

# Interlinear Glossing of the Latin Text of the Bayeux Tapestry

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Folivarski, Eva

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**Eva Folivarski**

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Tapestry**

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Interlinear Glossing of the Latin Text of the Bayeux Tapestry

Diplomski rad

Studentica:

Eva Folivarski

Mentor:

Izv. prof. dr. sc. Ivo Fabijanić

Zadar, 2020.



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Zadar, 30. rujna 2020.

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## 1. Introduction

The famous Bayeux Tapestry, so called due to its permanent home in Bayeux, France (*Britain's Bayeux Tapestry*), is a remarkable work of art, telling the story of the Norman Conquest of England, covering the events of 1064–66, dramatically ending with the depiction of the Battle of Hastings. Although called a ‘tapestry’, it is actually an embroidery<sup>1</sup> (Musset 9), more than 68 meters long, whose artwork and historical significance is highly praised, but whose author has never been definitively identified (Gameson 157).

Describing each scene are captions embroidered in the Latin language – a stretch of text spread out across the entire tapestry. Because this text is the key to understanding the story the tapestry unravels, the topic of this paper is to deconstruct the text in a detailed manner.

In order to do that, I have chosen the method of interlinear morphemic glossing (IMG for short), in which each word is separated into the word stem and its adjoining morphemes, the morphemes are named, and a free translation of each sentence into English is offered below the IMG. This paper relies on the IMG instructions developed by Christian Lehmann, Emeritus Professor of General and Comparative Linguistics at Erfurt University, Germany, as well as the Leipzig glossing rules and glossing abbreviations, edited by the Department of Linguistics of the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology (EVA) and by the Department of Linguistics of the University of Leipzig, Germany. By using this method, I have analyzed the features of the tapestry’s Latin text in an attempt to determine its author’s original language.

For the linguistic analysis of the language elements that IMG has isolated, I have employed the help of various experts in the field and two dictionaries. The latter are the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* and ΛΟΓΕΙΟΝ, an online dictionary of Latin and Ancient Greek.

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<sup>1</sup> In light of clarity and to avoid confusion, the Bayeux Tapestry will be referred to as a ‘tapestry’ rather than ‘embroidery’ throughout this paper.

The experts mainly consist of university professors. Professor Richard Gameson, who specializes in the history of the book and in medieval art at Durham University, UK, compiled the book *The Study of the Bayeux Tapestry* from a number of scholarly essays, including his own and that of H. E. J. Cowdrey, an Anglican priest and historian of the English Middle Ages. A very informative study titled *The Bayeux Tapestry* was written by French historian Lucien Musset, Emeritus Professor at University of Caen, France, who specialized in the Duchy of Normandy. For comments on the general framework of Medieval Latin, I have used the Medieval Latin lecture notes of Emeritus Professor Branimir Glavičić, the former Head of the Department of Classical Philology at University of Zadar, Croatia. For some specific commentary, I have consulted with Professors Ankica Bralić Petković and Zvonko Liović of the Department of Classical Philology at University of Zadar, Croatia, via e-mail.

However, because the text can hardly make much sense without also examining the scenes of the tapestry, there is also a chapter focused on inspecting the visual elements, both textual and artistic. This analysis draws largely on the comments and conclusions of Gameson and Musset, with a little help from University of Nottingham's article on medieval scribal conventions. Of course, discussing visual elements of the tapestry would not be possible without viewing the work itself, but because of the sheer volume of the tapestry, its visual inclusion in this paper was not possible. Fortunately, the entire tapestry is available to explore online, scene by scene, at *Britain's Bayeux Tapestry* web page.

For the historical context of the events pictured on the tapestry, Musset's expertise was once again crucial. Besides his contribution, *Encyclopædia Britannica's* article "Norman Conquest" fills in some blanks, while Charles Prentout's essay in Gameson's book offers solutions to demystifying some unattested characters in the tapestry.

All of this information is presented in several chapters, the first of which provides the historical basis for this paper's discussion. In the next chapter, the tapestry's entire text is

carefully glossed, with helpful explanations before each scene, followed by a chapter with a detailed linguistic analysis. Finally, the chapter inspecting the visual elements helps in understanding the clues about the tapestry's origin.

## 2. Historical Context

The Norman invasion of England, culminating in the Battle of Hastings in 1066, effected deep changes in England's political, administrative and social spheres (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica). It is for this reason that the Norman Conquest marks a pivotal point in Anglo-Saxon history. But why did it even come to these events?

In the few years preceding the Norman Conquest, there was a succession crisis in England because the English king, Edward the Confessor, had no living relative who would inherit the throne (Musset 79, 172). Due to this circumstance, there were several men laying claim to the English throne.

The first of these was Harold Godwinson, Earl of Wessex and Edward's brother-in-law. Only a day after Edward's death on 5<sup>th</sup> January 1066, Harold accepted the crown offered to him by the *witan* (or *witena gemot* – "wise men"), an Anglo-Saxon political assembly of high ranking men, who would choose the "best qualified heir" from the king's house (Musset 172).

The second claim was laid by Harald Hardrada, King of Norway, on the basis of an agreement between Harald's and Edward's predecessors, which stated that, if either of the two died without an heir, the other would inherit both lands. However, because Harald was also fighting Denmark, laying a claim to the Danish throne as well, mounting an attack on England would have proven to be a difficult endeavor. This is likely why he eventually joined forces with Harold Godwinson's exiled brother Tostig and launched an attack on England not long after King Edward's death. Unfortunately for Hardrada, Godwinson's army decisively won



against the Danish invasion at the Battle of Stamford Bridge on 25<sup>th</sup> September 1066, where Hardrada and Tostig were killed (Musset 78–80).

The third ruler to lay claim to the English throne was William I, Duke of Normandy, later known as William the Conqueror. Edward's mother, Emma of Normandy, was William's great aunt, which may have been the basis upon which Edward had promised William to name him his heir. Additionally, William claimed that Harold had sworn to support him in this claim not long before Edward's death. For these reasons, William prepared his troops for the conquest of England, and fought against Harold's army at Hastings on 14<sup>th</sup> October 1066. Given the recent struggles against the Norwegian invasion, the exhausted English army lost to William's fresh troops after hours of battle, in which Harold was killed. Finally, his death gave way for William to assume the throne (Musset 77, 80).

### **3. Glossing the Text**

The IMG method determines which grammatical function each morpheme performs in a word, but it can be more or less detailed based on the needs and purposes of their author. It usually involves three lines of interpretation, although there can be more if the author perceives the need for them ("The Leipzig Glossing Rules" 3). Generally, the first line is a word-by-word transliteration of the source text, the second line is the meta-language, i.e. the gloss, while the third line is the IMG author's translation of the source text into the target language (Lehmann 1). This paper contains five lines: 1) literal transliteration of the source text, including visual peculiarities, which is relevant for chapter 5; 2) standard transliteration, including visual separation of segmentable morphemes; 3) gloss containing category labels for all words; 4) gloss containing a word from the meta-language for structure-class words instead of a category label; 5) translation.

Here are some general rules all IMGs must follow: 1) each gloss must be aligned with its transliteration; 2) each word must be broken down to its stem and inflexional morphemes (if there are any); 3) the number of morphemes in the transliteration must correspond to the number of morphemes in the gloss, and the boundaries between them are signaled by a hyphen. There are also many optional rules that may be followed (Lehmann, “The Leipzig Glossing Rules”), some of which were employed in this paper. Their use is signaled by specific boundary symbols listed below, which are explained by Kutscher and Werning (xxv). The following list contains the glossing labels of grammatical categories and boundary symbols used in this paper:

3 – 3 <sup>rd</sup> person	M – masculine
A – active	N – neuter
ABL – ablative	NOM – nominative
ACC – accusative	PART – participle
ADVR – adverbializer	PASS – passive
CNJ – conjunctive	PF – perfect tense
COND – conditional subordinator	PL – plural
CONSEC – consecutive subordinator	PLUP – pluperfect
DAT – dative	POSS – possessive
DEM – demonstrative adverb or pronoun	PS – present tense
F – feminine	REFL – reflexive pronoun
GEN – genitive	REL – relative adverb or pronoun
HUM – human	SG – singular
INF – infinitive	SIM – simultaneous
INT – interrogative	SUBJ – subjunctive
IPF – imperfect tense	

Parallel in the transliteration and the gloss:

- Connects segmentable morphemes
- ~ Indicates reduplication morphemes

Different meanings in the transliteration and the gloss:

[ ] In the transliteration – marks a passage completely destroyed; contains scholarly reconstruction of the destroyed passage

In the gloss – marks a property that does not correspond to an overt element in the transliteration

Only in the transliteration:

- < > Marks additions to the transliteration, which are missing due to scribal errors
- ( ) Marks scholarly reconstruction of non-overt phonemes in Medieval Latin orthographic conventions
- { } Marks extra elements in the transliteration that are either scribal errors or redundant information

Only in the gloss:

- . Separates a combination of gloss elements that correspond to a single transliteration element which cannot be separated into corresponding morphemes
- \_ Combines two gloss elements when there is no single gloss element that corresponds to a transliteration stem
- \ Marks a non-segmentable grammatical property in the transliteration signaled by a morpho-phonological change

### *3.1. Transliteration and Interlinear Glossing*

(1) Edward the Confessor, sitting on the throne, speaks to Harold and another person, most likely sending them on a mission to Normandy in 1064 (Musset 79).

*EDVVARD*            *RĒX:*  
*Edward*            *rex.*  
Edward.M[.NOM]    king.M[.NOM.SG]  
Edward.M[.NOM]    king.M[.NOM.SG]  
‘King Edward.’

(2) Earl Harold of Wessex, identified by carrying a hawk, rides out to Bosham with his army.

*VBI: hAROLO*            *DVX:*            *ANGLORVM:*            *ET*  
*Ubi Harold*            *dux*            *Angl-orum*            *et*  
REL    Harold.M[.NOM]    leader.M[.NOM.SG]    Englishman.M-GEN.PL    CNJ  
where Harold.M[.NOM]    leader.M[.NOM.SG]    Englishman.M-of            and  
‘Where Harold, Earl of the English, and his soldiers ride to Bosham.’

*SVI*            *MILITES:*            *EQVITANT:*    *AD*    *BOSham:*  
*su-i*            *milit-es*            *equit-a-nt*    *ad*    *Bosham.*  
POSS.REFL-NOM.PL.M soldier.M-NOM.PL    ride-PS-3PL.A    ACC    Bosham[ACC]  
his-NOM.PL.M            soldier.M-NOM.PL    ride-PS-3PL.A    to    Bosham[ACC]

(3) The church at Bosham, where Harold and a companion enter to pray.

*ECCLĒSIA:*  
*Ecclesi-a.*  
church.F-NOM.SG  
church.F-NOM.SG  
‘The church.’

(4) After a meal, Harold sets sail, but is blown away by the wind to Guy of Ponthieu's land.

*HIC HAROLD: MARE NAVIGAVIT: ET VELIS:*

*Hic Harold mar-e naviga-v-it et vel-is*

DEM Harold.M[.NOM] sea.N-ACC.SG navigate-PF-3SG.A CNJ sail.N-ABL.PL

here Harold.M[.NOM] sea.N-ACC.SG navigate-PF-3SG.A and sail.N-with

'Here Harold navigated the sea and, with sails full of wind, arrived to the land of Count Guy.'

*VENTO: PLENIS VENIT: IN TERRA: VVIOONIS*

*vent-o plen-is ven-it in terr-a<m> Widon-is*

wind.M-ABL.SG full-ABL.PL.N come\PF-3SG.A ACC land.F-ACC.SG Guy.M-GEN

wind.M-by full-with.N come\PF-3SG.A in land.F-ACC.SG Guy.M-of

*COMITIS*

*comit-is.*

count.M-GEN.SG

count.M-of

(5) Harold is identified as the sole figure in the leading boat.

*HAROLD:*

*Harold.*

Harold.M[.NOM]

Harold.M[.NOM]

'Harold.'

(6) Harold is taken prisoner by Guy, but is treated with respect, still carrying his hawk.

*hIC: APPREhENDIT: VVIDO: HAROLDV̄: ET DVXIT:*

*Hic apprehend-it Wido Harold-u(m) et du-x-it*

DEM apprehend-PF.3SG.A Guy.M[.NOM] Harold.M-ACC CNJ lead-PF-3SG.A

here apprehend-PF.3SG.A Guy.M[.NOM] Harold.M-ACC and lead-PF-3SG.A

‘Here Guy apprehended Harold and led him to Beaurain and detained him there.’

*EVM AD BELREM: ET IBI EVM:*

*e-um ad Belrem et ibi e-um*

DEM.HUM-ACC.SG.M ACC Beaurain[ACC] CNJ DEM DEM.HUM-ACC.SG.M

he-ACC.SG.M to Beaurain[ACC] and there he-ACC.SG.M

*TENVIT:*

*ten-u-it.*

detain-PF-3SG.A

detain-PF-3SG.A

(7) Guy sits on the throne and questions Harold.

*VBI: hAROLD: 7 VVIDO: PARABOLANT:*

*Ubi Harold et Wido parabol-a-nt.*

REL Harold.M[.NOM] CNJ Guy.M[.NOM] converse-PS-3PL.A

where Harold.M[.NOM] and Guy.M[.NOM] converse-PS-3PL.A

‘Where Harold and Guy converse.’

(8) Duke William of Normandy sends two messengers to extract Harold from Guy.

*VBI: NVNTII: VVILLĒLMI: DVCIS: VENERVNT:*

*Ubi nunti-i                      Willelm-i                      duc-is                      ven-erunt*  
 REL messenger.M-NOM.PL William.M-GEN                      leader.M-GEN.SG                      come\PF-3PL.A  
 where messenger.M-NOM.PL William.M-of                      leader.M-of                      come\PF-3PL.A

‘Where Duke William’s messengers came to Guy.’

*AD VVIDONĒ*

*ad Widon-e(m).*

ACC Guy.M-ACC

to Guy.M-ACC

(9) A short figure holding the messengers’ horses, whose exact identity remains unknown, but was most likely Bishop Odo’s vassal (Prentout 25–28).

*TVROLD*

*Tuold.*

Tuold.M[.NOM]

Tuold.M[.NOM]

‘Tuold.’

(10) The two messengers are hastily riding to Beaurain.

*NVNTII:                      VVILLELMI*

*Nunti-i                      Willelm-i.*

messenger.M-NOM.PL William.M-GEN

messenger.M-NOM.PL William.M-of

‘William’s messengers.’

(11) A messenger arrives to William, informing him of Harold's detainment.

<i>+HIC VENIT:</i>	<i>NVNTIVS:</i>	<i>AD</i>	<i>WILGELMUM</i>
<i>Hic ven-it</i>	<i>nunti-us</i>	<i>ad</i>	<i>Wilgelm-um</i>
DEM come\PF-3SG.A	messenger.M-NOM.SGACC		William.M-ACC
here come\PF-3SG.A	messenger.M-NOM.SGto		William.M-ACC

'Here a messenger came to Duke William.'

*DVCEM*

*duc-em.*

leader.M-ACC.SG

leader.M-ACC.SG

(12) Guy and Harold both carry hawks while Harold is delivered to William as ordered.

<i>HIC: WIDO:</i>	<i>ADDUXIT</i>	<i>hAROLDUm</i>	<i>AD</i>	<i>VVILGELMUM:</i>
<i>Hic Wido</i>	<i>addu-x-it</i>	<i>Harold-um</i>	<i>ad</i>	<i>Wilgelm-um</i>
DEM Guy.M[.NOM] bring-PF-3SG.A		Harold.M-ACCACC		William.M-ACC
here Guy.M[.NOM] bring-PF-3SG.A		Harold.M-ACCto		William.M-ACC

'Here Guy brought Harold to William, Duke of the Normans.'

*NORMANNORVM:* *DVCEM*

*Normann-orum* *duc-em.*

Norman\_man.M-GEN.PL leader.M-ACC.SG

Norman\_man.M-of leader.M-ACC.SG

(13) William, now holding the hawk, brings Harold to his palace, where they talk.



*HIC: DVX: VVILGELM: CVM hAROLDO: VENIT:*  
*Hic dux Wilgelm cum Harold-o ven-it*  
 DEM leader.M[.NOM.SG] William.M[.NOM] ABL Harold.M-ABL come\PF-3SG.A  
 here leader.M[.NOM.SG] William.M[.NOM] with Harold.M-ABL come\PF-3SG.A  
 ‘Here Duke William arrived to his palace with Harold.’

*AD PALATIV̄ SV̄*  
*ad palati-u(m) su-u(m).*  
 ACC palace.N-ACC.SG POSS.REFL-ACC.SG.N  
 to palace.N-ACC.SG his-ACC.SG.N

(14) A woman stands at an altar while a cleric touches her head. Although the woman’s true identity remains a mystery, some suggest she is either Harold’s sister or his wife, Edgiva, who “rallied to William's side during the course of his march on London” (Prentout 22–25).

*VBI: VNVS: CLERICVS: ET: ÆLFGYVA*  
*Ubi un-us cleric-us et Aelfgyv-a.*  
 REL one-NOM.SG.M cleric.M-NOM.SG CNJ Aelfgyva.F-NOM  
 where one-NOM.SG.M cleric.M-NOM.SG and Aelfgyva.F-NOM  
 ‘Where (are) a cleric and Aelfgyva.’

(15) William and Harold set out with William’s army to fight Duke Conan of Brittany. On their way they pass Mont St. Michel, bordering Brittany and Normandy, and cross the river Couesnon. They arrive to Dol and charge at the castle, but Conan slips out down a rope.

*hIC: VVILLEM: DVX: ET EXERCITVS:*  
*Hic Willem dux et exercit-us*

DEM William.M[.NOM] leader.M[.NOM.SG] CNJ army.M-NOM.SG

here William.M[.NOM] leader.M[.NOM.SG] and army.M-NOM.SG

‘Here Duke William and his army came to Mont St. Michel and here they crossed the river

*EVVS: VENERVNT: AD MONTĒ MICHAELIS ET*

*e-ius ven-erunt ad mont-e(m) Michael-is et*

DEM.HUM-GEN.SG.M come\PF-3PL.A ACC mountain.M-ACC.SG Michel.M-GENCNJ

he-of.M come\PF-3PL.A to mountain.M-ACC.SG Michel.M-of and

Couesnon and arrived to Dol and Conan turned in flight.’

*hIC: TRANSIERVNT: FLVMEN: COSNOSIS: ET*

*hic transi-erunt flumen Cosnosis et*

DEM cross-PF.3PL.A river.N[.ACC.SG] Couesnon[ACC] CNJ

here cross-PF.3PL.A river.N[.ACC.SG] Couesnon[ACC] and

*VENERVNT AD DOL: ET: CONAN:- FVGA*

*ven-erunt ad Dol et Conan fug-a*

come\PF-3PL.A ACC Dol[ACC] CNJ Conan.M[.NOM] flight.F-ABL.SG

come\PF-3PL.A to Dol[ACC] and Conan.M[.NOM] flight.F-to

*VERTIT:-*

*vert-it.*

turn-PF.3SG.A

turn-PF.3SG.A

(16) While crossing the river holding their shields above their heads, some soldiers fall into sand and Harold pulls them out.

<i>hIC:</i>	<i>hAROLD:</i>	<i>DVX:</i>	<i>TRAhEBAT:</i>	<i>EOS:-</i>
<i>Hic</i>	<i>Harold</i>	<i>dux</i>	<i>trahe-ba-t</i>	<i>e-os</i>
DEM	Harold.M[.NOM]	leader.M[.NOM.SG]	pull-IPF-3SG.A	DEM.HUM-ACC.PL.M
here	Harold.M[.NOM]	leader.M[.NOM.SG]	pull-IPF-3SG.A	he-ACC.PL.M

‘Here Earl Harold was pulling them from the sand.’

<i>DÉ</i>	<i>ARÉNA</i>
<i>de</i>	<i>aren-a.</i>
ABL	sand.F-ABL.SG
of/from	sand.F-ABL.SG

(17) William’s soldiers pursue Conan and pass Rennes, the capital of Brittany.

*RÉDNES*

*Rednes.*

Rennes[NOM]

Rennes[NOM]

‘Rennes.’

(18) William’s army follows Conan to Dinan, where they fight, but Conan and the Dinans are surrounded. Conan surrenders by handing over the keys to the castle on the tip of a spear.

<i>hIC</i>	<i>MILITÉS</i>	<i>VVILLÉLMI:</i>	<i>DVCIS:</i>	<i>PVGNANT:</i>
<i>Hic</i>	<i>milit-es</i>	<i>Willelm-i</i>	<i>duc-is</i>	<i>pugn-a-nt</i>
DEM	soldier.M-NOM.PL	William.M-GEN	leader.M-GEN.SG	battle-PS-3PL.A

here soldier.M-NOM.PL William.M-of leader.M-of battle-PS-3PL.A

‘Here Duke William’s soldiers battle against the Dinans and Conan has handed over the

*CONTRA DINANTES:- ET: CVNAN: CLAVES:*  
*contra Dinant-es et Cunan clav-es*  
 ACC Dinan\_man.M-ACC.PL CNJ Conan.M[.NOM] key.F-ACC.PL  
 against Dinan\_man.M-ACC.PL and Conan.M[.NOM] key.F-ACC.PL  
 keys.’

*PORREXIT.*

*porre-x-it.*

hold\_out-PF-3SG.A

hold\_out-PF-3SG.A

(19) William honors Harold’s help in the battle by giving him arms.

*hIC: WILLELM: DEDIT: hAROLDO: ARMA*  
*Hic Willelm de~d-it Harold-o arm-a.*  
 DEM William.M[.NOM] PF~give-3SG.AHarold.M-DAT arms.N-ACC.PL  
 here William.M[.NOM] PF~give-3SG.AHarold.M-to arms.N-ACC.PL  
 ‘Here William gave arms to Harold.’

(20) The winning armies return to Bayeux.

*hIE VVILLELM VENIT: BAGIAS*  
*Hic Willelm ven-it Bagias.*  
 DEM William.M[.NOM] come\PF-3SG.A Bayeux[ACC]

here William.M[.NOM] come\PF-3SG.A Bayeux[to]

‘Here William came to Bayeux.’

(21) As William sits on the throne, Harold swears an oath to him by touching holy relics.

*VBI hAROLD: SACRAMENTVM: FECIT:- WVILLELMO*

*Ubi Harold sacrament-um fec-it Willelm-o*

REL Harold.M[.NOM] oath.N-ACC.SG make\PF-3SG.A William.M-DAT

where Harold.M[.NOM] oath.N-ACC.SG make\PF-3SG.A William.M-to

‘Where Harold made an oath to Duke William.’

*DVCI:-*

*duc-i.*

leader.M-DAT.SG

leader.M-to

(22) Harold and his army board a boat and return to England. They go to King Edward, who is sitting on the throne.

*hIC hAROLD: DVX:- REVERSVS: EST AD*

*Hic Harold dux rever-sus -est ad*

DEM Harold.M[.NOM] leader.M[.NOM.SG] turn\_back-PF.M-3SG ACC

here Harold.M[.NOM] leader.M[.NOM.SG] turn\_back-PF.M-3SG to

‘Here Earl Harold went back to the English land and came to King Edward.’

*ANGLICAM: TERRAM:- ET VENIT: AD: EDVWARDV:-*

*Anglic-am terr-am et ven-it ad Edward-u<m>*

English-ACC.SG.F land.F-ACC.SG CNJ come\PF-3SG.A ACC Edward.M-ACC  
 English-ACC.SG.F land.F-ACC.SG and come\PF-3SG.A to Edward.M-ACC

*REGEM:-*

*reg-em.*

king.M-ACC.SG

king.M-ACC.SG

(23) A funeral procession takes Edward's body to Westminster Abbey ("History of Westminster Abbey"). There is a hand in the sky above it, appearing from the heavens and pointing to the church.

<i>hic</i>	<i>PORTATVR:</i>	<i>CORPVS:</i>	<i>EADWARDI:</i>	<i>REGIS:</i>
<i>Hic</i>	<i>port-a-tur</i>	<i>corpus</i>	<i>E{a}dward-i</i>	<i>reg-is</i>
DEM	carry-PS-3SG.PASS	body.N[.NOM.SG]	Edward.M-GEN	king.M-GEN.SG
here	carry-PS-3SG.PASS	body.N[.NOM.SG]	Edward.M-of	king.M-of

'Here king Edward's body is carried to the Church of St. Peter the Apostle.'

<i>AD:</i>	<i>ECCLESIAM:</i>	<i>S̄CI</i>	<i>PETRI</i>	<i>APL̄I</i>
<i>ad</i>	<i>ecclesi-am</i>	<i>s(an)c(t)-i</i>	<i>Petr-i</i>	<i>ap(osto)l-i.</i>
ACC	church.F-ACC.SG	sacred-GEN.SG.M	Peter.M-GEN	apostle.M-GEN.SG
to	church.F-ACC.SG	sacred-of.M	Peter.M-of	apostle.M-of

(24) In the upper portion of the scene, Edward, visibly ill and weak, speaks to a handful of people gathered closely around him. In the lower portion, Edwards lies dead on a bed, while a priest stands next to his body.

*hIC* *ĒADVVDVS:* *RĒX* *IN* *LĒCTO:*  
*Hic* *E{a}dward-vs* *rex* *in* *lect-o*  
 DEM Edward.M-NOM king.M[.NOM.SG] ABL funeral\_bed.M-ABL.SG  
 here Edward.M-NOM king.M[.NOM.SG] in funeral\_bed.M-ABL.SG  
 ‘Here King Edward addresses confidants in his funeral bed and here he has died.’

*ALLOQVĪ:* *FIDELES:-* *ET* *hIC:* *DĒFVNCTVS* *ĒST*  
*alloqv-i-t(ur)* *fidel-es* *et* *hic* *defvnc-tus -est.*  
 address-PS-3SG confidant.M-ACC.PL CNJ DEM depart-PF.M-3SG  
 address-PS-3SG confidant.M-ACC.PL and here depart-PF.M-3SG

(25) Two members of the court (*witan?*) present to Harold the royal crown and an axe.

*hIC* *DEDERVNT:* *HAROLDO:* *CORONĀ:* *RĒGIS*  
*Hic* *de~d-erunt* *Harold-o* *coron-a(m)* *reg-is.*  
 DEM PF~give-3PL.A Harold.M-DAT crown.F-ACC.SG king.M-GEN.SG  
 here PF~give-3PL.A Harold.M-to crown.F-ACC king.M-of  
 ‘Here they gave Harold the royal crown.’

(26) Harold sits on the throne as the newly crowned English King holding the royal insignia.

People to his left and his right point to him and cheer.

*hIC* *RĒSIDET:* *hAROLD* *RĒX:*  
*Hic* *resid-e-t* *Harold* *rex*  
 DEM sit\_on-PS-3SG.A Harold.M[.NOM] king.M[.NOM.SG]  
 here sit\_on-PS-3SG.A Harold.M[.NOM] king.M[.NOM.SG]  
 ‘Here sits Harold, King of the English.’

*ANGLORVM:*

*Angl-orum.*

Englishman.M-GEN.PL

Englishman.M-of

(27) Standing next to Harold on the throne is the archbishop Stigand, who presumably crowned him, now gesturing towards the people around the king.

*STIGANT*                      *ARCHIEP̄S*

*Stigant*                      *archiep(iscop-u)s.*

Stigand.M[.NOM]      archbishop.M-NOM.SG

Stigand.M[.NOM]      archbishop.M-NOM.SG

‘Archbishop Stigand.’

(28) A group of people point in awe to Haley’s comet.

*ISTI*                      *MIRANT*                      *STELLĀ*

*Ist-i*                      *mir-a-nt*                      *stell-a(m).*

DEM.HUM-NOM.PL.M      wonder-PS-3PL.A      star.F-ACC.SG

this-NOM.PL.M              wonder-PS-3PL.A      star.F-ACC.SG

‘These people marvel at the star.’

(29) A figure speaks to Harold, who is sitting on the throne, presumably informing him about the comet. Below them on the margins is a fleet of empty boats.

*hAROLD*

*Harold.*

Harold.M[.NOM]



Harold.M[.NOM]

‘Harold.’

(30) A boat from England arrives to Normandy, probably bringing news of Harold’s coronation.

<i>hIC:</i>	<i>NAVIS:</i>	<i>ANGLICA:</i>	<i>VENIT.</i>	<i>IN</i>
<i>Hic</i>	<i>nav-is</i>	<i>Anglic-a</i>	<i>ven-it</i>	<i>in</i>
DEM	boat.F-NOM.SG	English-NOM.F	come\PF-3SG.A	ACC
here	boat.F-NOM.SG	English-NOM.F	come\PF-3SG.A	in

‘Here the English boat arrived to Duke William’s land.’

<i>TERRAM</i>	<i>WILLÆLMI:</i>	<i>DVCIS</i>
<i>terr-am</i>	<i>Willelm-i</i>	<i>duc-is.</i>
land.F-ACC.SG	William.M-GEN	leader.M-GEN.SG
land.F-ACC.SG	William.M-of	leader.M-of

(31) William sits on his throne, giving out an order to build boats. Another figure is sitting next to him.

<i>HIC:</i>	<i>WILLÆLM</i>	<i>DVX:</i>	<i>IVSSIT</i>	<i>NAVES:</i>
<i>Hic</i>	<i>Willelm</i>	<i>dux</i>	<i>iu-ss-it</i>	<i>nav-es</i>
DEM	William.M[.NOM]	leader.M[.NOM.SG]	order-PF-3SG.A	boat.F-ACC.PL
here	William.M[.NOM]	leader.M[.NOM.SG]	order-PF-3SG.A	boat.F-ACC.PL

‘Here Duke William ordered boats to be built.’

*EDIFICARE:*

*edific-a-re.*

build-PS-INF.A

build-PS-INF.A

(32) Men cut down trees and build boats, which they then drag to the sea.

*hIC TRAhUNT̄: NAVES: AD MARĒ:-*

*Hic trah-u-nt(ur) nav-es ad mar-e.*

DEM pull-PS-3PL.PASS boat.F-NOM.PL ACC sea.N-ACC.SG

here pull-PS-3PL.PASS boat.F-NOM.PL to sea.N-ACC.SG

‘Here the boats are dragged to the sea.’

(33) More men carry weapons, and then drag a wagon loaded with weapons and wine.

*ISTI PORTANT: ARMAS: AD NAVES: ET hIC*

*Ist-i port-a-nt arm-a{s} ad nav-es et hic*

DEM.HUM-NOM.PL.M carry-PS-3PL.Aarms.N-ACC.PL ACC boat.F-ACC.PL CNJ DEM

this-NOM.PL.M carry-PS-3PL.Aarms.N-ACC.PL to boat.F-ACC.PL and here

‘These people carry arms to the boats and here they pull a wagon with wine and arms.’

*TRAhUNT: CARRVM CVM VINO: ET ARMIS:-*

*trah-u-nt carr-um cum vin-o et arm-is.*

pull-PS-3PL.A wagon.M-ACC.SG ABL wine.N-ABL.SG CNJ arms.N-ABL.PL

pull-PS-3PL.A wagon.M-ACC.SG with wine.N-ABL.SG and arms.N-ABL.PL

(34) William boards the boats with his army. Among the many boats, his ship is identified by a large cross on the mast. They sail the sea.

+*hIC*: *VVILLELM*: *DVX* *IN* *MAGNO*:  
*Hic* *Willelm* *dux* *in* *magn-o*  
 DEM William.M[.NOM] leader.M[.NOM.SG] ABL large-ABL.SG.N  
 here William.M[.NOM] leader.M[.NOM.SG] in large-ABL.SG.N

‘Here Duke William crossed the sea in a large ship and arrived to Pevensey.’

*NAVIGIO*: *MARĒ* *TRANSIVIT* *ET* *VENIT* *AD*  
*navigi-o* *mar-e* *transi-v-it* *et* *ven-it* *ad*  
 ship.N-ABL.SG sea.N-ACC.SG cross-PF-3SG.A CNJ come\PF-3SG.A ACC  
 ship.N-ABL.SG sea.N-ACC.SG cross-PF-3SG.A and come\PF-3SG.A to

*PEVENESÆ*:-

*Pevenesae*.

Pevensey[ACC]

Pevensey[ACC]

(35) Horses are shown disembarking, while the boats remain empty. The soldiers, now dressed in armor, gallop on their horses. Men without armor slay livestock.

*hIC* *EXEVNT*: *CABALLI* *DE* *NAVIBUS*:- *ET*  
*Hic* *exe-u-nt* *caball-i* *de* *nav-ibus* *et*  
 DEM leave-PS-3PL.A pack\_horse.M-NOM.PL ABL boat.F-ABL.PL CNJ  
 here leave-PS-3PL.A pack\_horse.M-NOM.PL of/from boat.F-ABL.PL and

‘Here the horses left the boats and here the soldiers hurried to Hastings to seize food.’

*hIC*: *MILITES*: *FESTINAVERVNT*: *hESTINGA*: *VT*

<i>hic</i>	<i>milit-es</i>	<i>festina-v-erunt</i>	<i>Hestinga</i>	<i>ut</i>
DEM	soldier.M-NOM.PL	hurry-PF-3PL.A	Hastings[ACC]	CONSEC
here	soldier.M-NOM.PL	hurry-PF-3PL.A	Hastings[to]	to

<i>CIBVM.</i>	<i>RAPERENTVR:</i>
<i>cib-um</i>	<i>rape-re-ntur.</i>
food.M-ACC.SG	seize-SUBJ.IPF-3PL.PASS
food.M-ACC.SG	seize-SUBJ-IPF.3PL.PASS

(36) Among men on foot, a figure is shown sitting on a horse, clad in full armor. Around them are animals and houses. The mounted figure, named Wadard, may have been another one of Odo's tenants (Prentout 26–30).

<i>HIC:</i>	<i>EST:</i>	<i>VVADARD:</i>
<i>Hic</i>	<i>est</i>	<i>Wadard.</i>
DEM	be.PS.3SG	Wadard.M[.NOM]
here	be.PS.3SG	Wadard.M[.NOM]

‘Here is Wadard.’

(37) Servants cook food in a large cauldron and serve up the meat on skewers.

<i>hIC:</i>	<i>COQVITVR:</i>	<i>CARO</i>	<i>ET</i>	<i>hIC:</i>	<i>MINISTRAVERVN<sup>T</sup></i>
<i>Hic</i>	<i>coqv-i-tur</i>	<i>caro</i>	<i>et</i>	<i>hic</i>	<i>ministra-v-erunt</i>
DEM	cook-PS-3SG.PASS	flesh.F[.NOM.SG]	CNJ	DEM	serve-PF-3PL.A
here	cook-PS-3SG.PASS	flesh.F[.NOM.SG]	and	here	serve-PF-3PL.A

‘Here meat is cooked and here servants serve it up.’

*MINISTRI**ministr-i.*

servant.M-NOM.PL

servant.M-NOM.PL

(38) Men are eating and drinking at the tables, while a servant brings more wine. Bishop Odo blesses the feast.

*hIC FECERVNT: PRANDIUM: ET hIC EPISCOPVS:*

*Hic fec-erunt prandi-um et hic episcop-us*

DEM make\PF-3PL.A lunch.N-ACC.SG CNJ DEM bishop.M-NOM.SG

here make\PF-3PL.A lunch.N-ACC.SG and here bishop.M-NOM.SG

‘Here they dined and here the bishop blesses the food and drinks.’

*CIBV̄: ET: POTV̄: BENEDICIT.*

*cib-u(m) et pot-u(m) benedic-i-t.*

food.M-ACC.SG CNJ drink.M-ACC.SG bless-PS-3SG.A

food.M-ACC.SG and drink.M-ACC.SG bless-PS-3SG.A

(39) William sits with his half-brothers, Bishop Odo and Robert, Count of Mortain, at either of his sides.

*ODO: EP̄S: WILLELM: ROTBERT:-*

*Odo ep(iscop-u)s; Willelm; Robert.*

Odo.M[.NOM] bishop.M-NOM.SG William.M[.NOM] Robert.M[.NOM]

Odo.M[.NOM] bishop.M-NOM.SG William.M[.NOM] Robert.M[.NOM]

‘Bishop Odo; William; Robert.’

(40) A lord orders the men to build defenses. They dig while another lord oversees their work.

<i>ISTE</i> :	<i>IVSSIT</i> :	<i>VT</i>	<i>FODERETVR</i> :
<i>Ist-e</i>	<i>iu-ss-it</i>	<i>ut</i>	<i>fode-re-tur</i>
DEM.HUM-NOM.SG.M	order-PF-3SG.A	CONSEC	dig-SUBJ.IPF-3SG.PASS
this-NOM.SG.M	order-PF-3SG.A	that	dig-SUBJ.IPF-3SG.PASS

‘He ordered that a fort be dug up at the Hastings camp.’

<i>CASTELLVM</i> :	<i>AT</i> :	<i>HESTENGA</i>	<i>CEASTRA</i>
<i>castell-vm</i>	<i>at</i>	<i>Hestenga</i>	<i>c{e}astr-a.</i>
fort.N-ACC.SG	ACC	Hastings[ACC]	camp.N-ACC.PL
fort.N-ACC.SG	at	Hastings[ACC]	camp.N-ACC.PL

(41) A messenger brings news of Harold’s whereabouts to William.

<i>HIC</i> :	<i>NVNTIATVM EST</i> :	<i>WILLELMO</i>	<i>DE</i>	<i>HAROLD</i> :
<i>Hic</i>	<i>nuntia-tum –est</i>	<i>Willelm-o</i>	<i>de</i>	<i>Harold&lt;-o&gt;.</i>
DEM	report-PF.PASS.N-3SG	William.M-DAT	ABL	Harold.M-ABL
here	report-PF.PASS.N-3SG	William.M-to	of/from	Harold.M-ABL

‘Here William has been informed about Harold.’

(42) A woman and child flee as two men burn a house.

<i>hIC</i>	<i>DOMVS</i> :	<i>INCENDITVR</i> :
<i>Hic</i>	<i>dom-us</i>	<i>incend-i-tur.</i>
DEM	home.F-NOM.SG	burn-PS-3SG.PASS
here	home.F-NOM.SG	burn-PS-3SG.PASS

‘Here a home is burning.’

(43) William is fully armored, holding a staff with a flag. His soldiers leave Hastings and ride towards Harold to do battle. They are pictured as a large army in gallop.

<i>hIC:</i>	<i>MILITES:</i>	<i>EXIERVNT:</i>	<i>DE</i>	<i>hESTENGA:</i>	<i>ET:</i>
<i>Hic</i>	<i>milit-es</i>	<i>exi-erunt</i>	<i>de</i>	<i>Hestenga</i>	<i>et</i>
DEM	soldier.M-NOM.PL	leave-PF.3PL.AABL		Hastings[ABL]CNJ	
here	soldier.M-NOM.PL	leave-PF.3PL.Aof/from		Hastings[ABL]and	

‘Here soldiers left Hastings and came to the battle against King Harold.’

<i>VENERVNT</i>	<i>AD</i>	<i>PRELIVM:</i>	<i>CONTRA:</i>	<i>hAROLDUM·</i>
<i>ven-erunt</i>	<i>ad</i>	<i>preli-um</i>	<i>contra</i>	<i>Harold-um</i>
come\PF-3PL.A	ACC	battle.N-ACC.SG	ACC	Harold.M-ACC
come\PF-3PL.A	to	battle.N-ACC.SG	against	Harold.M-ACC

*REGĒ:*

*reg-e<m>.*

king.M-ACC.SG

king.M-ACC.SG

(44) William asks a mounted man in armor if he has seen Harold’s army, suggesting the battle’s imminent beginning. The man in armor is Vital, possibly another one of Odo’s tenants (Prentout 26–30).

<i>HIC:</i>	<i>VVILLĒLM:</i>	<i>DVX</i>	<i>INTERROGAT:</i>	<i>VITAL:</i>	<i>SI</i>
<i>Hic</i>	<i>Willelm</i>	<i>dux</i>	<i>interrog-a-t</i>	<i>Vital</i>	<i>si</i>
DEM	William.M[.NOM]	leader.M[.NOM.SG]	interrogate-PS-3SG.A	Vital.M[.ACC]	INT
here	William.M[.NOM]	leader.M[.NOM.SG]	interrogate-PS-3SG.A	Vital.M[.ACC]	if

‘Here Duke William questions Vital if he has seen Harold’s army.’

<i>VIDISSET</i>	<i>EXERCITV̄</i>	<i>HAROLDI</i>
<i>vid-isse-t</i>	<i>exercit-u(m)</i>	<i>Harold-i.</i>
see\PLUP-SUBJ-3SG.A	army.M-ACC.SG	Harold.M-GEN
see\PLUP-SUBJ-3SG.A	army.M-ACC.SG	Harold.M-of

(45) One of Harold’s soldiers sees the opposing army and informs Harold by pointing at it.

<i>ISTE</i>	<i>NVNTIAT:</i>	<i>HAROLDUM REGĒ</i>	<i>DE</i>
<i>Ist-e</i>	<i>nunti-a-t</i>	<i>Harold-um reg-e(m)</i>	<i>de</i>
DEM.HUM-NOM.SG.M	report-PS-3SG.A	Harold.M-ACCking.M-ACC.SG	ABL
this-NOM.SG.M	report-PS-3SG.A	Harold.M-ACCking.M-ACC.SG	of/from

‘This man informs King Harold about Duke William’s army.’

<i>EXERCITV</i>	<i>VVIL[LMI</i>	<i>DVCIS</i>
<i>exercit-u</i>	<i>Wilelm-i</i>	<i>duc-is.</i>
army.M-ABL.SG	William.M-GEN	leader.M-GEN.SG
army.M-ABL.SG	William.M-of	leader.M-of

(46) William, carrying a mace, exhorts his troops before the upcoming battle and they charge into it. Mounted soldiers throw spears, immediately following foot archers. The English, all on foot, are surrounded by Norman mounted troops.

<i>HIC WILLELM:</i>	<i>DVX</i>	<i>ALLOQVITVR:</i>
<i>Hic Willelm</i>	<i>dux</i>	<i>alloqv-i-tur</i>
DEM William.M[.NOM]	leader.M[.NOM.SG]	address-PS-3SG



here William.M[.NOM] leader.M[.NOM.SG] address-PS-3SG

‘Here Duke William rouses his soldiers so they would prepare themselves vigorously and

<i>SVIS:</i>	<i>MILITIBVS:</i>	<i>VT·</i>	<i>PREPARAREN<sup>T</sup></i>
<i>su-is</i>	<i>milit-ibus</i>	<i>ut</i>	<i>prepara-re-nt</i>
POSS.REFL-DAT.PL.M	soldier.M-DAT.PL	CONSEC	prepare-SUBJ.IPF-3PL.A
his-DAT.PL.M	soldier.M-DAT.PL	that	prepare-SUBJ.IPF-3PL.A

sensibly for the battle against the English army.’

<i>SE:</i>	<i>VIRILITER</i>	<i>ET</i>	<i>SAPIENTER:</i>	<i>AD</i>	<i>PRELIVM:</i>
<i>se</i>	<i>virili-ter</i>	<i>et</i>	<i>sapien-ter</i>	<i>ad</i>	<i>preli-um</i>
REFL.ACC	vigorous-ADVR	CNJ	sensible-ADVR	ACC	battle.N-ACC.SG
oneself	vigorous-ADVR	and	sensible-ADVR	for	battle.N-ACC.SG

<i>CONTRA:</i>	<i>ANGLORVM</i>	<i>EXERCITV:</i>
<i>contra</i>	<i>Angl-orum</i>	<i>exercit-u&lt;m&gt;.</i>
ACC	Englishman.M-GEN.PL	army.M-ACC.SG
against	Englishman.M-of	army.M-ACC.SG

(47) Troops charge at all sides, both on horseback and on foot, with spears, arrows, clubs and axes, and both of Harold’s brothers who fought alongside him die. From this point onward, the lower margins are filled with dead men and horses.

<i>hIC</i>	<i>CECIDERVNT</i>	<i>LÆVVINE</i>	<i>ET:</i>	<i>GYRÐ:</i>
<i>Hic</i>	<i>ce~cid-erunt</i>	<i>Lewine</i>	<i>et</i>	<i>Gyrð</i>
DEM	PF~fall-3PL.A	Leofwine.M[.NOM]	CNJ	Gyrth.M[.NOM]

here PF~fall-3PL.A Leofwine.M[.NOM] and Gyrth.M[.NOM]

‘Here Leofwine and Gyrth, King Harold’s brothers, died.’

*FRATRES: HAROLDI REGIS:*

*fratr-es Harold-i reg-is.*

brother.M-NOM.PL Harold.M-GEN king.M-GEN.SG

brother.M-NOM.PL Harold.M-of king.M-of

(48) The battle rages and horses are seen falling over each other and human bodies. Some foot soldiers have gained upper ground and attack from a hill.

*hic CECIDERVN<sup>T</sup> SIMUL: ANGLI ET*

*Hic ce~cid-erunt simul Angl-i et*

DEM PF~fall-3PL.A SIM Englishman.M-NOM.PL CNJ

here PF~fall-3PL.A both Englishman.M-NOM.PL and

‘Here both the English and the Franks died in battle.’

*FRANCI: IN PRELIO:*

*Franc-i in preli-o.*

Frank.M-NOM.PL ABL battle.N-ABL.SG

Frank.M-NOM.PL in battle.N-ABL.SG

(49) Odo appears in the midst of the battle in armor, carrying a club. He exhorts the men.

*HIC: ODO EP̄S: BACVLV̄: TENENS:*

*Hic Odo ep(iscop-u)s bacul-u(m) ten-e-ns*

DEM Odo.M[.NOM] bishop.M-NOM.SG staff.N-ACC.SG hold-PS-PART.A.NOM.SG.M

here Odo.M[.NOM] bishop.M-NOM.SG staff.N-ACC.SG hold-PS-PART.A.NOM.SG.M

‘Here bishop Odo, holding a staff, emboldens the young men.’

*CONFOR:-TAT PVEROS*

*confort-a-t puer-os.*

strengthen-PS-3.SG.A young\_man.M-ACC.PL

strengthen-PS-3.SG.A young\_man.M-ACC.PL

(50) William raises his helmet to dissolve the rumors of his death (Cowdrey 96). From this point on, the lower margins show a row of foot archers.

*hIC EST:- VVILLEĒ DVX*

*Hic est Wilel(m) dux.*

DEM be.PS.3SG William.M[.NOM] leader.M[.NOM.SG]

here be.PS.3SG William.M[.NOM] leader.M[.NOM.SG]

‘Here is Duke William.’

(51) Count Eustace of Boulogne is shown carrying a banner.

*E TIVS*

*E[usta]ti-us.*

Eustace.M-NOM

Eustace.M-NOM

‘Eustace.’

(52) The battle continues and the foot soldiers are riddled with arrows. The lower margins start showing dead bodies and dismembered body parts.

*hIC: FRANCI PVGNAN<sup>T</sup> ET CECIDERVNT*

*Hic Franc-i pugn-a-nt et ce~cid-erunt*

DEM Frank.M-NOM.PL battle-PS-3PL.A CNJ PF~fall-3PL.A

here Frank.M-NOM.PL battle-PS-3PL.A and PF~fall-3PL.A

‘Here the Franks battle and those who were with Harold died.’

*QVI ERANT: CVM hAROLDO:-*

*qu-i erant cum Harold-o.*

REL.HUM-NOM.PL.M be.IPF.3PL ABL Harold.M-ABL

who-NOM.PL.M be.IPF.3PL with Harold.M-ABL

(53) While surrounded by mounted troops, several soldiers are shown dead or dying, one of them being Harold. The lower margins show violent scenes of one-on-one battles and dismembered body parts. The mounted troops continue charging the foot soldiers as they flee the battle.

*HIC hAROLD:- REX:- INTERFECTVS: EST ET*

*Hic Harold rex interfec-tus -est et*

DEM Harold.M[.NOM] king.M[.NOM.SG] kill\PF-PASS.M-3SG CNJ

here Harold.M[.NOM] king.M[.NOM.SG] kill\PF-PASS.M-3SG and

‘Here King Harold was killed and the English turned in flight.’

*FVGA: VERTERVN<sup>T</sup> ANGLI*

*fug-a vert-erunt Angl-i.*

flight.F-ABL.SG turn-PF.3PL.A Englishman.M-NOM.PL

flight.F-to turn-PF.3PL.A Englishman.M-NOM.PL

#### 4. Linguistic Data Analysis

In order to understand the origin of the tapestry's text, it is necessary to deconstruct it. Although identifying the function of separate morphemes using interlinear glossing is a very detailed process on its own, the information laid out in the previous chapter requires interpretation on three levels in order to understand how the text was constructed. These levels are morphological, semantic and syntactic, respectively, which all rely on the glosses for their examination. However, before commencing with the analysis, it is essential to be aware of the linguistic circumstances of the time and regions involved.

Namely, The French language evolved from vulgate Latin, meaning that Latin used to be a spoken language in the Franco-Norman region that the Romans used to call Gaul. At the same time, there used to be public schools where standardized Latin was taught, but as the old school system dissolved, spoken Latin started to heavily influence the written language, and its structure greatly changed so that it transformed into Old French and Old Provençal as early as 700 A.D. (Glavičić).

On the other hand, the linguistic situation on the British Isles was entirely different from that of the old Roman province Gaul. Namely, Latin was introduced by Christian missionaries, thus it was never a spoken language in this region, leaving only learned people – predominantly clerics – to handle it with the help of handbooks (Glavičić). Reflected in this situation is the textbook character of the British Latin use, as well as its many non-Latin linguistic streaks and unusual neologisms, while the spelling of Latin words is often distorted (Glavičić). However, in the 7<sup>th</sup> century many monastery schools were opened, where clerical writers gained excellent knowledge of Latin (Glavičić).

Whichever region the author of the tapestry was native to, the text would have to have been influenced by their mother tongue, thereby modifying the Latin language according to

their region's linguistic practices. After all, Medieval Latin was nobody's first language, but rather the language of religion and public offices (Gameson 191, Glavičić).

#### 4.1. Verb Morphology

The scenes in the tapestry are predominantly explained by the perfect and present tense (see tables 1 and 2), both of which are only used factually, which is why they are all in the indicative mood. In other words, the purpose of the tapestry's text is to caption the images on the tapestry, rather than to allow the author artistic expression of the depicted events.

**Table 1**

#### Verb Forms of Regular Verbs in the Tapestry

Tense \ Mood Voice	INDICATIVE		SUBJUNCTIVE	
	ACTIVE	PASSIVE	ACTIVE	PASSIVE
<b>PRESENT</b>	13	4	–	–
<b>IMPERFECT</b>	1	–	1	2*
<b>PERFECT</b>	33	2	–	–
<b>PLUPERFECT</b>	–	–	1	–

\* *Raperentur* is an incorrect use of passive form, since sentence (35) is clearly meant to be in the active voice. It is unclear why an active form of *rapere* was not used.

Clearly, the author used either (historical) present or perfect tense in the indicative to mark a completed past action. However, there are only two cases of the imperfect indicative, which denotes a past action in progress. One of these is *erant* from (52), which might point to the author's discomfort at using tenses of the verb 'to be' with perfective meaning. The other example is *trahebat* from sentence (16), which is, judging by its positioning beneath the previous sentence, presumably happening in between the events of the preceding sentence, or during William's and his army's ride to Dol. Notably, in the few cases where the imperfect or

pluperfect are in the subjunctive mood, they denote an action which is simultaneous with (imperfect) or has happened before the action of the main clause (pluperfect).

**Table 2**

**Verb Forms of Irregular Verbs in the Tapestry (All in Indicative Mood)**

	<i>ESSE*</i>	DEPONENT VERBS**
<b>PRESENT</b>	2	2
<b>IMPERFECT</b>	1	–
<b>PERFECT</b>	–	2

\* *Esse* has only active forms and active meaning, therefore marking any of its forms as A is redundant.  
 \*\* Verbs with passive forms only, but active or medial/reflexive meaning. Marking their forms as PASS is misleading, while marking them as A is incorrect.

Moreover, deponent verbs are solely used in the indicative mood. Deponent verbs do not exhibit active forms, but only passive forms with active or reflexive meaning. Their presence is scarce in this text, almost as if the author tried to avoid using them, which is unsurprising given the frequency of grammatical and orthographic oddities in the text.

Interestingly, deponent verbs first make an appearance when Harold sets sail back to England, while the subjunctive mood starts to appear in the last third of the tapestry, as William lands in England, which suggests that the text was prepared for embroidering after each scene or set of scenes were finished. These subtle changes of lexis and grammar also point to the episodic quality of the tapestry, resembling an epic or a modern cinematographic piece of art.

#### *4.2. Morphology of Declinable Words*

The majority of information in the tapestry is conveyed through nouns, specifically those declined in the nominative and accusative case, respectively (see table 3). In other words, most of these nouns are subjects or direct objects of short sentences, while there are

some occurrences of verbless sentences, like (14), and singular nouns simply referencing a person, place or thing, like *Harold* in (5) or *Rednes* in (17).

**Table 3**

**Declinable Forms in the Tapestry**

	NOUNS	ADJECTIVES	PRONOUNS	PARTICIPLES
NOMINATIVE	78	2*	6**	1
GENITIVE	24	1	1	–
DATIVE	6	–	1	–
ACCUSATIVE	55	1	5	–
ABLATIVE	16	2	–	–

\* *Unus* in sentence (14) is actually a pronominal adjective.  
 \*\* *Qui* in sentence (52) also functions as a subordinating conjunction.

In many instances, the accusative also communicates motion towards a place or a person. The dative, however, simply indicates indirect objects, which are very few in this text. Perhaps the reason for their scarcity was to avoid adding to the complexity of the sentences in order for the text to be more easily legible, i.e. for clarity of information.

As for the genitive case, it is solely used to indicate possession: *nuntii Willelmi ducis* – “Duke William’s messengers” (‘messengers of Duke William’). Although the genitive occurs frequently in the text, its use is narrowed down to one of its possible syntactic and semantic relations, that which signifies the belonging of people and things. Notably, it always follows a noun or noun phrase in nominative, accusative or ablative case, with one exception in (46), where it precedes the noun in the accusative: *contra Anglorum exercitu*.

Moreover, many of the subjects and direct objects are formed as compounds consisting of a personal name and title, like *Edward rex* (“King Edward”) or *ad Wilgelmum ducem* (“to Duke William”). The same is true for compound nouns in the genitive (*terra*



*Widonis comitis* – “the land of Count Guy”) and once in the dative case (*Willelmo duci* – “to Duke William”), but there are none in the ablative. Moreover, the latter case shows the highest frequency of alternating uses, especially considering its relatively small number of occurrences in the text. Namely, there are instances of locative (*in lecto* – “in the funeral bed”), associative (*cum Haroldo* – “with Harold”), and instrumental ablative denoting either means or manner (*velis vento plenis* – lit. ‘with sails full of wind’), while even the true ablative is used to convey separation (*de arena* – “from the sand”).

The vocative case is noticeably absent from the text. This is because the text’s purpose is to describe the scenes in the tapestry and only imply speech, which would then be acted out by those presenting the tapestry to observers (Gameson 191).

Precisely because of the tapestry’s tendency towards factuality, proper nouns, including toponyms, are abundant in its text. However, none of the toponyms are Latinized (Musset 35), and they show no overt Latin inflexion for any case, although their intended case and function can be deduced through context and their position within the sentence.

Similarly, personal names do not make use of the Latin inflexion for nominative in almost every instance, save for *Eadward-us* in (24) and *Eustati-us* in (51). In contrast, the corresponding Latin inflexions are used for personal names in every other case represented in the tapestry. There are, of course, two exceptions here as well: the accusative case of *Vital* in (44) lacks an inflexion, much like the ablative of *de Harold* in (41). Unlike the former, where it is possible, because the name ends in an irregular consonant, that the author was simply not certain which declension the noun belonged to, the latter is correctly inflected in the same case in (52): *cum Harold-o*. This error in (41) may be a consequence of an effort to avoid repetition of that inflexion in the same sentence (“Hic nuntiatum est Willelm-o de Harold.”) due to the author’s confusion of Latin cases. Much like toponyms, almost none of the personal names are Latinized, possibly to leave them “easily identifiable” (Musset 35).

There are other irregularities in noun cases, some of which are exhibited as dropped letters at the ends of words, marked by < > in the transliteration, while others appear as hypercorrection – added letters either within the words or at their ends, marked by { } in the transliteration. Some examples of the former are words in accusative without the final “m” (or the proper abbreviation symbol), whose case can be extrapolated through context and position. In contrast, the latter instances are unpredictable, like the sudden addition of the final “s” to the plural accusative of *arma* in (33) although this word had previously been used in the same case correctly, or the insertion of unnecessary vowels where they clearly do not belong, like *E{a}dwardus* in (24) or *c{e}astra* (‘camp’) in (40). Because hypercorrection of this type is an attribute of Anglo-Saxon Medieval Latin (Glavičić), it is possible that these specific words or sentences were embroidered by Anglo-Saxon hands.

Besides additions and omissions, several proper nouns manifest considerable variation in spelling. Among them, the name William varies the most, which is unsurprising considering the high frequency of its use – nineteen instances – while other names occur only up to five times. Thus, the variants of William in this text are *Willelm* (fourteen times), *Wilgelm* (three times), *Willem* (once) and *Wilelm* (once). The last two are undoubtedly misspelled, while the three *Wilgelms* appear in three consecutive sentences, all in the very beginning of the tapestry, perhaps indicating that a different person had a hand in embroidering this part of the text. On the other hand, all these spelling variants are Anglicized versions of the name (Musset 35). Other proper nouns with varying spelling are: Edward, twice with the above mentioned inserted *-a-*, twice without it; Conan as *Conan* and *Cunan*; and Hastings as *Hestinga* and *Hestenga*. Notably, *Wido* is the only proper noun appearing more than once without alternate spelling. Since Medieval Latin spelling was subject to change according to the region of its use and the regions’ phonetics (Glavičić), it is probable

that the varying spelling of names is a consequence of the English and Normans alternating in completing this endeavor.

Unlike nouns, adjectives and pronouns appear very rarely, while there is only one participle, whose function is descriptive, unlike most adjectives in the text. Being a deverbal word form, the participle *tenens* from (49) may also form a clause of its own, which would read: “Odo episcopus baculum *tenet et* confortat pueros.” Apart from the participle, there are only two other instances in which an adjective or participle are used in a descriptive manner (discussed in subchapter 4.4.) rather than for simple and precise factual information. The latter use is evident in the two appearances of the adjective meaning ‘English’ as *Anglicam terram* (22) and *navis Anglica* (30), where it states that the land and boat are English, so as not to be confused with Normandy. Appearing as part of a title is the adjective *sancti* (23), used to refer to the Church of St. Peter the Apostle, also only informative. Apart from true adjectives, there is also the pronominal adjective *unus* (14), which simply states that there is a cleric in the scene, but because his identity is evidently of no importance, he is not named; instead, *unus* only establishes the cleric’s presence. Notably, all adjectives and pronouns match the correct gender of the nouns to which they are assigned.

Much like adjectives, pronouns are used to refer to specific people depicted in the tapestry. Their scarcity in the text would lead to the conclusion that exact identification of characters was a priority for this work; therefore, a higher frequency of pronouns might have led to confusion as to who they would have referred to. It is notable that reflexive, possessive reflexive and relative pronouns are only used instead of a noun when it is clear from the preceding or succeeding parts of the sentence to which character(s) they refer. This is also true for three out of four instances of the demonstrative pronoun *is* (‘he’). Namely, the exception is in sentence (16): “Hic Harold dux trahebat *eos* de arena.” where we are faced with a textual lack of information regarding the characters. However, *eos* could refer to

William and his army (*exercitus eius*) from the previous sentence, which is in fact spread above the text of sentence (16). Furthermore, the scene in (16) is happening in the middle of the events of sentence/scene (15), so in this instance, the scene, rather than the text, points to the referent of *eos*.

Conversely, the four instances of the demonstrative pronoun *iste* ('this man') are used at once as subject of a sentence and as its "introduction". In other words, instead of referring to a character mentioned in a previous sentence, they point to one or more people depicted in the scene, which the pronoun introduces, and serve as a connector between the scene and the text.

#### 4.3. Invariable Words

As mentioned above, the vast majority of sentences in the tapestry are "introduced" by a single word, which connects the visual representations of events to the text above it, thus establishing a relation between them. These are predominantly pronominal adverbs *ubi* ('where') and *hic* ('here') with the exception of the four instances of *iste* covered in the previous subchapter. Considering the low frequency of occurrence of *ubi* in relation to *hic* (36:5 in favor of *hic*), a hypothesis has been put forth which asserts that *ubi* is only used when relating to a setting already established in the preceding sentence/scene, while "*Hic* identifies distinct events, irrespective of their setting" (Gameson 190). Even the sole instance of the pronominal adverb *ibi* ('there') in (6) seems to corroborate this perspective – Harold was led to Beaurain and *there* (i.e. in Beaurain) he was detained. Sentences (7), (8), (14) and (21) all begin with an *ubi*<sup>2</sup> which is easily related to a place mentioned in the previous sentence, except for (2), which follows only the words "Edward rex" – "King Edward", presumably implying an event taking place at the King's palace. However, the event described by (2),

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<sup>2</sup> *Ubi* is noticeably absent from the second half of the text, possibly indicating a faster pace of action through the exclusive use of *hic* to introduce new a setting in each scene.

Harold riding to Bosham with his army, would be taking place in a completely different setting. Unless the author meant to imply that they rode out of the palace, this could be an oversight in text planning.

Turning over to conjunctions, there is a noticeable simplicity of expression due to very few alternations. Namely, the only coordinating conjunctions present in the text are *et* ('and') and *at* ('but'), the former widespread throughout the work, while there is only one instance of the latter in (40). However, since *at* carries an oppositional meaning, not fitting the logic of the sentence which requires a connecting meaning, and considering the almost exclusive use of *et*, this *at* must be a scribal/embroidering error. Thus, it is possible that another *et* was originally planned here, which would change the meaning of sentence (40) into: "He ordered that defenses be dug up *and* a Hastings camp." Other than that, it is peculiar how no other coordinating conjunction was used. Although the hyper usage of *et* renders the text simple, it also attests to its lack of stylistic finesse.

Additionally, there are two subordinating conjunctions used in four instances, three times *ut* ('so that') and once *si* ('if, whether'), in order to introduce dependent clauses. Their use is somewhat problematic, but more attention will be given to this issue in subchapter 4.5.

Another category of invariable words present in the text are prepositions. Those prepositions referring to words in the accusative case are *ad* ('to') and *contra* ('against'), the ablative case *cum* ('with') and *de* ('from, about'), while *in* ('in, to') introduces both of these cases. Unfortunately, sometimes the cases need to be extracted from context, i.e. the adjoining preposition and syntactic logic, due to the errors in nominal inflexion described in the previous subchapter. Notably, in all but one instance the prepositions immediately precede the noun or noun phrase they refer to. Namely, the exception appears in (46) as *contra Anglorum exercitu*, where the previously mentioned genitive is placed before the accusative, thus allowing no elegant insertion of *contra* in the accusative's immediate vicinity. The exception

notwithstanding, the prepositions are used with minimum variation in function, pointing to consistency of expression. For this reason and their anteposition, it is likely that the above mentioned *at* may have been intended to be *ad*, as it immediately precedes *Hestenga*. Whichever solution is correct, this *at* is indeed an obvious error.

Before moving on to the next level of analysis, there is a lone *simul* that requires mention. Bearing the meanings ‘together, simultaneous(ly)’ or ‘both’, this adverb’s function is to emphasize that not just English, but also Norman soldiers died in the final battle. This is markedly the only adverb in the text which bears a descriptive meaning, unlike *ubi*, *hic* and even *ibi*, pointing to a carefully planned word choice, which will be discussed in the next subchapter.

#### 4.4. Semantics and Word Choice

On the subject of lexis, there are a few points concerning verbs that require attention. The first point involves the choice of verb which bears the meaning ‘to converse’. Namely, in (7) the verb *parabolant* describes the scene below it as Harold and Guy having a conversation. However, *parabolare* is an unusual choice for Latin. In fact, this is a word “with French associations ... from which modern French *parler* is derived” (Gameson 184). Evidently, there is Romance influence in this example, since the standard Latin verb in this case would be *colloqui*. Apparently, this is a characteristic of Medieval Latin influenced by translations of the Bible from Greek into Latin, which included the Greek word *parabola* – Eng. ‘comparison, story, speech’ (Glavičić).

The second point deals with the syntagm *fuga vertere*, which means ‘to turn in flight’. Since these two words are consistently used in conjunction with each other, it would seem that they formed a common phrase, although the phrase which is more common in Latin is

*fugam dare* – lit. ‘to give (oneself) to flight’. Once again, this characteristic points to an external influence to the author’s knowledge of Latin.

The third point concerns verbs which signal motion. Namely, where the intended meaning was ‘to come, to arrive’, the Latin verb is consistently *venire*, while verbs which denote motion towards or from a place are compounds of the verb *ire* (‘to go’). Their use is fairly consistent throughout the text, although the frequency of *venire* suggests either that the author’s linguistic expression was unimaginative or that they were ignorant of the full (or even moderate) range of Latin synonyms.

Finally, while there is no direct or indirect speech in the text, the act of speaking is implied by the use of verbs and phrases which denote verbal exchange of information (*parabolare, interrogare, nuntiare, nuntius*), oath swearing (*sacramentum facere*), instruction (*alloqui, iubere, confortare*), and blessing (*benedicere*). Because words indicating the act of speech exhibit considerable variation of use in accordance with their intended meaning, it is possible that the (un)spoken element of the tapestry’s events served as instruction on how to narrate it to viewers (Gameson 190–191).

Concerning the choice of terms *Franci* and *Normanni*, Musset argues that, from the victors’ point of view, they would not have used the terms “Frank” or “French” to describe themselves at that point in history (Musset 37). However, he does state that William’s army was multinational, consisting mainly of Normans, but also of Bretons, Flemings and many other “French” troops, and that the English administration used the term *Franci* beginning from 1066 (37, 80). Additionally, the term *Normanni* only appears once in the text, as part of William’s title – *dux Normannorum* – which should be translated as “Duke of Normandy” rather than “Duke of the Normans”. Interestingly, most of the names and toponyms in the tapestry are either archaic forms or Anglicized terms, like *Willelm* and *Bagias* (Musset 36).

On another note, the term *dux* is consistently used for both Harold (until he is crowned) and William, thus equalizing their importance (Musset 37). Moreover, the tapestry acknowledges Harold as *rex*, the king, after Edward's death, also consistently, up until Harold's death in the very last scene. All of this points to English influence in creating the text rather than French/Norman.

As previously mentioned, the majority of textual information in the tapestry is conveyed through simple, factual statements. However, there are several instances of descriptive phrases, most likely indicating an important side note to the depicted historical events. One of these describes Harold's voyage from England to Normandy as "velis vento plenis" (4) or, in other words, as crossing the sea "with sails full of wind". It is most likely that the inclusion of this phrase was meant to explain that Harold accidentally landed in Count Guy's territory (Gameson 187), leading to his capture. This bit of information would seem to corroborate the hypothesis that Harold initially set out from England to complete a mission in Normandy, on which King Edward sent him in 1064, likely having something to do with the succession of the English throne (Musset 79).

Similarly, in (24) Edward speaks to his trustees "in lecto" – "in (his) funeral bed" – informing us of his encroaching death. Notably, in (34) William crosses the sea "in magno navigio" – "in a large ship" – which is the only phrase in the whole text using a *navigium* and an adjectival phrase instead of simply *navis*. This phrase possibly indicates it as William's flagship or even as an omen of his dominance over the Englishmen in the upcoming conquest (Gameson 187).

Apparently, there was a need to attribute battlefield excellence to the English army, as much as the Norman troops. For this reason (48) emphasizes that both (*simul*) English and Norman soldiers died in the battle. That would explain why, in (46), William orders his soldiers to prepare for the battle against the English army "vigorously and wisely" (also a



descriptive phrase). It seems to serve as a testament both to English endurance and Norman strength, depicting them as equally worthy opponents by “tactfully respecting everybody’s feelings” (Musset 37). Indeed, as Gameson continuously asserts throughout his essay, it seems that the purpose of the tapestry was not to elevate or vindicate the actions of either the Anglo-Saxon or the Norman side in the matter, but rather to explain why the conquest was successful (211).

Similarly, Bishop Odo’s presence and interference in the battle seemed to be of high importance, but not having a military rank himself, his role is purely to rouse the men by wielding a staff – *baculum tenens* – in (49), presumably lifting their spirits right after it has been established that Normans have died along with the Englishmen. The importance of the *baculum* is in its authoritative symbolism, as William is also seen holding one (Cowdrey 95).

Such concise phrasing achieves linguistic economy. While the majority of the text may seem repetitive and unimaginative, it manages to contain a lot of imagery and information in very few descriptive words. As seen above, in some instances, it even reveals whether parts of the tapestry convey the Anglo-Saxon or Norman perspective of the events.

#### 4.5. Syntax

The tapestry’s text is organized into “sentences”, which are embroidered directly above or in the middle of the scenes to which they relate. For the most part, they are simple sentences, sometimes with a compound subject. What is curious about Latin of this time period is the order inversion of syntactic functions within a clause, which is also true for this tapestry: instead of placing the verb in the final position of a clause, it is usually placed right after the subject and followed by an object or adverbial (Bralić Petković). Without a doubt, this characteristic of Latin was conditioned by either French or English influence although both are equally possible.

Compound sentences follow simple ones in frequency of appearance, and their verbs are all in the indicative mood. Interestingly, the sequences of independent clauses indicate the prevalent use of parataxis (Bralić Petković), as they may well have been simple sentences had the conjunction *et* not have been embroidered between them. In other words, the conjunction almost seems redundant – either of the prepositions *ubi* or *hic* introducing sentences could easily replace it. This type of literary technique indicates the elementary knowledge of Latin the author must have possessed, befitting an English author of that time (Bralić Petković).

This is true nowhere more so than in the strange tense (dis)agreement in sentences like (18), where the first clause is in the present (*pugnant* – “they battle”), and the second clause in the perfect tense (*porrexit* – “(he) has handed (them) over”). Since aligning both clauses in the same tense would have been more sensible, this type of sentence structure would indicate that the author either meant to have the clauses describe two separate scenes or that the second clause was meant to portray a consequence of the first one. However, the latter explanation does not account for most of the other compound sentences, in which the first clause does not in any way entail or even imply the action of the following clause(s), therefore the former seems more likely. As to why the clauses were connected in the end, the reason probably lies in the scenes – since they were not separated visually, the author likely chose to handle the sentences in the same way.

The subjunctive mood is only used in the dependent clauses, which are properly introduced by subordinating conjunctions *ut* and *si*, with attention being given to *consecutio temporum*, i.e. the agreement of tenses in related clauses. However, these clauses also present certain issues. Firstly, the use of passive voice in the subordinate clause of sentence (35) is inexplicable unless the text’s author meant to use *rapere* in a medial sense, in which case the translation would read as follows: “Here the soldiers hurried to Hastings to *supply themselves* with food.” Its translation notwithstanding, to use *rapere* in this type of syntagm is

unnecessarily complicated and points to confusion in Latin syntax and semantics. It is likely that the text was prepared with only the author's native language in mind, which would then have been reverse engineered into Latin.

Secondly, sentence (40) shows an unwarranted use of a subordinate clause where an accusative with infinitive (ACI) would normally – and more naturally – be used, especially because it is preceded by an imperative verb (*iubere*). In this case, the sentence would read as follows: “Iste iussit fodere castellum...” Namely, by using a subordinate clause, the author had once again complicated Latin syntactic structure. Likewise, sentence (46) presents a similar issue, but at the very least, it employs the active voice correctly.

Lastly, sentence (44) seemingly introduces a conditional clause with the conjunction *si* (‘if’), although it actually functions as an interrogative particle/conjunction, as was frequently the case in Medieval Latin (Glavičić). The conjunction's English translation, as well as the correct agreement of tenses (if it actually were a conditional clause), would have us assume that there is a condition in this sentence, though no part of it justifies this structure.

Other than dependent clauses, there are several grammatical peculiarities concerning the assignment of cases to nouns following verbs which require specific sentence constructions. There are two particularly interesting examples, the first of which has to do with the verb *nuntiare* (‘to announce, inform, report’). Normally, this verb would require the dative of person and accusative of thing, while the latter may be substituted by a construction of *de* (‘of, about’) and ablative, as is the case in (41) – “...nuntiatum est Willelmo de Harold[o].” – and (45) – “Iste nuntiat Haroldum regem de exercitu...” However, the accusative of *Haroldum regem* in (45) stands out because it is nonsensical to use an accusative of person with *nuntiare*, unless it points to a missing preposition *ad* (‘to’), which would then form the medieval Latin construction of *ad* and accusative (Liović). In this case, the sentence should have read as follows: “Iste nuntiat *ad* Haroldum regem de exercitu...” –

“This man reports to King Harold about the army...” Although it may be argued that *ad* could have been self-evident, it is unlikely because no other word was dropped for that reason anywhere else in the text. Instead, the author’s oversight may have been the cause for such an oddly constructed sentence in Latin.

The second example concerns the verb *alloqui* (‘to speak to, address’). Since this verb is formed by adding the preposition *ad* (which is always and only adjacent to the accusative) to the verb *loqui* (‘to speak’), its noun would normally be in the accusative case, i.e. as a direct object, as it is in (24) – “... Eadwardus rex in lecto alloquitur fideles...” However, the only other instance in which *alloqui* appears in this text is in (46), where it is paired with the dative – “... Willelm dux alloquitur suis militibus ut prepararent se ... ad prelium...” It is possible that the author made an erroneous analogy with *dicere*, *loqui* or some other verb which simply means ‘to say, speak’ and allows a construction with dative (Liović). However, since *alloqui* is a verb usually used to address gods or the military, and even as consolation, its meaning indicates a more solemn act than the mere “speaking” of *dicere* (Liović). Indeed, Edward addressing his trustees on his death bed (presumably announcing his will to them concerning his heir to the throne) and William exhorting his troops before an upcoming battle could, in both cases, be understood as a form of command (Liović). This act would entail a hierarchical relation between the characters or, in other words, a one-sided form of communication. Therefore, both Edward and William are speaking ‘at’ somebody instead of speaking ‘to’ them, which is why *alloqui* warrants the use of accusative, and not the dative.

Both examples of peculiar case assignment, however, are possibly the result of assimilation of case inflections, which is a characteristic of Merovingian Latin (Glavičić). Unfortunately, this specificity of the tapestry’s text does not bring us any closer to identifying the author’s place of origin.

## 5. Visual Representation Analysis

Although the emphasis in this paper is on the text embroidered into the tapestry, its story is told primarily via visual representation, i.e. the scenes which the text describes and complements. However, because neither gives complete information without the other, both the linguistic and visual data are important for understanding the tapestry. With that in mind, this chapter covers not just the scenes, but also the visual features of the text which add information about the circumstances of the tapestry's making.

### 5.1. Textual Matters

In medieval times, including captions in pictorial arts was a common practice (Gameson 181–182). Therefore, the mere inclusion of an accompanying text in the Bayeux Tapestry reveals nothing of its origin. However, it is full of interesting features, some of which may also be seen as oddities.

To start, the style of the lettering is thin, plain and simple, while all the letters are in capitals. Most of the letters are written either in the Uncial-based form or square lettering, although there is some variation between them (Gameson 182). Specifically, the letters E, H and M are, in some places, written as a square capital, and at other places rounded<sup>3</sup>. This variation must be the reason for mistakes like “HIƎ” in (20), where the rounded E was meant to be a C, thus forming the word *hic*. In (45), there is an amusing slip-up: the E in “WILELMI” was meant to be square, but, either because of lack of space or the proximity of two L's, it is missing the middle dash, leaving the letter looking like the left square bracket and the word missing a third L. Similarly, because the letters D and O are both round, the first mention of Harold in (2) and Guy in (4) involve two O's in the place of a D and an O.

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<sup>3</sup> The Uncial-based H and M are represented by lowercase letters in the transliteration in chapter 3.1., while the Uncial E is represented by the symbol Ǝ.

Notably, all the U's and V's in the text are square, creating, in this way, the look and feel of a stone inscription by eliminating the visual difference between U and V. Nevertheless, there is variation in the use of the letter V: while the letter W is mostly represented by two adjacent V's, in some places it is a proper W instead, and there is no apparent reason for these inconsistencies.

If we would venture to guess the geographical origin of the text's author, it would be prudent to note that the letters *Æ* (in *ÆLFGYVA* and *PEVENESÆ*) and *Ð* (in *GYRÐ*) are “distinctively Anglo-Saxon characters” (Musset 34). However, Gameson pointed out that the introductory *HIC* is preceded by a cross on two occasions – sentences (11) and (34) – which, according to him, gives “a subtle emphasis to William's first appearance in the Tapestry and to the launching of his invasion of England” (183), which would establish the Norman protagonist and his actions as the highlights of the tapestry.

Next, considerable care was also taken to properly divide words so that there is no mistake where one word ends and another begins. For this reason, many words end in either two or three dots, or two dots and a stroke. This is usually the case when two words are embroidered close to each other and especially if a word is broken into two parts by an element of a scene – for instance, sentence (2): “... ET SVI MILITES:EQVI // TANT:’”. In other cases, the scene elements divide two words from each other, so it is not necessary to provide visual emphasis of word division. There is also an instance of a word being divided into two parts because it continues in the line below, like in (4):

“... VE // LIS:VENTO:PLENIS VE=  
=NIT:INTE // RRA:...”

As far as prepositions are concerned, they are almost exclusively not divided from the nouns they precede. On the contrary, they are often positioned so close that it may appear as if a

noun and its preposition are one word, like in (4) above. Apparently, this kind of style “is the graphic vocabulary of contemporary inscriptions rather than that of books” (Gameson 183).

Clear division was obviously very important, but so was the positioning of the captions. Namely, the vast majority of the words are placed directly above the scenes they accompany, allowing for clarity of information that the conjoined text and scene were meant to convey. In some cases, the sentences are “squeezed” in the middle of the scene, as in (16), and in others, they are spread out across the scene as evenly as possible. There are even a few instances, like (28) and (51), in which the text is embroidered in the top margin, above the usual position of the text. Obviously, the author aimed to emphasize key elements, and strived for maximum efficiency when choosing how to use the text to fill the space in and around the scenes.

On that note, visual cues of word truncating must be mentioned. In view of efficient use of space, the author frequently employed the tilde above a word in order to indicate that one or more of a word’s letters have been omitted. Most often, the tilde is used to indicate the final –m of a declinable word in the accusative singular – exceptionally in (50), it does not indicate the grammatical case, but the final letter of William’s name, “VVILLEĒ”. Other uses of the tilde include indicating the omission of the final 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural –ur in passive or deponent verbs, and the contracted words *EĪS* (*episcopus*), *SĪI* (*sancti*) and *APĪI* (*apostoli*). Apart from the tilde, the 7 is used only once in lieu of *ET*. All of these uses are part of the medieval scribal conventions in paleography (“Letter forms and abbreviations”). More than that, they save some space, which becomes increasingly important towards the end of the tapestry, where the scenes become more and more crowded with elements, leaving little room for the text. For this reason, the author went beyond the conventional abbreviation practice and combined the final 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural –nt of active verbs into a digraph (indicated as N<sup>T</sup> in chapter 3.1.).

Considering the somewhat odd word division described above, the peculiar placement of the text and especially the space-saving abbreviations, it is likely that the author had not planned the text and scenes simultaneously. That is not to say that the text had not been planned at all, but that it was added to fit the scenes without taking enough consideration of space management. Gameson strongly asserted that the text and scenes were planned together (184–191), claiming that the interaction between them forces the “literate beholder to consider them together” (186) because the “inscriptions were meant to be seen and read” (184). Indeed, his deliberation finely explains that the text’s simple style – rather than an elaborate, ornate one – and its immixture with the scenes emphasize the text (183, 185–186). However, that does not account for the awkwardness of the final result, especially if we consider the largely inconsistent use of the tilde. It is utilized mainly when the embroiderer(s) ran out of space to complete a whole word, leaving one word in a phrase complete, while the other is truncated, like in (45): “HAROLDVM REGĒ”, and sometimes, the tilde is not used at all where a word is clearly missing a letter. Even so, it is possible that the embroiderer(s) simply thought that the words would take up less space than they actually did.

## *5.2. Scene Commentary*

The first portion of the tapestry, which includes several scenes, tells the story of Harold’s mission in Normandy, on which he was supposedly sent by King Edward in 1064. This mission probably had something to do with the succession of the English throne (Musset 79), at least in the context of this tapestry. At first glance, this episode seems no more important than a scene depicting an army feast before a battle, but it actually confirms that William was indeed expecting Harold and, upon learning of his whereabouts, hurried to extract him, which is why an unusually large portion of the tapestry is dedicated to the messengers’ travels between William and Guy. Therefore, this mission must have been of



great importance. Not only that, the episode reveals that Harold is treated with respect even as he is taken prisoner.

Alternatively, the mission may have had something to do with the following scenes, which depict William and Harold marching together towards Dol to fight Duke Conan of Brittany, and subsequently pursuing him until he surrendered. However, this sequence of events may also have been a follow-up of Harold's actual mission, or simply events he was caught up in due to their coinciding with Harold's (belated) arrival. Either way, the scenes portray an alliance between William and Harold, which is solidified by three elements.

First, during their march on Dol, some soldiers fall into quicksand and Harold is shown valiantly risking his own life to pull them out. Second, after their victory over Conan, William presents Harold with arms, which is a great honor, but also puts Harold in a lower hierarchal position in relation to William (Cowdrey 98). Immediately after that, the third element depicts Harold swearing an oath to William by touching on holy relics. It is presumed that this scene was meant to place Harold in William's service and/or have Harold promise the English throne to William (Musset 146). This act not only creates the basis for the 'plot twist' of Harold's betrayal, but also establishes his oath as sacred in the eyes of the Christian Church and God. Therefore, Harold is doubly bound to honor his oath. Whether or not this kind of oath actually happened, it presents a pivotal point in the tapestry.

That Christianity was greatly important to the tapestry's author is evident in several other scenes besides the one with Harold's oath. The next time we encounter a religious scene is at Edward's funeral. There, we may observe a divine presence in the form of a hand appearing in the sky, pointing to the newly completed Westminster Abbey, which would hold Edward the Confessor's remains (Gameson 176).

Similarly, immediately after Edward's death, Harold is offered the throne and crowned, presumably by Archbishop Stigand, who is standing next to Harold as he is

proclaimed the English king (Musset 174). Those two scenes likely represent a blend of the secular and religious. Namely, Harold would have been chosen as the successor by the *witan* – pictured as finely dressed people handing the crown to Harold – while the archbishop would have had to officiate at the coronation (Musset 172). The significance of these elements is twofold: one, because it represents the English royal tradition, which William had every intent of continuing (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica); two, because Stigand seems to have been an excommunicated priest, whose officiating at the coronation symbolizes a sin (Musset 78), and who was, later on, deposed by William (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica).

Speaking of sin, it is unclear how to interpret the scene with Edward on his deathbed. While he is seen speaking to those who are loyal to him, it is unknown whether these “confidants” are merely the people closest to him, or the *witan*, whom the English kings largely trusted in reaching political decisions (Musset 172). It is possible that Edward either decided on his deathbed or was persuaded by the “confidants” to name Harold his heir over William. Whichever is the case, all of the events, starting from Harold’s oath and ending with his coronation, point to one theme – William’s rightful claim to the throne (from the victor’s perspective) because of England’s sin (Gameson 188). Namely, instead of placing the blame for the ‘betrayal’ solely on Harold, the scenes are full of clues which indicate that the entire people had acted against God’s will – both the text and the scenes emphasize Harold was given the crown instead of seizing it (Gameson 188) – and William’s mission was to right that wrong.

Signaling a turn of events (and William’s mission) is the appearance of Haley’s comet (Gameson 193) as the star the people marvel at, visible in the top margins above Harold on the throne. At that time, it was believed to be a portent of a great calamity and, appearing immediately after Harold’s coronation, signifies his downfall (Musset 180). It also serves as a cue for the beginning of William’s invasion, implied by the fleet of “ghost ships” in the

bottom margins (Musset 180). Several scenes later, picturing William's large fleet on its way to England, William's flagship is identified by a cross on the mast (and the phrase *magnum navigium* rather than just *navis*), which is another religious justification of his conquest.

On that note, Bishop Odo, William's half-brother, is almost constantly present in the scenes from the point where William hears about Edward's death and Harold's coronation, up until the very end of the tapestry. Having a respected, high-ranking cleric of the Christian Church in the family must have helped William's standing and influenced the backing of his invasion by the Pope (Musset 78).

Moreover, it is more than likely that Odo is the person who commissioned the creation of this tapestry. Namely, although William had the Pope's support to invade England (Musset 78), the pervasive Christian symbolism throughout the tapestry completely ignores some other factors which had a significant impact on the outcome of the Norman Conquest (these will be discussed towards the end of this chapter). Other than that, three figures appear, Turol, Wadard and Vital, seemingly without a reason – since their presence neither moves nor hinders the action. According to Prentout, all three men were Odo's tenants, who received lands in England after the Conquest, one of whom was even stationed in Kent beforehand (25–30). Therefore, if this postulation is true, then they were probably included in the tapestry because Odo was at liberty to honor his vassals. On the other hand, they may have been well known back then, but are unknown to us now.

Another mysterious character is the only woman in the tapestry referred to by name, Aelfgyva. Her identity, as much as the presence of the priest beside her, remains the topic of discussion among many scholars, who have put forth numerous theories about her. One of these identifies her as Harold's sister Aelfgyva, supposedly kidnapped by a Breton prince, while the purpose of the mission into Brittany would have been to retrieve her (Prentout 23). However, this theory does not explain how she came to be in William's palace before the

actual mission, or why she would have traveled with Harold to Normandy in the first place. A second theory identifies her as Harold's wife Edith, who was not fond of Harold, and who rallied to William's side after the Battle of Hastings (Prentout 25). This theory also posits that she had a hand in creating the tapestry. Other theories mostly involve women whose names do not even resemble Aelfgyva (Prentout 22–24). For these reasons, her true role and identity are difficult to confirm.

In contrast, there are several attested side characters that make an appearance in the tapestry. The first of these is Count Guy I of Ponthieu, a vassal of William's, who captured Harold after his being blown off course. Other than creating a side plot for Harold, Guy's interference is minimal and largely inconsequential. On the other hand, Conan II of Rennes, Duke of Brittany, serves as a binding agent between William and Harold. Historically, the depiction of events concerning Conan and the war between Normandy and Brittany is accurate (Musset 136), and visually, it provides the basis for further events. These scenes also follow the characters through a number of geographical areas, thus providing a setting and even a sense of time elapsed in their traversing.

Unlike either Guy or Conan, there are four other prominent historical figures that appear in the tapestry only once, and effect no change in the course of action. On the Norman side, these are William's half-brother, Count Robert of Mortain, pictured dining with him on the eve of the battle, and Count Eustace II of Boulogne, pictured holding an elaborate banner, believed to be the Papal Banner (*Britain's Bayeux Tapestry*). On the English side, the characters are Harold's brothers, Leofwine and Gyrð, pictured only dying in the heat of the battle.

Of course, his brothers are not the only ones to die in this bloody battle. The extent of its carnage and violence is pictured not just in the centered scenes, but also in the margins, displaying droves of armed men at first, and then gradually an array of body parts. In the

climax of the battle, we see Harold's death, although there is some debate over whether he is the figure below the word "Harold", who is shot in the eye by an arrow, or if he is the one cut down by a sword, pictured beneath the words "interfectus est" (*Britain's Bayeux Tapestry*).

Amidst these gory scenes, we can observe the difference between the English and Norman armies. While the Normans are mainly on horseback, with some foot archers interspersed among the mounted units, the English are predominantly foot soldiers with large shields. In this respect, the tapestry is a precious example of actual combat styles employed by these armies.

Contrarily, even though the battle itself and William's preparation for it are given quite a bit of space, there are crucial circumstances that were overlooked in the making of the tapestry. Namely, there is never any mention, either verbally or visually, of Harlad Hardrada, his alliance with Harold's exiled brother Tostig, or their joint invasion of England, which Harold was fighting off just before facing William. Harold's final battle against Tostig and Harald took place less than a month before the Battle of Hastings and, although Harold's army won, they were far too exhausted and battered to successfully defend against another invasion (Musset 79–80).

Apart from the Norse attacks, there is also absolutely no mention of the multinational quality of William's troops. Namely, his preparation also consisted of enlisting the help of many "French" nations, some of whom were the Bretons William fought against only two years prior to the Battle of Hastings, who are also pictured in the beginning of the tapestry. Be that as it may, it would appear that its author did not consider non-Norman presence to be of any importance, or perhaps may have thought that it would distract from the justification of William's conquest. In any case, the exclusion of such important elements gives the story "dramatic effect" (Musset 80).

Finally, looking at the chafed, damaged last part of the tapestry, it is evident that a piece of it is missing. It is usually assumed that this last piece would have contained William's coronation, and would have been another several meters long (Cowdrey 96). Despite the lack of a proper ending, the tapestry still manages to tell the story of the Norman Conquest of England.

## **6. Conclusion**

Understanding the Bayeux Tapestry's story and origin has proven to be a rather complex undertaking, requiring a multi-sided approach. Above all, the information about the historical and socio-political situation which historians have accumulated about early 11<sup>th</sup> century England provided the basis for any type of analysis. However, historical facts alone could not unravel the tapestry's mystery, which is why the IMG method was used on its Latin text in an attempt to connect its features to the original language of the tapestry's author. Through this process, I was able to come to some conclusions about the Latin in the tapestry by organizing its features into categories.

First, examination of the morphological level of the verbs revealed that the perfect and historical present in the indicative mood were predominantly used to describe the action. Their use is factual rather than artistic, indicating that the text is meant to perform the function of captions, which guide the viewer in interpreting the scenes. Other than that, there is a striking scarcity of the subjunctive mood and deponent verbs, which, I believe, points to insufficient knowledge of the Latin language.

The second category focused on the morphological level of declinable words, which mostly consist of nouns, followed by several pronouns and adjectives, along with one participle. Confirming the caption-like quality of the text, the declinable words appear largely in the nominative, either as subjects of sentences or on their own, and in the accusative as

direct objects or denoting motion towards a goal. While there is hardly any use of the dative, and the genitive is solely used to denote possession, the ablative exhibits significant diversity of function. Moreover, the vocative is completely absent because there is no direct speech, and adding to the factual character of the text is the noticeable avoidance to use adjectives in a descriptive manner.

That being said, none of these features point to the influence of any specific language. However, most of the proper nouns are left non-Latinized while toponyms are also entirely uninflected. Although this may have been done to avoid confusion, the name *Wilhelm/Willelm* points to Anglo-Saxon influence. Similarly, there are some omissions and additions (like *ceastra*) in word spelling, which are specific for Anglo-Saxon Medieval Latin.

The next category involves invariable words like adverbs, conjunctions and prepositions. Unlike verbs and declinable words, invariable words have fixed functions, which do not contribute to the meaning of the text, but serve as necessary grammatical elements. Of these, the most frequent are adverbs *ubi* and *hic*, which function as introductory words connecting the scenes with the sentences. They appear in almost every scene, except for those simply captioned as the name of a depicted person. Their repetitive character is mirrored in the almost exclusive use of the conjunction *et* to connect sentences and simplify the reading of the text. As for prepositions, all but one immediately precede the noun they modify.

Moving on to the category of semantics, the analysis has revealed some interesting findings. Namely, the verb *parabolare* compellingly points to French influence, but also to clerical involvement, since this is a Greek word which spread through Greek translations of the Bible. However, other instances where either English or French influence may be observed are not as obvious, like the varying use of the terms *Franci* and *Normanni*. Although the term *Franci* would not have readily been used by the Normans at that time, the variation

between the two terms leaves room to believe that both sides helped create this tapestry. In fact, several examples suggest that, linguistically, both sides are treated with equal respect. This includes leveling Harold's and William's official titles, as well as recognizing Harold as king after his coronation, and describing both armies as fierce opponents.

Besides specific influence, the word choice also reveals how compact the text was meant to be, since there are very few cases of descriptive phrasing. Regardless, when it is employed, it is very brief, but comprehensive. In addition, there are subtle clues which indicate that the tapestry was meant to be played out to an audience. Namely, there are a number of words signifying speech in the text, whose impressive variation of use was likely meant to prompt a person to the appropriate action while interpreting the tapestry's scenes to other people.

In the last linguistic category, the syntactic level, it is possible to observe that the vast majority of sentences are simple sentences or compound sentences in parataxis. Their internal structure reveals the characteristic Medieval Latin inversion of syntactic order, in which the verb is no longer in the final position of a sentence, but in the second (or third) place, following the subject. This inversion is followed by the peculiar tense confusion, where the present and perfect tense are liberally interchangeable, and by the predominantly indicative mood of the verbs. The latter is not surprising because of the awkward and, at times, inappropriate use of consecutive clauses in the subjunctive mood, where it is clear that ACI would have been the logical choice. Unfortunately, this also meant that subordinating conjunctions would be improperly used.

Moreover, there are inexplicable errors in assigning grammatical cases to nouns following certain verbs. These are, notably, in relation to two speech related verbs, *nuntiare* and *alloqui*. Namely, they both appear twice in the text, but each time with a noun in a different case. Because only one of these is correct, it seems like the author was utterly



confused when faced with basic grammar, which is probably the consequence of one of many Latin language reforms.

Because this tapestry is far more of a visual document than it is textual, the text's visual features also bear importance. It is precisely in the appearance of specific letters that we may find evidence of the text's origin. Namely, Æ and Ð are purely Anglo-Saxon letters and they are present in proper nouns naming English people and places (but not in the Norman/Breton *MONS MICHAELIS!*). Other than this small clue, the text is full of peculiarities which do not speak about its origin, but are mostly a testament of medieval scribal conventions and the pain-staking process of embroidery.

On the other hand, the actual depiction of events has proven to contain some evidence of the tapestry's origin. Nevertheless, the scenes would not have been understandable without the text. In any case, most of the scenes seem to center on Harold's perceived betrayal of the oath he took before William on his mission in Normandy. Even though the exact content of that oath has never been specified or confirmed, either on the tapestry, or historically, the scenes tell the story of William's "just" retribution in form of a military conquest of England. However, throughout the entire tapestry, equal respect is given to both opponents and their entourage. For this reason, I believe that this tapestry was not made to reveal how the English were punished for their sin of crowning Harold over William, but to explain how the Anglo-Norman unification under William exonerated the English.

As for the tapestry's author, Bishop Odo seems a likely suspect. Not only is he emphasized verbally, but also visually, even though he had no great contribution to the story, especially if the hypothesis about his three vassals depicted in the tapestry is correct. Of course, as a priest, he would have been skilled enough in Latin to have produced the tapestry's text.

Taking all of the above into consideration, it becomes clear that the text itself does not give too much information from which the tapestry's and its author's origin may be ascertained. Although IMG provides invaluable information about Medieval Latin, the tapestry's scenes are better at providing information about its origin. However, it is only when the visual representation of the Norman Conquest and its accompanying text are unified that they tell a complete story (or a version of it).

Finally, much like the text and scenes make sense only when they are considered together, so I believe that the tapestry is the product of mutual effort between English and Norman hands, but commissioned at the behest of the victorious side. Even so, I do not claim to have solved the mystery of the Bayeux Tapestry, but merely suggest one possible explanation. After all, it is an extraordinary work of art and a piece of history, whose final solution will only be found through steadfast research.

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## INTERLINEAR GLOSSING OF THE LATIN TEXT OF THE BAYEUX TAPESTRY:

## Summary and Key Words

The Bayeux Tapestry's origin has long been shrouded in mystery. It is said to have been completed not long after the Norman Conquest of England, which it portrays, but its author and place of origin have never been firmly established. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to investigate the tapestry's features, primarily by focusing on its linguistic aspect, in an attempt to answer some of the questions that surround it.

For this reason, the Latin text on the tapestry, which describes its scenes, is broken down into its smallest meaningful units by using the interlinear morphemic glossing technique (IMG). In this way, each word is carefully analyzed, starting from the morphological level, then building up to reach the semantic and syntactic levels, all in an effort to gain an insight into the linguistic features of early 11<sup>th</sup> century Latin. However, because the pictorial story and the text cannot properly function without the other, there is also a section devoted to the analysis of the tapestry's visual elements and what they can reveal about Anglo-Norman relations of that time. The end result yields a somewhat unexpected hypothesis that its creation was the result of cooperation between Anglo-Saxons and Normans.

Key words: IMG, Bayeux Tapestry, Norman Conquest, Medieval Latin

MEĐURETČANE GLOSE LATINSKOG TEKSTA BAYEUX TAPISERIJE: Sažetak i  
ključne riječi

Podrijetlo Bayeux tapiserije već je dugo nerješiva zagonetka. Navodno je dovršena nedugo nakon normanskog osvajanja Engleske, čije događaje oslikava, ali njen tvorac i mjesto nastanka nikad nisu točno utvrđeni. Stoga je svrha ovog rada istražiti njena obilježja, prvenstveno je obrađujući s jezikoslovnog gledišta, pokušavajući time odgovoriti na neka pitanja koja ju okružuju.

Zbog toga je tekst tapiserije na latinskom jeziku, koji opisuje njene scene, raščlanjen na svoje najmanje jezične jedinice koje nose značenje koristeći tehniku međuretčanih morfemskih glosa (engleska kratica IMG). Na ovaj je način svaka riječ pažljivo analizirana, počevši od morfološkog te penjući se do semantičkog i sintaktičkog stupnja, a sve to da bi se stekao uvid u jezična obilježja latinskog jezika iz ranog 11. stoljeća. Međutim, zato što slikovna priča i njen tekst ne mogu valjano funkcionirati jedno bez drugog, dio rada posvećen je i analizi vizualnih elemenata tapiserije te pojedinostima koje oni mogu otkriti o anglo-normanskim odnosima tog vremena. Završni rezultat polučuje ponešto neočekivanu hipotezu da je njen nastanak rezultat suradnje Anglosasa i Normana.

Ključne riječi: IMG, Bayeux tapiserija, normansko osvajanje Engleske, srednjovjekovni  
latinitet