5:2; and Phil. 1:18. The following are representative examples.

Jn. 13:35

έν τούτῳ γνώσονται πάντες

bi þamma ufkunnand allai

‘by this will all men know’

1Cor. 4:4

οὐκ έν τούτῳ δεδικαίωμαι

ni in þamma garaihtips im

‘am I not hereby justified’

¹³ Examples of the instrumental usage of the Greek *έν* as a calque of a Semitic prototype are also attested elsewhere. Thus, in the *Res gestae Divi Saporis*, a trilingual Parthian, Middle Persian, and Greek inscription, the Greek part of which is clearly influenced by the scribe’s Aramaic mother tongue, are found such formulae as εἰς τοῦτο τὸ νιβύστ ‘by means of this inscription’ and εἰς τὴν βοήθειαν τῶν θεῶν ‘with the help of the gods’ (see CASSIO 1998: 1012).

#4. Greek construction “έν τῷ + V_{Inf.Pres}”, often followed by the subject N marked by the accusative, is used adverbially in the sense of ‘while (N) does V’, on the model of the Hebrew infinitival construction governed by the particle *b-* (see BLASS 1961: §404). The construction is typical of Luke but rare elsewhere in the NT. The relevant passages are Mt. 27:12; Lk. 1:8, 2:6, 1:21, 2:43, 5:12, 8:5, 8:42, 9:18, 9:29, 9:33, 9:51, 17:11, 17:14, 18:35; Mk. 4:4; and Gal. 4:18. In most cases, the Gothic translator transforms this construction into a finite clause governed by the complementizer *mihþanei* ‘while’, with the subject in the nominative and the verb in the preterit. The following are representative examples.

<p>Lk. 5:12 έν τῷ εἶναι αὐτὸν ἐν μιᾷ τῶν πόλεων <i>mihþanei was is in ainai baurge</i> ‘while he was in one of the cities’</p>	<p>Mk. 4:4 έν τῷ σπεῖρειν <i>mihþanei saiso</i> ‘while he was sowing’</p>	<p>Lk. 2:6 έν τῷ εἶναι αὐτοὺς ἐκεῖ <i>mihþanei þo wesun jainar</i> ‘while they were there’</p>
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However, other solutions are also attested. In two cases, the Gothic translator prefers other complementizers (*in þammei* ‘as long as’, lit. ‘in that, which’) with the verb in the subjunctive (present or preterit):

<p>Gal. 4:18 έν τῷ παρῆναι με πρὸς ὑμᾶς <i>in þammei ik sijau andwairþs at izwis</i> ‘as long as I am present with you’</p>	<p>Lk. 9:51 έν τῷ συμπληροῦσθαι τὰς ἡμέρας <i>in þammei usfulnodedun dagos</i> ‘as long as the days were complete’</p>
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In two passages, the Gothic translator interprets the accusative-marked αὐτοὺς as a sort of reflexive pronoun rather than a subordinate subject. Consequently, the subject is omitted, and the verb functions as deponent (i.e., reflexive with an active meaning). The following are representative examples.

<p>Lk. 9:33 έν τῷ διαχωρίζεσθαι αὐτοὺς ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ <i>mihþanei afskaskaidun sik af imma</i> ‘as they departed themselves away from him’</p>	<p>Lk. 2:43 έν τῷ ὑποστρέφειν αὐτοὺς <i>mihþane gawandidedun sik aftra</i> ‘as they turned themselves back’</p>
<p>Mt. 27:12 έν τῷ κατηγορεῖσθαι αὐτὸν ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρχιερέων καὶ πρεσβυτέρων <i>mihþanei wrohiþs was fram þaim gudjam jah sinistam</i> ‘when he was accused by priests and elders’</p>	

Notably, in Lk. 9:33, the Greek also presents a deponent verb (διαχωρίζεσθαι ‘to depart from’), on which the Gothic reflexive might have been modeled. This is not the case in Lk. 2:43, where Gothic *gawandjan* ‘to turn round’, attested as deponent elsewhere as well, has no Greek parallel. In Mt. 27:12, this same construction is translated in an unusual way, i.e. as a passive clause, with the accusative-marked pronoun interpreted as the logical object (thus becoming the subject in the passive form) rather than a subordinate subject.

Interestingly, the Gothic translator was perfectly able to distinguish the abovementioned occurrences of “έν τῷ + V_{Inf.Pres}” from those such as the one below, where the construction represents a completely different complementizer governed by έθαύμαζον:

Lk. 1:21

έθαύμαζον έν τῷ χρονίζειν έν τῷ ναῷ αὐτόν

sildaleikidedun hva latidedi ina in þizai alh

‘they were amazed, what had delayed him in the temple’

#5. The same construction, but with the aorist infinitive, is used with the adverbial sense of ‘after that’ (also almost exclusively in Luke). The Gothic translation alternates complementizers, again without a clear semantic motivation, including *mipþanei* ‘while’ (Lk 9:36, 2:27, 5:1), *bipe* ‘after that’ (Lk. 19:15, 3:21), and the literal rendering *in þammei* ‘in that, which’, i.e., ‘while’ (Lk. 9:34):

Lk. 9:36

έν τῷ γενέσθαι τήν φωνήν

mipþanei warþ so stibna

‘when there was a voice’

Lk. 19:15

έν τῷ έπανελθεῖν αὐτόν

bipe atwandida sik aftra

‘while he turned back’

Lk. 9:34

έν τῷ εκείνους είσελθεῖν

in þammei jainai qemun

‘when they came’

As before, the Greek deponent verbs are translated quite freely into Gothic through a change in diathesis, with the accusative-marked noun interpreted as the real object, rather than a subordinate subject (see Lk. 3:21 below). Outside Luke, the aorist infinitive governed by the dative article without the preposition έν does also occur, with a similar meaning. The Gothic translator uses *in þammei*, as in the main type, thus restoring the lacking preposition (see 2Cor. 2:13).

Lk. 3:21

έν τῷ βαπτισθῆναι ἅπαντα τὸν λαόν

bipe daupida alla managein

‘when [he] baptized all the people’

2Cor. 2:13

τῷ μη εὐρεῖν με τίτον

in þammei ni bigat Teitaun

‘inasmuch I had not found Titus’

#6. The Hebrew secondary preposition *’ahārē* ‘after’, from the root *’hr* ‘to come after’, is rendered by “όπίσω + N_{Gen}” in Biblical Greek, which is unnatural, for, in the classical language, όπίσω had only the adverbial meaning ‘backward, behind’ (see BLASS 1961: §215.1). Notably, in the NT, this use of όπίσω occurs exclusively in the direct speech of Jesus and other characters. In fact, the Semitic influence is often stronger in direct discourse than elsewhere in the NT. Just how un-Greek this calque might have sounded becomes clear with consideration of the fact that όπίσω is used with two opposite meanings, ‘from’ and ‘after’ (cf. Mk. 8:33 and Mk. 8:34 below). The Gothic translator renders όπίσω with the prepositions *aftra* or *afar* (to describe approach) or *hindar* (to describe departure). The relevant passages are Mt. 10:38; Mk. 1:7, 1:17, 1:20, 8:34; Lk. 9:23, 14:27, 19:14; and Jn. 12:19. The following are representative examples.

Mt. 10:38

ἀκολουθεῖ ὀπίσω μου

laistjai afar mis

‘follows after me’

Mk. 8:33

ὑπάγε ὀπίσω μου Σατανᾶ

gagg hindar mik Satan

‘go away from me, Satan’

Mk. 8:34

ὅστις θέλει ὀπίσω μου ἀκολουθεῖν

saei wili afar mis laistjan

‘he who wants to come after me’

#7. The partitive construction “έκ + N_{Gen}” used in place of the subject of the main verb is a Semitism in NT Greek calqued on the Hebrew construction with “*min* ‘out of’ + N” serving as the subject (see BLASS 1961: §164.2). The two surviving relevant passages are rendered inconsistently in Gothic, one with (Jn. 16:17) and one without (Jn. 7:40) the preposition *us* translating Greek *έκ*.

Jn. 16:17

εἶπον ἐκ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ

qerun us þaim siponjam is

‘said [some] of his disciples’

Jn. 7:40¹⁴

πολλοὶ ἐκ τοῦ ὄχλου οὖν [...] ἔλεγον

managai þan þizos manageins [...] qerun

‘many people, out of the crowd, then said’

#8. As mentioned, Hebrew formed many secondary prepositions through the grammaticalization of certain prepositional phrases. Some prepositional expressions were based on the word *tôk* ‘middle’, such as *batôk* ‘in the middle’ and *mittôk* ‘from the middle’ (from *min* + *tôk*). Such phrases were often translated literally into Greek as *έν μέσῳ*, *έμμέσῳ*, *εις μέσον*, *διά μέσου*, or *έκ μέσου*. All such occurrences are considered Semitisms since Classical Greek would have used simple prepositions instead (such as *έν*, *διά*, *έκ*, *εις*); see BLASS (1961: §215.3).

The Gothic translator offers two renderings, one with “*in miduma* ‘in the middle’ + N_{Gen}” (as in Lk. 8:7 below) and the other with the adjective *midjeis* ‘middle’ agreeing in case and number with the noun to which it refers (as in Jn. 8:59 below). In one case only (Mk. 7:31), a different construction is used, *miþ tweiþnaim* ‘in between’ (more or less). The relevant passages include Lk. 2:46, 4:30, 8:7, 10:3, 17:11; Mk. 7:31, 9:36; Jn. 8:59; and 2Cor. 6:17. The following are representative examples.

Lk. 8:7

έν μέσῳ τῶν ἀκανθῶν

in midumai þaurniwe

‘in the midst of the thorns’

Jn. 8:59¹⁵

διά μέσου αὐτῶν

þairh midjans ins

‘among them’

Mk. 7:31

άνά μέσον τῶν ὀρίων

miþ tweiþnaim markom

‘in the midst of the boundaries’

#9. Another set of secondary prepositions is formed in Hebrew from phrases including the word *pānîm* ‘face’, such as *mippānê* ‘away from’ (form *min* + *pānîm*, lit. ‘away from the face’), *lipnê* ‘in front of, towards’ (form *l* + *pānîm*, lit. ‘in front of the face’). Such secondary prepositions are often calqued in Greek with prepositional expressions deriving from *πρόσωπον* ‘face’, or the adverbs *ένώπιον*, *κατενώπιον*, *έναντίον*, or *έναντι*, all meaning ‘face to face’, in place of the simple prepositions in Classical Greek (see BLASS 1961: §217).

¹⁴ Notably, πολλοί in Jn. 7:40, rendered as *managai* in Gothic, is found in one manuscript only (P66) and, therefore, is not accepted by NA28. However, it is found in many other early translations of the NT; cf. OCS *mnodzi že otŭ naroda* ‘many of the people’, which is the same as, e.g., Luther’s *viele nun vom Volk*.

¹⁵ This phrase is lacking in the majority of the manuscripts and is, therefore, rejected by NA28.

The Gothic translator translates these prepositional phrases consistently with the standard formula *andwairþi* ‘person’ (lit. ‘presence’) preceded by the specific preposition needed in the given context. The same formula is used regardless of the exact prepositional expression is found in the Greek original (be it πρόσωπον, ἑνώπιον, and κατενώπιον, or ἔναντι). Only in some cases is the construction “*faura* + N_{Dat}” preferred (cf. Mt. 11:10 below). The relevant passages are numerous: Mt. 11:10; Mk. 1:2; Lk. 1:76, 1:6, 1:8, 1:15, 1:17, 1:19, 1:75, 4:7, 5:18, 5:25, 7:27, 8:47, 9:52, 10:1, 14:10, 15:10, 15:18, 15:21, 16:15; 2Cor. 2:17, 4:2, 7:12, 8:21, 12:19; Eph. 1:4; Gal.1:20; 1Tim. 2:3, 5:4, 5:20–21, 6:12–13; 2Tim. 2:14, 4:1; Col. 1:22; and 2Thess. 1:9. The following are representative examples.

Lk. 1:6 ¹⁶	Mt. 11:10	Lk. 1:8	II Thess. 1:9
ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ	πρὸ προσώπου σου	ἔναντι τοῦ θεοῦ	ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ κυρίου
<i>in andwairþja gudis</i>	<i>faura þus</i>	<i>in andwairþja gudis</i>	<i>fram andwairþja frauþins</i>
‘before the Lord’	‘before you’	‘before the Lord’	‘from the Lord’

II.2 Modifications in verbal government

A very good knowledge of Greek would have been necessary for the Gothic translator to realize that some verbs in NT Greek show a non-standard case/preposition government compared with Classical Greek. It is even more difficult to evaluate his perception of similar constructions, for instance, whether he considered such occurrences as mistakes to rectify or as distinctive features to preserve. As a matter of fact, he frequently departs from his typical literalist attitude and, for example, renders distinct but synonymous verbal constructions with the same Gothic pattern (cf. #10, #12, and #15), or, by contrast, translates the same Greek construction differently (cf. #11).

#10. The construction “ὀμνύναι ‘to swear’ + ἐν + N_{Dat} / εἰς + N_{Acc}” (with N referring to the thing sworn by), rather than the accusative that is consistent with classical usage, is a calque on the Hebrew verbal phrase *nišb’ā b-* ‘he swears by...’, formed, once again, with the particle *b-* in its instrumental sense (see BLASS 1961: §149). In the only relevant occurrence, the Gothic translator renders both prepositional phrases (ἐν + N_{Dat} and εἰς + N_{Acc}) with “*bi* + N_{Dat}”.

Mt. 5:34–36
μὴ ὀμόσαι ὅλως, μήτε ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ [...] μήτε ἐν τῇ γῆ [...] μήτε εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα [...] μήτε ἐν τῇ κεφαλῇ σου
<i>ni swaran allis, ni bi himina [...] nih bi airþai [...] nih bi Iairusaulwmai [...] nih bi haubida þeinamma</i>
‘do not swear altogether, neither by heaven [...], nor by earth [...], neither by Jerusalem [...], nor by your head’

#11. The construction “κρύπτειν ‘to hide’ + N_{Acc} (what is hidden) + ἀπὸ N_{Gen} (from whom it is hidden)” is explained as a calque on the Hebrew construction with the particle *min* ‘from’ (see BLASS 1961: §155.3). In Classical Greek, a double accusative would have been used instead. The

¹⁶ NA28 reads here ἐναντίον τοῦ θεοῦ, which is less similar to the Gothic rendering but still non-classical.

Gothic translator renders this construction inconsistently, once with “*af* + N_{Dat}” (see Lk. 18:34) and four times with “*faura* + N_{Dat}” (see Jn. 12:36 below; likewise, Lk. 9:45, 10:21, and 19:42).

Lk. 18:34

ἦν τὸ ῥῆμα τοῦτο κεκρυμμένον ἀπ'αὐτῶν

was þata waurd gafulgin af im

‘this saying was hidden from them’

Jn. 12:36

ὁ Ἰησοῦς [...] ἀπελθὼν ἐκρύβη ἀπ'αὐτῶν

Iesus [...] galaib jah gafalh sik faura im

‘Jesus [...] went and hid before them’

#12. Similarly, the verbs φοβεῖσθαι ‘to fear’, βλέπειν ‘to beware’, προσέχειν ‘to avoid’, and φεύγειν ‘to escape’ can be constructed with “ἀπό + N_{Gen}” referring to the thing that is to be avoided instead of the classical prepositionless N_{Acc}, which is also attested (see BLASS 1961: §149.1). The Gothic translator renders the Semitized construction with “*faura* + N_{Dat}” (see Jn. 10:5 below) while translating the classical construction literally (cf. Mt. 10:28 below, where both options are attested in the same verse in the Greek but then leveled out in the Gothic). On one occasion, the Gothic shows a prepositionless N_{Gen} (see Mk. 8:15 below). The relevant passages include Mt. 7:15, 10:28; Mk. 8:15, 12:38; Lk. 3:7, 20:46; and Jn. 10:5.

Mt. 10:28

μη φοβεῖσθε ἀπὸ τῶν ἀποκτενόντων[Gen] τὸ σῶμα [...] φοβήθητε δὲ μᾶλλον τὸν δυνάμενον[Acc]

ni ogeib izwis þans usqimandans[Acc] leika [...] ib ogeib mais þana magandan[Acc] [...]

‘do not fear those who destroy the body [...] but fear more those capable [...]

Mk. 8:15

βλέπετε ἀπὸ τῆς ζύμης τῶν Φαρισαίων

atsaihvib izwis þis beistis[Gen] Fareisaie

‘beware of the leaven of the Pharisees’

Jn. 10:5

ἀλλὰ φεύξονται ἀπ'αὐτοῦ

ak þliuhand faura imma

‘but will flee in front of him’

#13. The construction “καλεῖν τὸ ὄνομα_{Acc} X_{Gen} Y_{Acc}” with the meaning ‘to call X by the name Y’ is considered a Semitism¹⁷ and is possibly a Septuagintism (cf. Jer. 11:16). In the Gothic Bible, it is translated literally with the double accusative.

Lk. 1:13

καλήσεις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰωάννην

haitais namo is Iohannen

‘you shall call his name John’

Lk. 1:31¹⁸

καλήσεις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν

haitais namo is Iesu

‘you shall call his name Jesus’

#14. The use of the verb βασιλεύειν ‘to rule, reign’ with “ἐπί + N_{Acc}” instead of the classical prepositionless N_{Gen} is a calque on the Hebrew expression *mālak ‘al* (see BLASS 1961: §177). Gothic always translates this verb literally with “*þiudanon* + *ufar* + N_{Dat}”.

¹⁷ See BLASS (1961: §157.2). I have excluded from consideration the other examples of accusative-marked nominal predicates since they are also consistent with the classical syntax apart from the Semitic interference.

¹⁸ Note that these two passages also show the indicative future with the imperatival function, which is another well-known Septuagintism, see #18.

Lk. 1:33
βασιλεύσει ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον Ἰακώβ
biudanoþ ufar garda Iakobis
'will reign over the house of Jacob'

Lk. 19:14
οὐ θέλομεν τοῦτον βασιλεῦσαι ἐφ' ἡμᾶς
ni wileima þana biudanon ufar unsis
'we do not want him to reign over us'

Lk. 19:27
μὴ θελήσαντάς με βασιλεῦσαι ἐπ' αὐτούς
þaiei ni wildedun mik biudanon ufar sis
'who would not want me to reign over them'

#15. The verb ὁμολογεῖν constructed with “ἐν + N_{Dat}” in the sense of ‘confessing faith in someone’ is an Aramaism (see BLASS 1961: §220.3). The Gothic translation renders this construction with “*anhaitan* + N_{Dat}” (see Mt. 10:32), which is also used when the Greek shows the classical prepositionless N_{Acc} (see Rom. 10:9).

Mt. 10:32
ὅστις ὁμολογήσει ἐν ἐμοὶ [...], ὁμολογήσω κάγῳ ἐν αὐτῷ
saei andhaitiþ mis [...], andhaita jah ik imma
'who will confess me [...], him shall I confess as well'

Rom. 10:9
ἐὰν ὁμολογήσης [...] κύριον[Acc] Ἰησοῦν
jabai andhaitis [...] fraujiþ[Dat] Iesu
'if you will confess [...] the Lord Jesus'

II.3 Non-standard use of the categorial values

In an inflectional language, the selection of the wordform of a lexeme that has the determinate categorial value of a grammatical category required in a given context depends primarily on the arbitrary properties of the governing words rather than on some communicative need. Selection of the wrong value results, not in a different message, but in a morphological error: the more grammatical the category, the less semantic the choice of its values in each context.¹⁹ For example, the choice of the correct nominal case depends on the governing verb or preposition rather than on the “case semantics”. Various inflectional languages often select distinct values for certain categories — for example, distinct nominal cases — in semantically similar contexts. Consequently, if a translation reproduces the grammatical values of the original text too literally, the resulting pattern sounds unnatural or incorrect. Nevertheless, over-literal translation of categorial values is effectively what happened with respect to a number of calques from Hebrew found in the Greek NT. These mistranslations are so many, and so typical, that they constitute a distinctive feature of NT Greek, and subsequent translations often tried to preserve rather than

¹⁹ The theory of grammaticality, including the role of grammatical errors in detecting grammatical categories, is surveyed in POLIVANOVA (2022: Ch. 6).

rectify them. An analysis of the Gothic translator's ways of dealing with such abnormal constructions is, therefore, of interest.

#16. The “nominative of address” is attested in the Greek NT. In this construction, an articulated N_{Nom} replaces the expected N_{Voc} as a calque of the Hebrew address construction in which the article functions as a vocative marker (see BLASS 1961: §147; MILLER 2019: 109fn5; WALLACE 1996: 58; JOÛON 2011: 476). Gothic translates these address NPs systematically with omission of the article (which is regularly translated elsewhere). Distinguishing the nominative of address from the plain vocative can be difficult because the nominative and vocative endings are almost always homonymous. Nominative forms are attested undoubtedly in Jn. 13:13, 19:3 and perhaps in Mk. 9:25, while ambiguous forms are attested in Lk. 8:54, 10:21, 18:11; Mk. 5:8, 5:41; Gal. 4:6; and Eph. 5:25. The semantics is also susceptible to ambiguity, as in Jn. 13:13, which can be interpreted as a simple nominative of assertion rather than a form of address. Notably, the Latin translation may help to determine the correct reading.

Jn. 13:13 ²⁰ ὁμιεῖς φωνεῖτέ με· ὁ διδάσκαλος καὶ ὁ κύριος <i>jus wopeid mik: laisareis[Nom] jah frauja[Nom/Voc]</i> 'you call upon me: teacher and lord'	Jn. 19:3 χαῖρε ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων <i>hails þiudans[Nom] Iudaie</i> 'Hail, King of the Jews!'	
Lk. 10:21 ναὶ ὁ πατήρ <i>Jai atta[Nom/Voc]</i> 'yes, Father!'	Mk. 5:8 ²¹ ἐξελθε τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἀκάθαρτον <i>usgagg ahma[Nom/Voc] unhrainja</i> 'come out, unclean spirit!'	Gal. 4:6. ἀββα ὁ πατήρ <i>abba fadar[Nom/Voc/Acc]</i> 'Abba, Father!'
Lk. 8:54 ἡ παῖς ἔγειρε <i>mawi[Nom/Voc] urreis</i> 'girl, arise!'	Lk. 18:11 ὁ θεὸς εὐχαριστῶ σοι <i>gub[Nom/Voc/Acc] awiliudo þus</i> 'O God, I thank you'	Mk. 5:41 τὸ κοράσιον σοὶ λέγω ἔγειρε <i>mawilo[Nom/Voc] du þus qiþa urreis</i> 'girl, I say to you, arise!'

In the following passages, Gothic supplies personal pronouns (*þu, jus*) where the Greek source has the article.

Mk. 9:25 ²² τὸ ἄλαλον καὶ κωφὸν πνεῦμα [...] ἐξελθε <i>þu ahma[Nom/Voc] þu unrodjands jah bauþs [...] usgagg</i> 'you, dumb and deaf spirit [...] come out'	Eph. 5:25 οἱ ἄνδρες ἀγαπᾶτε τὰς γυναῖκας <i>jus wairos[Nom/Voc] frijof qenins izwaros</i> 'you, husbands, love your wives!'
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Also noteworthy is the fact that adjectives agreeing with a N_{Voc} are put into the weak form almost without exception. If this is a diagnostic feature, Mk. 5:8 should read as a plain vocative rather than a nominative of address since *unhrainja* 'unclean' shows the weak form. Consequently, if the

²⁰ The Vulgate shows the morphological vocative, specifically *vos vocatis me magister et domine*[Voc].

²¹ The Vulgate shows morphological vocative: *vos exi spiritus immunde*[Voc].

²² The Vulgate (9:24) shows morphological vocative: *surde*[Voc] *et mute*[Voc] *spiritus*.

adjective is in the strong form, the vocative interpretation of the head noun is unlikely. Accordingly, because *unrodjands* ‘dumb’ and *baups* ‘deaf’ are in the strong forms, Mk. 9:25 is best understood as a nominative of address rather than a plain vocative (in that passage and Mk. 5:8, the head noun *ahma* is morphologically ambiguous).

#17. Adjectival gradation is weakly grammatical because there are not many grammatical rules that mandate a determinate degree form of the adjective. To be sure, words such as *than* that call for a comparative and such expressions as *out of* that imply a superlative constitute rare exceptions. Normally, though, the “wrong degree form” is a highly speculative or interpretational notion. The text of the Greek NT includes some occurrences of adjectives that philologists consider to be in the “wrong” degree form, mainly on semantic grounds; that is, the text becomes “more meaningful” after readjusting the degree form of some adjectives. Since semantic considerations do not constitute strong evidence, all such passages are highly debatable. Nevertheless, such “wrong” forms have been investigated and explained as calques from Hebrew in which the adjectival gradation is not coded morphologically.²³

I turn now to a consideration of how the Gothic translator renders these forms. Since there are no formal distinctive features that characterize some adjectival degree forms as “wrong”, my selection of the relevant passages is based purely on the examples mentioned and commented on in BLASS (1961) and WALLACE (1996), with the exclusion of the most conjectural ones. In exploring this phenomenon further, I consider first the passages in which a positive degree may cover for a comparative because of the presence of *ñ* ‘than’ or *παρά* ‘in comparison with’, both rendered with *þau* in Gothic. In Lk. 18:14, a comparative adjective in Gothic corresponds to the positive form in Greek. STREITBERG (2000: 150, *apparatus*) claims that this comparative form may have been induced by the particle *þau* ‘than’. The same did not happen in Lk. 15:7 and Mk. 9:45, where the Gothic shows the positive forms as well.

Lk. 18:14

κατέβη οὗτος δεδικαιωμένος_[pos.] εἰς τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ παρ’ ἐκεῖνον
atiddja sa garaihtoza_[comp.] gataihans du garda seinamma þau raihtis jains
 ‘this man went down to his house more justified than certainly that one’.

Lk. 15:7

οὕτως_[pos.] χαρὰ ἔσται ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ ἐπὶ ἐνὶ ἁμαρτωλῷ μετανοοῦντι, ἢ ἐπὶ ἐνενήκοντα ἐννέα δικαίους
swa_[pos.] faheds wairþiþ in himina in ainis frawaurhtis idreigondis þau in niuntehundis jah niune garaihtaize
 ‘so much [or, perhaps ‘more’] joy will be in heaven for a single penitent sinner than for ninety-nine righteous’

²³ On Hebrew see JOÜON (2011: 489–491); on the NT Greek calques see BLASS (1961: §245.2–3); BLACK (1988: 218); WALLACE (1996: 297–305); on the Gothic renderings thereof see also WOLFE (2018: §2.1).

Mk. 9:45

καλόν_[pos.] σοί ἔστιν εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν ζωὴν χωλόν, ἢ τοὺς δύο πόδας ἔχοντα βληθῆναι εἰς τὴν γέενναν
gob_[pos.] þus ist galeiþan in libain haltamma, þau twans fotuns habandin gawairpan in gaiainnan
'good [or, perhaps 'better'] is [it] for you to enter the lame life, than for the one who has two feet being cast into the Gehenna'

Next, some occurrences are read as superlatives, while showing some other degree form, because the referent is opposed, by a quality, to some majority. The Gothic renderings in these cases are inconsistent.

Lk. 1:42

εὐλογημένη_[pos.] σὺ ἐν γυναιξίν καὶ εὐλογημένος_[pos.] ὁ καρπὸς τῆς κοιλίας σου
þiubido_[pos.] þu in qinom jah þiubido_[pos.] akran qiþaus þeinis
'blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb'

Eph. 3:8

ἐμοὶ τῷ ἐλάχιστοτέρῳ_[sup.+comp.] πάντων ἁγίων
mis þamma undarleijin_[pos.] allaize þize weihane
'to me, the one [who is] the least of all the saints'

There are also some occurrences in which a comparative or superlative is opposed to a positive form within the same sentence. Many scholars suggest readjusting the positive form according to the context in such situations. The Gothic renderings are also non-literal, though the reasoning behind the different choices may be difficult to discern.

Lk. 9:48

ὁ γὰρ μικρότερος_[comp.] ἐν πᾶσιν ὑμῖν ὑπάρχων, οὗτος ἔσται μέγας_[pos.]
sa minnista_[sup.] wisands in allaim izwis, sa wairþiþ mikils_[pos.]
'the smallest of all you, that one will become great'.

Mt. 5:19

ὃς ἐὰν οὖν λύσῃ μίαν τῶν ἐντολῶν τούτων τῶν ἐλαχίστων_[sup.] καὶ διδάξῃ οὕτως τοὺς ἀνθρώπους, ἐλάχιστος_[sup.] κληθήσεται ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν οὐρανῶν, ὃς δ' ἂν ποιῆσῃ καὶ διδάξῃ, οὗτος μέγας_[pos.] κληθήσεται.
Iþ saei nu gatairiþ aina anabusne þizo minnistonon_[sup.] jah laisjai swa mans, minnista_[sup.] haitada in þiudangardjai himine; iþ saei taujiþ jah laisjai swa, sah mikils_[pos.] haitada.
'now, whoever will break one of these least commandments, and will teach men so, he will be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but who will do and teach them, he will be called great'

Lk. 16:10

ὁ πιστὸς ἐν ἐλαχίστῳ^[sup.] καὶ ἐν πολλῷ^[pos.] πιστὸς ἐστίν, καὶ ὁ ἐν ἐλαχίστῳ^[sup.] ἄδικος καὶ ἐν πολλῷ^[pos.] ἄδικός ἐστιν

saei triggws ist in leitilamma^[pos.] jah in managamma^[pos.] triggws ist; jah sa in leitilamma^[pos.] untriggwa jah in managamma^[pos.] untriggws ist.

‘th one who is faithful in the small [thing] is faithful also in the big [thing], and the one unfaithful in the small [thing] is unfaithful also in the big [thing]’

Lastly, in two passages, the Gothic translator corrects the Greek comparative forms to superlatives.

Mk. 9:34

πρὸς ἀλλήλους γὰρ διελέχθησαν τίς μείζων^[comp.] ἐστί

du sis misso andrunnun hvarjis maists^[sup.] wesi

‘disputed among themselves who would be the biggest’

1Tim. 4:1

ἐν ὑστέροις^[comp.] καιροῖς

in spedistaim^[sup.] dagam

‘in the last days’

The general impression is that the Gothic translator tries to adjust the usage of the degree forms that he finds in Greek based on a kind of semantic reasoning analogous, if not identical, to the reasoning of modern philologists. This correction again reveals him to have been a thoughtful philologist and subtle interpreter rather than a mechanical translator of the sacred text.

#18. The use of future indicative verb forms to render categorical injunctions and prohibitions in place of the present imperative or subjunctive is almost unknown in Classical Greek. Rather, this usage represents a calque from Hebrew, in particular, a Septuagintism, for it appears mainly in quotations of Old Testament legal prescriptions and commandments (see BLASS 1961: §362). Normally, the Greek future is translated with the present indicative in Gothic (which lacks a future tense). However, when future forms are used for commandments in Greek, present conjunctive forms are consistently found in the Gothic. The relevant passages include Mt. 5:21, 5:27, 5:33, 5:43, 5:48, 6:5, 27:4; Lk. 1:13, 1:31, 17:4; Mk. 9:35, 10:43–44; Rom. 7:7; 13:9; and Gal. 5:14. Note that this feature is highly interpretational as well, for the reading of a future form as an imperative can only be established based on certain non-grammatical factors. It seems, however, that the Gothic translator is fully aware of these factors since he is able to distinguish the “real” future forms from the “imperatival” future forms in such passages as Lk. 1:31 with no additional information from the Greek text.

Mt. 5:43

ἠκούσατε ὅτι ἐρρέθη, ἀγαπήσεις^[Ind.Fut] τὸν πλησίον σου [...]

hausideduþ batei qipan ist: frijos^[Subj.Pres] nehundjan þeinana [...]

‘you have heard that it was said: love your neighbor [...]’

Mk. 9:35

εἴ τις θέλει πρῶτος εἶναι ἔσται^[Ind.Fut] πάντων ἔσχατος

jabai has wili frumists wisan sijai^[Subj.Pres] allaize aftumists

‘if anyone desires to be first, he should be last of all’

Mt. 6:5

οὐκ ἔσεσθε^[Ind.Fut] ὡς οἱ ὑποκριταί
ni sijaiþ^[Subj.Pres] *swaswe þai liutans*
'you should not be as the hypocrites'

Mt. 27:4

οἱ δὲ εἶπαν τί πρὸς ἡμᾶς; σὺ ὄψη^[Ind.Fut]
ip eis qeþun: hva kara unsis? þu witeis^[Subj.Pres]
'and they said, what is that to us? you see it'

Lk. 1:31

τέξῃ^[Ind.Fut] υἴόν, καὶ καλέσεις^[Ind.Fut] τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν
gabairis^[Ind.Pres] *sunu jah haitais*^[Subj.Pres] *namo is Iesu*
'you will bear a son, and should call his name Jesus'

#19. A unique and famous calque from Hebrew is the feminine pronoun αὕτη used as a general deictic in place of the neuter τοῦτο 'this'. This form occurs in Mk. 12:11, where a passage from Ps. 118(117):22–23 is quoted (which makes it a Septuagintism). I quote here this verse and the one leading up to it for context.

Mk. 12:10–11

λίθον^[m.Acc] ὃν ἀπεδοκίμασαν οἱ οἰκοδομοῦντες, οὗτος^[m.Nom] ἐγενήθη εἰς κεφαλὴν γωνίας / παρὰ κυρίου ἐγένετο αὕτη^[f.Nom] καὶ ἔστιν θαυμαστή^[f.Nom] ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς ἡμῶν
stains^[m.Nom] *þammei uswaurpun þai timrjans, sah*^[m.Nom] *warþ du haubida waihstins / fram frauþin warþ sa*^[m.Nom] *jah ist sildaleiks in augam unsaraim*
'the stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner / this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes'

The original Hebrew text mentions *'eben* 'stone', which is a feminine noun. The feminine deictic pronoun *zō'ēt* in the following verse is, therefore, ambiguous: it may refer to the stone, but it also may be used as a general deictic referring to the whole picture in accordance with the rules of Hebrew. The Greek translators apparently misunderstood this form entirely, for, as a feminine deictic, αὕτη can refer neither to λίθος 'stone', which is masculine, nor to the generic whole, in which case a neuter would have been used. Thus, a calque from Hebrew is the only viable explanation (see BLASS 1961: §138.2).²⁴ The Gothic translator does not maintain the feminine form since it would be totally unsuited to the context. Instead, he turns to the masculine *sa*, which is equally unusual as a generic deictic (the neuter *þata* 'that' would normally have been used instead). The intended antecedent of this masculine form is not obvious but could be *stains* 'stone', in which case the Gothic translator demonstrates some degree of acquaintance with the Hebrew Bible since neither the Greek nor the Latin text allows for this reading.²⁵

²⁴ Other feminine pronouns used as generic deictics occur elsewhere in the Septuagint (especially in Psalms), but this occurrence is apparently the only one in the NT. The Vulgate also includes feminine forms as generic deictics calqued on Hebrew but, interestingly, not in the present passage, where a neuter pronoun is correctly selected: *a Domino factum est istud*^[n.Nom], *et est mirabile*^[n.Nom] *in oculis nostris*.

²⁵ Linking *sa* to *waihsta* 'angle', as WOLFE (2018: §4) suggested, seems less convincing to me.

II.4 Redundant repetition

Biblical Greek is characterized by frequent pleonasms, that is, unnecessary or redundant repetitions of words. Though not unknown to *koinē* Greek, such constructions have been strongly reinforced by the Semitic substrate.

#20. The so-called “resumptive pronoun” is inserted without apparent necessity to specify a noun already connected to a relative linker. This usage forms such patterns as: “X, of which **his** Y” and the like. The Semitic substrate reinforced this pattern in NT Greek: since the Hebrew relative particle is a conjunction, rather than a pronoun, a resumptive (pleonastic) pronoun was needed to supply gender and number values.²⁶ In Gothic, the relevant passages are Mk. 1:7, 13:19; Lk. 3:16, 3:17; and Jn. 18:9. Literal translations are attested in most cases (cf. Mk. 1:7 below). In Mk. 13:19, both the relative and the pleonastic pronouns are rendered with the same word in Gothic, with the translator inserting the explanatory adverb *swe* ‘as’, probably to make the sentence less ambiguous. In Lk. 3:17, a participle takes the place of the relative clause.

Mk. 1:7 (almost identical to Lk. 3:16)

οὗ οὐκ εἰμὶ ἱκανὸς κύψας λῦσαι τὸν ἱμάντα τῶν ὑποδημάτων **αὐτοῦ**
þizei ik ni im wairþs anahneiwands andbindan skaudaraip skohe is
‘of whom I am not worthy to loosen the ties of his shoe’

Mk. 13:19

θλιψις **οἷα** οὐ γέγονεν **τοιούτη** ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς κτίσεως
aglo swaleika, swe ni was swaleika fram anastodeinai gaskaftais
‘such affliction as there was not any similar from the beginning of the creation’

Lk. 3:17

οὗ τὸ πτύον ἐν τῇ χειρὶ **αὐτοῦ**
habands winþiskauron in handau seinai
‘having the winnowing-shovel in his hand’

#21. Hebrew has a special “coverbal” construction in which the main predicate of a sentence is accompanied by a “coverb”, i.e., a verb with similar but less specific semantics that reinforces the meaning of the main verb. For verbs of motion, these redundant coverbs include *qwm* ‘to raise’, *hlk* ‘to go’, and *yš* ‘to go out’. This pattern represents the source of the pleonastic participial construction “V_{Part} + V_{Fin}” in the Greek NT. The following participles can appear as coverbs: ἀναστὰς ‘getting up’, ἐλθὼν ‘having gone’, ἐρχόμενος ‘going’, ἐξελθὼν ‘exiting’, καθίσας ‘sitting down’, and ἀφείς ‘leaving’. In fact, such phrases as ἀναστὰς ἕστη ‘standing up stood forth’ or ἐξελθὼν ἐπορεύθη ‘going out went away’ sound quite redundant to the modern reader.

The Gothic translator renders all such passages literally but, at the same time, presents no consistent translational equivalents for specific Greek pleonastic participles. Based on the tabulations by BLASS (1961: §419) and DALMAN (1902: 20–24), the relevant passages include the following: Lk. 1:39, 4:29, 4:38, 4:39, 4:42, 5:3, 5:28, 6:8, 10:25, 14:28, 14:31, 15:15, 15:18, 15:20,

²⁶ On Hebrew, see JOÜON (2011: §145); on the Greek calques, see BLASS (1961: §§278, 297); BLACK (1988: 218).

15:25, 16:6, 17:19, 18:11, 19:23; Mk. 2:14, 7:24, 8:13, 10:1, 10:50, 12:12; and Mt. 5:24, 6:5, 9:9, 9:19. Of some interest is Lk. 6:8, in which the Gothic translator uses two verbs (*urrisan* ‘to arise’ and *gastandan* ‘to stand’) symmetrically in both sentences while the Greek shows two unmatched constructions.

Lk. 6:8

εἶπεν δὲ τῷ ἀνδρὶ [...] ἔγειρε καὶ στῆθι εἰς τὸ μέσον· καὶ ἀναστὰς ἕστη
jah qap du þamma mann [...] urreis jah stand in midjaim. þaruh is urreisands gastap
 ‘and said to that man [...]: rise up, and stand forth in the midst. Therefore, arising he stood forth’

Lk. 4:38

ἀναστὰς δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς συναγωγῆς εἰσῆλθε [...] *usstandands þan us þizai swnagogai galaiþ* [...] ‘getting up from the synagogue, he entered [...]

Mt. 5:24

ἐλθὼν πρόσφερε τὸ δῶρόν σου *atgaggands atbair þo giba þeina* ‘while coming, bring your gift!’

#22. A “coverbal” construction analogous to the one just described is found in Hebrew also in the case of verbs of saying. This construction appears as a calque in the Greek NT as well. There are two patterns, “V_{Part} + V_{Fin}” and “V_{Fin} + καὶ + V_{Fin}”, that take the forms ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν ‘answering said’ and ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν ‘answered and said’, respectively (both sound redundant to the modern reader). Interestingly, the main and conjoined verbs are interchangeable, cf. ἀποκριθήσονται λέγοντες ‘they will answer saying’ (Mt. 25:44). Examples of this pattern are attested already in Herodotus, but, in the case of Biblical Greek, the substrate influence of Hebrew is beyond doubt, especially when the main verb is not one of the usual verbs of saying, e.g., γράφει λέγων ‘he writes saying’ or διαλογίζεται λέγων ‘he reflects saying’ (see BLASS 1961: §420; DALMAN 1902: 24–26).

The Gothic translation is always literal and lexically consistent in using as the verb of saying *qiban* ‘to say’. This pattern is so widely attested throughout the NT that it can be considered a distinctive stylistic feature. The relevant passages are too numerous to list individually; the following are representative examples.

Lk. 1:63

ἔγραψεν λέγων *gamelida qibandans* ‘wrote, saying’

Lk. 5:21

ἤρξαντο διαλογίζεσθαι οἱ γραμματεῖς καὶ οἱ φαρισαῖοι λέγοντες *dugunnun þagkjan þai bokarjos jah Fareisaieis qibandans* ‘the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, saying’

Mt. 25:40

καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐρεῖ αὐτοῖς *jah andhaffjands sa þiudans qibiþ du im* ‘and the king, answering, says to them’

Mt. 9:27

δύο τυφλοὶ κρίζοντες καὶ λέγοντες *twai blindans hropjandans jah qibandans* ‘two blind men crying and saying’

Mt. 25:44

ἀποκριθήσονται [...] λέγοντες *andhaffjand [...] qibandans* ‘they [will] answer, saying’

Lk. 1:19

ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ ἄγγελος εἶπεν *andhaffjands sa aggilus qap* ‘answering, the angel said’

Lk. 20:2

καὶ εἶπαν λέγοντες πρὸς αὐτόν

jah qeḅun du imma qibandans

‘and said to him, saying’

Mk. 4:38

καὶ ἐγείρουσιν αὐτὸν καὶ λέγουσιν αὐτῷ

jah urraidedun ina jah qeḅun du imma

‘and they awakened him, and say to him’

#23. Note that the verbal pairs described in #22 redundantly refer to the same event, so, in the case of paratactic pairs, both verbs should, in theory, share the same tense value. This is what effectively happens, with but a few exceptions in which the two verbs in the Greek present a mismatch in tense value (“V_{Aor/Impf} + καὶ + V_{Pres}”). This is most certainly a Semitism resulting from the mistranslation of a *waw conversivum* (also known as *waw consecutivum*), i.e., a Biblical Hebrew construction in which the verb reverts in its tense/aspect value to the opposite when preceded by the enclitic conjunction *w-* ‘and’. Thus, an imperfective (so-called *yiqtol*²⁷), when provided with the prefix *w-* (thus becoming a *wayyiqtol*), resembles semantically the perfective form (termed *qatal*).²⁸

Notably, *waw consecutivum* has always been perceived as a stereotypically biblical construction, as much by speakers of modern Hebrew as by the ancient translators of Hebrew into Greek and Latin. The translators, however, showed some uncertainty in translating the tense value of the *wayyiqtol* verb form. If rendered too literally, the form corresponds to a non-past tense (present, subjunctive, or future), but a more accurate reading would have required a past tense instead (usually the aorist in Greek and perfect in Latin). Effectively, as comparisons of various translations of the same Hebrew verse show, both options are attested; see KANTOR (2020: 78) for some examples.

As a Septuagintism, this construction, including the uncertainty in the tense value, entered Christian Greek (though, for some reason, it is usually not mentioned among the Semitisms in the Greek NT). Therefore, such passages as ἀπεκρίθη καὶ λέγει (Mk. 7:28), with the first verb in the aorist and the second in the present tense, represent a too literal reshaping of a *waw conversivum* chain, whereas a more insightful decision on the part of translators would have been to put both verbs in the aorist (as is done elsewhere, cf. ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν in Jn. 6:43).

Beyond the “coverbal” constructions, there are many other occurrences in the Greek NT of present verb forms preceded by the conjunction καὶ that might have been rendered with aorists instead. This interpretation of the tense/aspect value is suggested by the general semantics of the passages and also indirectly confirmed by the variability in the Greek manuscripts and Latin translations.

The Gothic translator renders this Greek construction with surprising consistency. Thus, in the “coverbal” constructions, both verbs are always set in the preterit (including Mk. 7:28 below, where the Greek text presents a tense mismatch; also Mk. 7:34, 9:35, and 14:61). Even when a different verb precedes the verb of saying, the Gothic selects the preterit form for both (see Mk. 4:38 and Mt. 9:9 below; likewise, Mk. 1:41, 2:14, 2:18, 4:38; Mt. 26:71; and Jn. 19:4, 19:9). Overall, the phrase *jah qab*_{3.Sg.Pret} ‘and s/he said’ occurs more than 130 times, while *jah qibib*_{3.Sg.Pres} ‘and

²⁷ The terminology of the Hebrew verb morphology is based on the wordforms of the verb *qtl* ‘to kill’.

²⁸ This traditional explanation, based on the idea of “tense inversion”, traces back to medieval grammars of Hebrew. It may seem simplistic, but it is acceptable for a first approximation. For more detail on the grammar of this construction and the history of scholarship, see JOÜON (2011: §117); COOK (2012); KANTOR (2020).

s/he says' is only attested once (analogous figures for the plural: 30× vs 3×). Consequently, there are 31 occurrences of *qab*_{Pret} translating λέγει_{Pres} (cf. Mt. 8:4 below) as well as 2 occurrences of *qebun*_{Pret} that translate λέγουσι_{Pres} (cf. Mk. 4:38 below).

Mk. 7:28

ἡ δὲ ἀπεκρίθη_[Aor] καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ_[Pres]
*ib si andhof*_[Pret] *imma jah qab*_[Pret] *du imma*
 'and she answered him and said to him'

Jn. 18:38²⁹

λέγει_[Pres] οὖν αὐτῷ ὁ Πιλᾶτος
*banuh qab*_[Pret] *imma Peilatus*
 'then said to him Pilate'

Mk. 4:38

καὶ ἐγείρουσιν_[Pres] αὐτὸν καὶ λέγουσιν_[Pres] αὐτῷ
*jah urraidedun*_[Pret] *ina jah qebun*_[Pret] *du imma*
 'and they awoke him, and say to him'

Mt. 8:4

καὶ λέγει_[Pres] αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς
*jah qab*_[Pret] *imma Iesus*
 'and said to him Jesus'

Mt. 9:9

εἶδεν_[Aor] ἄνθρωπον καθήμενον ἐπὶ τὸ τελώνιον Μαθθαῖον λεγόμενον καὶ λέγει_[Pres] αὐτῷ
*gasahv*_[Pret] *mannan sitandan at motai Marḅaiu haitanana jah qab*_[Pret] *du imma*
 'he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the customs, and he says to him'

It is unclear why the translator modifies the sacred text so systematically. The simplest explanation is that his Greek *Vorlage* presented the aorist forms in each relevant passage. However, the available data do not confirm this. The Latin translations of the NT could have served as his model too, but, in such passages as Jn. 18:38, no known Latin version has the verb in the past tense. A less likely hypothesis is that the translator had some familiarity with the Hebrew Bible (or even Hebrew grammar), as did St. Jerome. Whatever his motivation, it is clear that here the translator chooses to emend the text so as to render it more consistent and semantically sound rather than trying to reproduce in Gothic an inconsistency in the Greek Bible.

#24. The “coverbal” use of προστίθεσθαι ‘to add’ conjoined with another verb is unusual in Classical Greek, this being a calque of Hebrew “*waggôsep l- + V*”, a narrative formula that indicates a succession of events (see BLASS 1961: §435). One of the two verbs is usually non-finite. This construction is rendered literally in the three relevant passages in Gothic, where the verbs *anaaukan* or *biaukan* ‘to add’ are used.

Lk. 19:11

προσθεῖς εἶπεν παραβολήν
biaukands qab gajukon
 'in addition he spake a parable'

Lk. 20:11 (≈ Lk. 20:12)

καὶ προσέθετο ἕτερον πέμψαι δοῦλον
jah anaaiuk sandjan anḅarana skalk
 'and he proceeded to send another servant'

#25. The “distributive reduplication”, though not unknown in *koinē* Greek, was reinforced by a similar Semitic construction (see BLASS 1961: §158; for Gothic also PIRAS 2009: 168). In Gothic, it is rendered either literally (2Cor. 4:16) or with the special phrase *twans hvanzuh*, which is translatable as ‘two by two’ (Mk. 6:7, Lk. 10:1).

²⁹ Both Vulgate and *Latina Vetus* confirm the present tense: *dicit*_[Pres] *ei Pilatus*.

Mk. 6:7 (≈Lk. 10:1)
 ἤρξατο αὐτοὺς ἀποστέλλειν δύο δύο
dugann ins insandjan twans hwanzuh
 ‘began to send them forth two by two’

2Cor. 4:16
 ὁ ἔσω ἡμῶν ἀνακαινοῦται ἡμέρα καὶ ἡμέρα
sa innuma ananiujada daga jah daga
 ‘the inward man is renewed day by day’

#26. Among the repetitive patterns, I also include the *figura etymologica*, which is a cover term for various grammatical and stylistic phenomena in Hebrew and Greek. Hebrew had a special verbal form, the infinitive absolute, analogous in some respect to the English *-ing* gerund. For emphasis or to express a vast range of hypotactic relationships, the main verb of the sentence was preceded, or followed, by the infinitive absolute derived from the same root (see JOÛON 2011: §123). Parallel to this, Hebrew also presented the so-called “internal object”, i.e., a direct object etymologically cognate with the main verb (see JOÛON 2011: §125q). The difference between the infinitive absolute and the internal object is subtle: the former is a grammatical pattern in Hebrew syntax, whereas the latter is a stylistic device. Both of these constructions are often reproduced in Biblical Greek with *figurae etymologicae*, i.e., verbal phrases in which one actant is etymologically connected to the verb (cf. BLASS 1961: §§153, 198.6, 488; WALLACE 1996: 169, 190). *Figurae etymologicae* are known from Homer onward and, in the Greek Bible, are reinforced by the Semitic substrate. They serve to emphasize the meaning of the verb, cf.: χαρᾷ χαίρει ‘rejoices with joy’, that is, ‘strongly rejoices’, or φυγῇ φεύγειν ‘run in utmost haste’.

Figurae etymologicae are not always easy to detect because of their stylistic, rather than grammatical, nature and, consequently, lack of distinctive, formalizable features. I include in my data all passages that can be described as *figurae etymologicae* in the broadest sense, that is, all pairs of the type “verb + cognate actant” regardless of their possible source in Hebrew or semantics. This sample also includes the passages in which the cognate actant is the subject (cf. Mk. 4:14 ὁ σπείρων σπείρει ‘the sower sows’). The relevant passages are Mt. 6:19; Mk. 1:26, 3:28, 4:3, 4:14, 4:41, 5:42, 7:13, 10:38; Lk. 2:8, 2:9, 6:48, 7:29, 8:5, 9:14, 14:29; Jn. 6:28, 7:24, 17:26; Eph. 2:4, 4:8; 2Cor. 3:10; 1Tim. 6:12; 2Tim. 4:7; and Col. 2:19. The Gothic translator uses two strategies to translate the *figurae etymologicae* found in his Greek *Vorlage*.

To begin with, in a few passages, he apparently ignores them (cf. Mk. 1:26, 5:42 below; likewise, Lk. 6:48, 14:29; Mk. 3:28, 7:13).

Mk. 5:42
 ἐξέστησαν ἐκστάσει μεγάλῃ
usgeisnodedun faurhtein mikilai
 ‘they were astonished with great astonishment’

Mk. 1:26
 φωνῆσαν φωνῇ μεγάλῃ
hropjands stibnai mikilai
 ‘crying in a loud voice’

In the remaining occurrences, the translator renders the Greek *figura* with cognate terms in Gothic. Of some interest are Lk. 2:8, in which he relocates the *figura* to a loosely related, word (i.e., from φυλάσσοντες ‘keeping watch’ to ἀγραιοῦντες ‘camping’); Lk. 9:14, in which both cognate words (*anakumbjan* ‘to sit at a table’ and *kubitus* ‘seat’) are borrowed from Latin; and Eph. 4:8, which presents two *figurae* in a row, both reproduced in Gothic.

Lk. 2:8

ἀγראυλοῦντες καὶ **φυλάσσουντες φυλακάς**
þairhwakandans jah witandans wahtwom
'camping (lit.: staying awake) and keeping watch'

Lk. 9:14

κατακλίνατε αὐτοὺς κλισίας
gawaurkeiþ im anakumbjan kubituns
'make them sit on seats'

Eph. 4:8

ἤχμαλώτευσεν αἰχμαλωσίαν, ἔδωκεν δόματα
ushanþ hunþ jah atuhgaf gibos
'he led captivity captive and gave gifts'

Furthermore, there are several well-known occurrences in the Gothic Bible of *figurae etymologicae* (in the broadest sense) that do not correspond to the Greek text. Thus, the Greek phrase τὰ ἔργα / τὸ ἔργον ποιεῖν in Jn. 8:41 and Jn. 17:4 is rendered with pairs of cognate terms in Gothic, though with different roots in each passage. Sometimes, even single words are translated with etymologically connected phrases (as in Lk. 2:29 and Mt. 9:23 below).³⁰

Jn. 8:41

ὁμοῖς **ποιεῖτε** τὰ **ἔργα** τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν
jus taujiþ toja attins izwaris
'you do the deeds of your father'

Jn. 17:4

τὸ **ἔργον** τελειώσας ὃ δέδωκάς μοι ἵνα **ποιήσω**
waurstw ustauh þatei atgaf mis du waurkjan
'I have finished the work that you gave me to do'

Lk. 2:29

δέσποτα
fraujinond frauja
'O ruling Lord!'

Mt. 9:23

ἰδὼν τοὺς ἀλύητάς
gasaihvands swigljans [jah haurnjans haurnjandans]³¹
'seeing the minstrels [and the horn players playing horns]'

It seems reasonable, therefore, to conclude that the Gothic translator uses these phrases purposefully. Apparently, the *figura etymologica* was perceived as appropriate for the Biblical style already in the Greek tradition.³² The Gothic translator therefore may have decided to reproduce this stylistic device, either as an imitation of the Greek model (see KEIDAN 2005: §3.4) or a reminiscence of the indigenous poetical language (as suggested by TOPOROVA 1989: 76).³³

II.5 Semantic calques

#27. The particle εἰ, usually meaning 'if', when serving as an emphatic negation particle meaning 'by no means', is a calque of Hebrew *'im* 'if' used as a negation, especially in oaths (see BLACK 1988: 220; further detail in WOLFE 2018: §3). This construction is frequent in the Septuagint but occurs only once in the NT (apart from some Septuagintisms). In the only surviving relevant passage, the Gothic translator renders it literally, apparently not grasping the intended meaning.

³⁰ See WOLFE (2006) for more examples and TOPOROVA (1989: 74–75) for an even longer list (31 entries).

³¹ This phrase is a marginal gloss in the Gothic manuscript, see STREITBERG (2000: 16, *apparatus*).

³² Thus, the translators of the Septuagint had already created *figurae etymologicae* with no parallel in Hebrew (see SHISHKIN 2018).

³³ WOLFE (2006), by contrast, considers the *figurae etymologicae* insignificant in the Gothic NT.

Mk. 8:12

ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, εἰ δοθήσεται τῇ γενεᾷ ταύτῃ σημεῖον

‘verily I say unto you, to this generation there shall be given no sign’

amen, qība izwis: jabai gibaidau kunja þamma taikne

‘verily I say unto you, if to this generation shall be given any sign’

#28. The use of cardinal numerals to refer to weekdays is a Semitism (see BLASS 1961: §247.1).³⁴ In the two relevant passages, the Gothic translation is not literal: no cardinal numeral is used. Thus, the Semitizing formula μία σαββάτων ‘the first [day] of the week’ is rendered as either “the day after Shabbat” (Mk. 16:2) or “every first [day] of the week” (1Cor. 16:2).

Mk. 16:2³⁵

τῆς μιᾶς σαββάτων

þis dagis afarsabbate

‘of the day after Shabbat’

1Cor. 16:2

κατὰ μίαν σαββάτων

ainhvarjanoh sabbate

‘every first [day] of the Shabbats’

#29. Plural οὐρανοί in the sense of ‘the seat of God’ is a calque of Hebrew *šamayim* (plural of the root *šmy* ‘heaven’), while the original meaning of ‘heaven’ is preserved mainly in the singular οὐρανός (see BLASS 1961: §141). The Gothic largely respects the number of the Greek forms. In Mt. 5:48, the Gothic plural form substitutes the Greek adjective οὐράνιος ‘heavenly’, which might be intentional.

Mt. 5:19–20; 7:21; 8:11; 11:11–12

βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν

in þiudangardjai himine

‘in the kingdom of heaven’

Mt. 5:48

ὁ πατήρ ὑμῶν ὁ οὐράνιος

atta izwar sa in himinam

‘your father, the one in heaven’

Other plural forms of *himins* (especially the locative phrase *in himinam* ‘in heavens’) are attested in Mt. 5:16, 5:45, 6:1, 6:9, 10:32–33; Mk. 11:25–26, 12:25, 13:25; Lk. 10:20; 2Cor. 5:1; Eph. 1:10, 6:9; Phil. 3:20; and Col. 1:16, 1:20, 4:1.

#30. The use of πᾶσα σὰρξ ‘everybody’, lit. ‘every flesh’, is a semantic calque of Hebrew *kol bāsār* that occurs only in the direct speech of Jesus (see BLASS 1961: §275.4). The Gothic translator renders it with the phrases *all leike* lit. ‘all of the bodies’ or *ainhun leike* ‘any of the bodies’ when negated (on which see also #32), thus opting against a literal translation of the Greek original wording that possibly sounded unnatural to him.

Lk. 3:6

ὄψεται πᾶσα σὰρξ τὸ σωτήριον τοῦ θεοῦ

gasaihiþ all leike nasein gudis

‘all of the bodies will see the salvation of God’

Jn. 17:2

ἔδωκας αὐτῷ ἐξουσίαν πάσης σαρκός

atgaft imma waldufni allaize leike

‘you have given him power over all of the bodies’

³⁴ Cf. already Josephus, *Ant.* 1, 29: αὕτη μὲν ἂν εἴη πρώτη ἡμέρα, Μωϋσῆς δ’ αὐτὴν μίαν εἶπεν.

³⁵ To accommodate the genitive form of Gothic *þis dagis*, Streitberg resorts to a variant reading of the Greek NT, while NA28 prefers the dative τῇ μιᾷ.

Mk. 13:20
 οὐκ ἂν ἐσώθη πᾶσα σὰρξ
ni þauh ganesi ainhun leike
 ‘any of the bodies would be saved’

Gal. 2:16
 [...] οὐ δικαιωθήσεται πᾶσα σὰρξ
ni wairþiþ garaihts [...] ainhun leike
 ‘any of the bodies will be justified’

II.6 Structural calques

#31. The expression ἀπό μιᾶς ‘at once’, unknown in Classical Greek, is a calque of the Aramaic expression *min ḥāḏā*’ (see BLASS 1961: §241.6; BLACK 1954: 82). The Gothic translator interprets this unusual construction correctly, rendering it with the adverb *suns* ‘at once’. The same adverb translates also ἐφάπαξ in what is probably another form of the same calque (ἐπί ἅπαξ being structurally similar to ἀπό μιᾶς):

Lk. 14:18
 καὶ ἤρξαντο ἀπὸ μιᾶς πάντες παραιτεῖσθαι
jah dugunnun suns faurqīþan allai
 ‘and they all at once began to make excuses’

1Cor. 15:6
 ἐπάνω πεντακοσίοις ἀδελφοῖς ἐφάπαξ
managizam þau fimfhundam broþre suns
 ‘above five hundred brethren at once’

#32. The discontinuous construction of the type “οὐ/μή V πᾶς N” that performs the function of nominal negation (instead of the classical negative pronoun οὐδεῖς/μηδεῖς) is explained as a calque of Hebrew *lō’ ... kōl* ‘nobody, no one, no’, literally ‘not everyone’ (see BLASS 1961: §302.1). The Gothic translator takes a twofold approach here. For generic references, such as πᾶσα σὰρξ ‘anybody’, πᾶν ῥῆμα ‘anything’, and πᾶς λόγος ‘anything’, he consistently uses “any of + N_{Gen.Pl}”, cf. *ainhun leike* ‘any of the bodies’, *ainhun waurde* ‘any of the words’ (see Mk. 13:20, Lk. 1:37 below; likewise, Eph. 4:29 and Gal. 2:16 in #30). For determinate references, on the other hand, he translates with “*hazuh/alls + N*” (see Eph. 5:3, 5:5 below; likewise, Jn. 12:46, Mt. 7:21).

Mk. 13:20
 οὐκ ἂν ἐσώθη πᾶσα σὰρξ
ni þauh ganesi ainhun leike
 ‘then any of the bodies would be saved’

Lk. 1:37
 οὐκ ἀδυνατήσκει παρὰ τῷ θεῷ πᾶν ῥῆμα
nist unmahteig guda ainhun waurde
 ‘nothing (lit.: no word) is impossible to God’

Eph. 5:3
 ἀκαθαρσία πᾶσα [...] μηδὲ ὀνομαζέσθω
allos unhrainiþos [...] nih namnjaidau
 ‘all uncleanness [...] should not be named’

Eph. 5:5
 πᾶς πόρνος [...] οὐκ ἔχει κληρονομίαν
hazuh hors [...] ni habaiþ arbi
 ‘no fornicator [...] should have the inheritance’

#33. The use of εἷς τὸν ἕνα instead of the classical ἀλλήλους is considered a calque of Hebr. *zeh ’et-zeh* ‘one another’ (cf. BLASS 1961: §247.4). The only relevant passage — containing both the classical and the Semitizing constructions — is rendered in Gothic with three distinct reciprocal constructions, as if the translator wanted to reinforce the reciprocal semantics, i.e., *izwis misso* ‘yourselves’ for ἀλλήλους, and *ainhvarjizuh* ‘one another’ + *anþar anþarana* ‘one another’ for εἷς τὸν ἕνα.

1Thess. 5:11

διὸ παρακαλεῖτε ἀλλήλους καὶ οἰκοδομεῖτε εἷς τὸν ἕνα

inuh þis þrafsteiþ izwis misso jah timrjaiþ ainhuarjizuh anþar anþarana

‘wherefore comfort yourselves together and edify one another’

#34. The so-called *genitivus qualitatis*, i.e., a N_{Gen} modifying a noun in place of an adjective — such as σῶμα τοῦ θανάτου ‘the mortal body’, literally ‘the body of death’ — is one of the most characteristic features of the Biblical style. It has a clear Semitic origin since Hebrew had only a limited number of adjectives, using nominal phrases of the type “*status constructus* + *status absolutus*” instead (see BLASS 1961: §165; WALLACE 1996: 86–88). The phrases resulting from calquing a *status constructus* chain would have sounded unnatural (or incomprehensible) in Classical Greek. It remains unclear whether the Gothic translator understood the intended meaning of these phrases since his translations of them are consistently literal. In the following examples, I provide the literal translations of the Gothic genitival constructions rather than converting them into the intended adjectival form (the other passages being Phil. 3:21; Col. 1:22, 2:11; 1Tim. 1:17; and 2Thess. 1:8).

Lk. 3:3 (= Mk. 1:4, 9:47)

βάπτισμα μετανοίας

daupein idreigos

‘baptism of penance’

Lk. 16:8

τὸν οἰκόνομον τῆς ἀδικίας

þana fauragaggjan inwindiþos

‘the factor of dishonesty’

Lk. 16:9

μαμωνᾶ τῆς ἀδικίας

faihuþraihna inwindiþos

‘wealth of injustice’

Lk. 18:6

ὁ κριτὴς τῆς ἀδικίας

staua inwindiþos

‘the judge of iniquity’

Mt. 5:22

εἰς τὴν γέενναν τοῦ πυρός

in gaiainnan funins

‘in the Gehenna of fire’

Rom. 7:24

ἐκ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ θανάτου

us þamma leika dauþaus

‘from the body of death’

III. Assessment of the data

I turn now to my assessment of the surveyed material with respect to the three translation strategies listed at the outset (p. 5). Since my criteria for identifying Semitisms are arbitrary and formal, the resulting list may involve some difficult or controversial selections. The following considerations are pertinent in this context.

- Regarding the non-literal renderings, it is often difficult to determine whether the translator’s strategies are consistent. Thus, even if the majority but not the entire set of occurrences presents a consistent translation, I have considered the feature consistent as a whole (as in #9, where, alongside the main rendering *in andwairþja*, a unique occurrence of *faura* is also attested).
- The meaning of a “literal translation” is imprecise in many cases, especially those involving prepositional phrases. As mentioned, prepositions encode relationships rather than meanings, therefore they cannot be translated “literally”. Accordingly, I encountered some difficulties in distinguishing strategy 1 from strategy 3 for features #1 to #9.

- Sometimes, the translator renders a Semitizing feature of the NT Greek with two Gothic patterns corresponding to distinct semantic readings. Thus, ὀπίσω is translated with either *hindar* or *afar/aftar* in keeping with its meaning in each context (see #6). Similarly, as just seen, the phrase πᾶσα σάρξ is rendered variously in Gothic, depending on whether the sentence is affirmative or negative (see #30). I counted similar cases as examples of the third strategy.
- When there are only one or two occurrences of a Semitism, the consistency of the translation is impossible to establish. The assignment of such cases to a certain strategy may, therefore, be arbitrary (e.g., #19, the only existing example of a non-literal translation of the deictic αὐτή) because the available data are insufficient to reveal the translator’s overall strategy.
- I assigned cases in which the Gothic text shows the same rendering for multiple Greek patterns to the third strategy since they could be interpreted as intentional stylistic choices by the Gothic translator (see #10, #31).

Table 2 presents the results of the analysis.

	Strategy 1	Strategy 2	Strategy 3
Prepositions	#1, #2	#3, #4, #5, #7, #8	#9, #6
Verbal government	#13, #14	#11	#10, #12, #15
Categorial values		#19, #17	#16, #18
Redundant repetition	#20, #22	#21, #24, #25	#23, #26
Semantic calques	#27	#28	#29, #30
Structural calques	#34	#33	#32, #31

Table 2. Distribution of the translational strategies

IV. Conclusions

I draw attention to the fact that the non-literal translations, intentional or not (i.e., strategies 2+3) account for around 76% of the features (26 of 34), and the non-literal, consistent translations (strategy 3 only) account for around 38% of the features (13 of 34). These findings demonstrate the Gothic translator’s skill. On the one hand, he tries to maintain the wording and grammar of the original as far as possible — as many other Christian writers would do in that time.³⁶ On the other hand, the translator seems sensitive to the distance between the Greek of the NT and Classical Greek of which the Semitisms are one example. His astuteness in this regard is especially apparent in passages in which he seems to work to preserve in translation certain Semitizing patterns of the Greek NT by rendering them with consistent non-literal Gothic patterns (strategy 3). I wish to highlight the most interesting facts that emerged from my analysis.

The fact that he does not employ literalism (strategy 1) in his renderings of non-standard uses of Greek grammatical categories suggests an awareness of Classical Greek grammar. Specifically, the translator avoids rendering the Greek article in the “nominative of address” (#16), makes significant decisions in rectifying “wrong” degree forms of adjectives (#17), and

³⁶ As Jerome’s famous formulation *et verborum ordo mysterium est* (Ep. 57, 5) suggests.

consistently distinguishes the future verb forms used for commandments from the standard forms (#18). Also, in translating a famous occurrence of gender mismatch, he takes a clever and significant decision with no support from the Greek text, possibly demonstrating thereby some familiarity with the Hebrew Bible (#19).

Also suggestive of a knowledge of Hebrew are the translator's renderings of the redundant verbal pairs and, in the case of sentence-initial verbs of saying, corrections of the tense mismatches in the Greek text (e.g., from ἀπεκρίθη καὶ λέγει 'answered and says' to *andhof jah qab* 'answered and said'). If not the direct influence of Hebrew, such a correction implies at least considerable grammatical awareness (#23).

Regarding the non-standard prepositional constructions, I draw attention to the fact that the translator uses a distinctive pattern (*in andwairþja* 'in the presence of') to render a number of Greek prepositional expressions (πρόσωπον, ἐνώπιον, κατενώπιον, and ἔναντι) as if intentionally leveling out the apparent "barbarisms" of the Greek text (#9).

The translator appears skillful enough to deal with some non-trivial structural and semantic calques from Hebrew. Thus, e.g., he translates correctly Greek ἀπὸ μιᾶς and ἐφάπαξ with Gothic *suns* 'at once', whereas a knowledge of Classical Greek would not have suggested such a reading (#31). Likewise, he not only considers the *figurae etymologicae* attested in the Greek NT worthy of preservation in translation to the extent that the Gothic lexicon allowed but also creates new constructions based on this pattern with no parallels in the Greek text (#26).

All of this evidence points to the conclusion that the Gothic translator was a careful reader of the Holy Scriptures. In particular, he never has recourse to pure literalism. Rather, his imitation of the sacred language is consistent with refined style typical of an Atticist writer of the IV cent. from the Arian milieu.

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