

Manx manuscript sermons, 1696–1863: language and historical context



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MANX MANUSCRIPT SERMONS, 1696–1863: LANGUAGE AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT¹

ABSTRACT

Approximately 650 manuscript sermons written and preached in Manx by the Anglican clergy of the Isle of Man survive from the period between 1696 and 1863, exceeding the number found in Irish and Scottish Gaelic combined. Most of the sermons have identifiable authors and contain precise dates and places of preaching, as well as details of re-use and adaptation, and are thus a rich source of information on the island's social, religious and linguistic history. In linguistic terms, the texts shed new light on the evolution and standardization of Manx orthography, and on phonological and morphosyntactic variation and change. This article outlines the extent of the corpus and its linguistic value, as well as examining questions of composition, translation, and societal bilingualism and diglossia. The discussion draws particularly on a current project to transcribe the portion of the corpus predating the completion of the Manx Bible in 1772.

1. MANX LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

MANX WAS THE dominant vernacular of the people of the Isle of Man until the late eighteenth century, before a range of socioeconomic forces led to language shift to English. This was substantially complete by the second half of the nineteenth century, although a handful of elderly native speakers and semi-speakers remained until the mid-twentieth century (Broderick 1999). As a result of early social and political separation from the wider Gaelic world, Manx is notable for divergent linguistic developments, and for its English-based orthographic tradition. The roots of this tradition go back at least to the early

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seventeenth century (Thomson 1953; Wheeler 2019), and it had achieved a substantial level of standardization by the time of the completion of the Manx Bible translation in 1772.

Owing in part to a number of structural, practical and ideological factors,² relatively little attention has been paid to Manx within wider Gaelic and Celtic scholarship. Manx linguistic and literary studies have hitherto mostly focused on the relatively accessible printed material from the eighteenth and nineteenth century, especially the Bible, as well as transcribed and recorded speech from the last generations of native speakers (Rhŷs 1894; Marstrander 1932; Jackson 1955; Broderick 1984–6). There have also been important editions and analyses of certain individual manuscript texts, including most notably Bishop Phillips's Prayer Book translation, which dates from *c.* 1610 (Moore and Rhŷs 1895; Thomson 1953; Wheeler 2019, 2020a), as well as secular song material. However, the two largest manuscript corpora, namely the carvals ('carols' or religious ballads),³ and the sermons, have remained greatly under-studied to date. The present article articulates the linguistic, sociolinguistic and wider historical value of the Manx manuscript sermon corpus as well as outlining potential future research avenues.

2. THE MANX MANUSCRIPT SERMON CORPUS 1696–1863

2.1. *Extent of corpus*

The vast majority of the extant Manx manuscript sermon material is housed at the Manx National Heritage (MNH) Library at the Manx Museum in Douglas; all manuscript references in this article are to material in this repository unless otherwise stated. The MNH sermon material was recently catalogued by the Manx scholar Fiona McArdle.⁴ The catalogue contains approximately 650 whole or fragmentary sermon texts in Manx from the period when the language was in regular liturgical use in the Manx church, from the late seventeenth to the mid-nineteenth century. There are also six manuscript sermons in the National Library of Wales (Sir John Rhŷs papers A3/10), and three further sermons exist

²These factors include the status of the Isle of Man as a distinct national jurisdiction, but lacking significant research institutions and funding bodies of its own; the lack of accessible primers, reference works and university-level courses which would make Manx accessible to scholars of the Gaelic languages; long-standing biases within Celtic Studies towards medieval literature (Thomson 1969: 178); and assumptions among Gaelic philologists regarding the perceived anglicized nature of Manx grammar and orthography (Lewin 2017).

³Carvals are lengthy original compositions concerning Biblical themes and narratives, often with dozens of stanzas, traditionally performed after the Christmas Eve church service into the mid-nineteenth century (Gilchrist 1925; Clague 2005), and preserved in manuscript carval books dating from the 1770s onwards, although some of the compositions are considerably older. A selection of carvals was published in Moore (1891) as well as in various local newspapers and periodicals, but there are as yet no modern scholarly editions or analyses. Clague's (2005) catalogue of the carval manuscripts and printed sources in the Manx Museum archive reveals that the corpus comprises 325 carvals, attested in over a thousand individual copies or variants. Like the sermons, the carval texts show a significant degree of orthographic and linguistic variation.

⁴The sermon and carval catalogues are available on request in the form of spreadsheets from Manx National Heritage.

in editions, the originals presumed lost. The rest of the material in the McArdle catalogue includes sermons in English (116 items), twentieth-century Manx sermons and prayers from the revival context (23 items), and miscellaneous devotional and liturgical material from the native Manx period.

Of the sermons in Manx, forty-five are bilingual, with English and Manx text in parallel columns or pages; this practice is largely restricted to a single author, William Crebbin (Vicar of Jurby, *fl.* 1743–82), although other authors have English and Manx versions of the same sermon in separate notebooks, and an indeterminate number of the remaining Manx sermon corpus are likely to be translations of English originals now lost (see §5.1 below). At present twenty-five individual authors have been securely or tentatively identified, with approximately seventy sermons having unidentified authors.⁵ The authors and users of this material were the parochial Manx clergy of the Diocese of Sodor and Man within the Church of England, most of whom were Manx-born, and Manx-speaking, well into the nineteenth century. Virtually no material survives from the nonconformist denominations,⁶ although the Wesleyan Methodists are known to have used Manx in their services and preaching, in some cases to a later date than the established church (Jenner 1876: 190).

Apart from an early outlier from 1696 (Lewin 2015), the oldest surviving sermons date from the 1720s and 30s and are the work of Philip Moore (1705–83), later the general editor of the Manx Bible, although there are references to preaching in Manx from the early seventeenth century onwards (Moore and Rhŷs 1895 i: xxii; Craine 1994: 30, 39; Grass 2021: 99). The numbers of extant authors and individual compositions begin to pick up substantially from the middle of the eighteenth century, with the bulk dating from the final decades of the century and the first half of the nineteenth. Some of the extant sermon corpora from individual ministers (not including monolingual English texts) are very substantial indeed:

William Crebbin (*fl.* 1743–82): 48 sermons

John Clague (*fl.* 1773–1812): 120 sermons

John E. Harrison (*fl.* 1823–49): 103 sermons

Thomas Howard (*fl.* 1827–63): 89 sermons.

As language shift to English accelerated in the mid-nineteenth century, use of Manx in church services gradually declined (Jenner 1876), with 1863 being the latest preaching date recorded in the McArdle catalogue.

As well as manuscript sermons, twenty-two of the English-language sermons of Thomas Wilson, the island's bishop from 1697 to 1755, were translated

⁵These figures must be considered provisional, given that it has not been possible within the scope of the current project to examine the whole corpus of Manx sermons in detail.

⁶Apart from some twentieth-century sermons from the language revival context, the only item of Methodist provenance in the MNH catalogue is MS 10949, a single page fragment dating from 9 January 1848 by John Jaughn [Joughin] of Kirk Bride, giving the text for a sermon preached at Little London chapel near Peel. This absence of Methodist material likely reflects the predominance of extemporary preaching in this tradition (Davies 1961: 112, 160, 231; Dr Tim Grass, personal communication).

into Manx and published in 1783 at the expense of the late bishop's son,⁷ and there are unpublished proofs for a further thirteen of these translations.⁸ For editions and discussion of some of these sermons, see Lewin (2011) and Lewin and Wheeler (2018). In addition, six of the sixteenth-century official homilies of the Church of England were translated into Manx and published as pamphlets in the early nineteenth century; these have been edited by Thomson (1997).

Very few of the manuscript sermons have been the object of scholarly editions or analysis prior to the present project. Sophia Morrison (1859–1917), a prominent figure in the early Manx linguistic and cultural revival, edited and published two sermons by Thomas Quayle (vicar of Onchan 1759–98) in normalized orthography (i.e. that of the Manx Bible) with an introduction and brief notes on linguistic features in the *Isle of Man Examiner* newspaper in 1906. The original manuscript sources for these sermons are lost as far as is known, but three other manuscript sermons by Quayle are extant. Kavanagh (1947) edits an anonymous Manx manuscript sermon dating from 1821, presenting it in normalized orthography; this was 'one of a number of sermons which the Rev. Canon Kermode, Vicar of Lezayre [...] sent me in 1939' (Kavanagh 1947: 90). Inquiries at University College Cork, Kavanagh's former institution, suggest that these manuscripts, too, are now lost.⁹ Finally, Lewin (2015) edits the Woods text from 1696, with discussion of the orthography, linguistic features, and transmission and re-use of the sermon, as well as its relationship to the Phillips Prayer Book manuscript.

2.2. Current project

The authors were awarded a British Academy and Leverhulme Trust Small Project Grant for the period 2020–2, with additional financial support from Culture Vannin (the Manx Heritage Foundation), for a project entitled 'Variation and change in the language of Manx sermons', based in the Department of Welsh and Celtic Studies at Aberystwyth University. Given the extent of the corpus, it was decided to focus our initial attention on the subset of the material predating the completion of the Manx Bible in 1772, on the hypothesis that manuscripts from this period would be more likely to show variation in orthography and linguistic features (which is not to say that variation is absent in texts of the later period). The cut-off date is of course to some degree arbitrary, especially with regard to those authors whose floruits straddle 1772. Eighty-two Manx or bilingual manuscript sermons with known authors were identified for

⁷ According to Cubbon (1939: 798), the translator was Thomas Corlett (vicar of Lezayre 1773–1803), but in a letter to Philip Moore dated 18 April 1781 and printed in Wilson (1782a: xix–xx), Henry Corlett (vicar of German 1761–1801) states that he is presently engaged in translating some of Wilson's sermons and hopes to see them published 'for the use of such of my countrymen as scarcely understand any other language but their own'. It thus seems clear that Henry, rather than Thomas, Corlett was responsible for at least some, and probably all, of the extant printed translations. We are grateful to Professor Max W. Wheeler for bringing this source to our attention. There are also three manuscript translations by John Clague (vicar of Rushen 1782–1816) of some of Wilson's sermons (see below §5.1).

⁸ As far as is known, only a single copy of these proofs exists, currently in private hands.

⁹ Our thanks to Dr Síle Ní Mhurchú of UCC for her help in relation to these manuscripts.

the period 1696 to 1772. We excluded those portions of an author's *œuvre* post-dating 1772 and also undated manuscripts, with a few exceptions, namely two undated sermon fragments by Philip Moore and one undated sermon by James Wilks, owing to these individuals' importance as early Manx sermon writers, the probable early date, and the relatively small size of Moore's and Wilks's extant corpora; we also included Wilks's sermon from 1775 (MS 13221/3/3), bringing his total to three texts. In addition, three sermons pre-dating 1772 but with as yet unidentified authors (two evidently in the same hand) were included, bringing the total number of sermons transcribed to ninety, amounting to 13.7% of the known pre-revival Manx manuscript sermon corpus of 656 texts.¹⁰ All of the material in this sub-corpus is in the Manx National Heritage Library, with the exception of one text in the John Rhŷs papers in the National Library of Wales. In all cases the original manuscripts are extant and were consulted, except for the two sermons by Thomas Quayle transcribed in normalized orthography by Sophia Morrison (1906), which we included for the sake of completeness, with the proviso that the original orthography is lost apart from the samples given in Morrison's footnotes. Details of the sermon authors are given in Table 1 (p. 131).

The primary aim of the current project has been to transcribe and diplomatically edit the ninety manuscript sermons in the sub-corpus, with the intention of making this material available to scholars, the Manx language community and the wider public in an open-access online searchable format. Further outputs will include a number of article-length studies and textual editions.

2.3. *Manuscripts and texts*

Our texts are generally written in small octavo notebooks typical of Anglican sermons of the period (Chamberlain 2012: 48). There is usually a title page outlining the topic and/or occasion of the sermon, and the sermon invariably opens with a short passage of scripture or 'text' around which the sermon is structured. Dates and places of preaching are usually listed at the beginning or end of the sermon. These details were presumably considered important in order to avoid preaching the same sermon too often to the same congregation, and to keep track of loans and guest preaching between parishes.

Where relevant, other details may be given in the manuscripts, such as numbers of communicants at communion services; details of the deceased in the case of funeral sermons; sums raised for particular causes or persons upon the preaching of charity sermons; details of individuals performing penance under sentence of the church courts; and information about reuse and adaptation by other preachers. In the case of bilingual sermons, the language of delivery may be noted, as in the following example from William Crebbin (curate and then vicar of Jurby 1743–1803), which is an abridged translation of a series of sermons by Tillotson (1717: 676–88, 696–701) (§5.1):

¹⁰This figure, which includes the MNH and NLW material, derives primarily from the McArdle catalogue and must be regarded as a working estimate, given that we have not had the opportunity to examine the entire corpus firsthand, nor to search for possible omissions.

Table 1. Sermon writers in the pre-1772 sub-corpus

	born	earliest dated sermon	latest dated sermon	died	total sermons	project sermons (mostly ≤1772)	clerical career ¹¹
John Woods	c. 1665	1696	1696	1739	1	1	d. 1688/9, c. German 1688–?92, p. 1694, Braddan 1692–5, ch. Castletown 1695; Malew 1696–1739
Philip Moore	1705	1723	1731	1783	11	11	dc. 1729, p. 1739, c. Bride, Marown, ch. Douglas 1736–65; Ballaugh 1751–60, Bride 1760–83
William Crebbin	c. 1717	1743	1782	1803	48	25	dc. 1743, c. Jurby 1743–51; Jurby 1751–1803
Robert Christian	c. 1727	1752	1752	1754	2	2	dc. 1750; c. Ballaugh 1750–2; German 1752–4
William Mylrea	1721	1752	1752	1795	1	1	dc. 1747; c. Andreas 1747–54; Bride 1754–60; Andreas 1760–87
<i>NLW Rhŷs A3.10</i>	–	1752	1752	–	1	1	
James Wilks	c. 1719	1753	1775	1777	3	3	dc. 1742, p. 1743; c. German 1742–4; German 1744–52, Kirk Michael 1752–71; Ballaugh 1771–7
Joseph Cosnahan	c. 1725	1756	1763	1768	3	3	dc. 1747; Braddan 1750–1768
<i>MSS 05727/I, /10</i>	–	1756	1756	–	2	2	
Henry Corlett	1736	1758	1779	1801	8	4	dc. 1755, c. Ballaugh 1755–61; German 1761–1801
Thomas Quayle	c. 1727?	1760	1765	1798	5	5	c. Castletown 1752–58; Onchan 1758–98
<i>MS 09608/53</i>	–	1761	1761	–	1	1	
Charles Crebbin	1736	1763	1802	1817	42	19	ch. St Matthew's 1765–9; Santan 1769–1817; ch. St George's 1781–1817
Thomas Cubbon	1739	1765	1812	1828	28	12	Santan 1765–9; Maughold 1769–1814; Lonan 1814–17; Bride 1817–28
Total					156	90	

¹¹Most details after Gelling (1998) (dc. = deacon, c. = curate, ch. = chaplain, p. = priest; references to parishes mean incumbency as vicar or rector unless otherwise stated).

Jurby 1753 August 19th 9 *Sunday after Trinity* — Manks
 1754 August 11th 9 *Trinity* — Manks
 1755 September 21st 17 *Sunday after Trinity*: Ballaugh Manks
 Ramsey 28th 18 *Sunday* [after Trinity] English
 Jurby October 19th 21st *Trinity* Manks
 Kirk Andrews November 2d 23 *Sunday after Trinity* Manks
 Jurby November 14th 1756 22^d *Sunday after Trinity* Manks
 Ballaugh August 7th 1757 9 *Sunday after Trinity* Manks
 Jurby November 6th 22 *Sunday after Trinity* Manks
 1758 October 29th 23 [Sunday after] *Trinity* Manks
 1760 January 27th 3 *Sunday after Epiphany* Manks
 1761 March 29th 1 *Sunday after Easter* Manks
 1762 April 15 1 *Sunday after Easter* Manks. (William Crebbin
 1753, MS 05724/4, p. 31)

Crebbin preaches this bilingual sermon twelve times in Manx between 1753 and 1762, and only once in English, and that in the chapel in the market town of Ramsey. The other occasions are all in the more thoroughly Manx-speaking rural parishes of Jurby (his own), and the neighbouring Andreas and Ballaugh. In addition to being reused on multiple occasions by their original creator, sermon manuscripts were also sometimes borrowed or inherited by other preachers (cf. Lewin 2015), as explicit notes in the manuscripts sometimes attest. How extensive these practices were and how they were arranged remains a topic for further investigation.

2.4. *Broader historical context*

Aside from their intrinsic linguistic value for scholars of the Gaelic languages, the Manx manuscripts arguably rank as one of the most important collections of Anglican sermons in existence, and have the potential to make a significant contribution to the emerging interdisciplinary field of Sermon Studies (Francis 2012). Unlike many contemporary English sermon collections (Chamberlain 2012: 47), most Manx sermons have readily identifiable writers; almost all of them are intended for regular parish preaching; and the material belongs uniformly to the established church. The language of the sermons also presents research opportunities beyond its purely philological value. The use of Manx ties their provenance to the Isle of Man, and to the tight-knit clerical networks of the Church of England's smallest diocese. The incomplete standardization of the written language provides greater scope for study of linguistic variation than the relatively linguistically homogeneous English sermons of the same period. The sermons are also of considerable interest for Manx religious and broader social history, in terms of their content, as well as additional information sometimes included in the manuscripts, such as details of penances performed by parishioners and other incidents of note in parish life, but space precludes discussion of these important matters in the present article.

Turning to the broader tradition of sermon-making in the Gaelic languages, it is useful to compare the Manx corpus with the manuscript sermons found in

Irish and Scottish Gaelic. There is no shortage of manuscript sermons copied or composed in Irish in our period (Ó Dúshláine 1996; Mac Murchaidh 2004; Tracey 2019), but they are quite distinct from the Manx material. Most importantly, the number of extant Manx sermons greatly exceeds that found in Irish; Ó Dúshláine (1996: 86–7) enumerates approximately 226 Irish sermons but this includes printed as well as manuscript sermons.¹² All of the extant chronologically comparable manuscript sermons found in Irish are of Catholic provenance, many preserved in Maynooth (Ó Fiannachta 1993), although some Protestant sermons did appear in print. A striking point of distinction between the Manx manuscript sermons and those in Irish is the anonymity of many of the Irish sermons, no doubt related to the legally liminal status of Catholic clergy in eighteenth-century Ireland (Ó Dúshláine 1996: 92–7; Ó Doibhlin 2000: 23; Tracey 2019: 111). Neither are dates of preaching found in the Irish manuscript sermons with the regularity of the Manx corpus, although some later collections such as that of Pádraig de Bhál (*fl.* 1812–33) buck this trend (Ó Dúshláine 1996: 110). Other sermons such as *Seanmóir Aoine an Chéasta*, composed by the Franciscan Seán Ó Dúlaidh in the seventeenth century have been absorbed into the manuscript tradition of the eighteenth and nineteenth century as canonical texts to be read and copied by non-clerics, rather than to be preached, and are therefore further removed from the context of composition and delivery (Ó Dúshláine 1996: 86, 89). A point which has often invited superficial comparison with the case of Manx is that a good number of the extant Catholic manuscript sermons in Irish from our period were written in an English-based orthography (Ó Fiannachta 1993; 1968; Ó Súilleabháin 1965; O’Sullivan 1944). The frequent characterization by some commentators of English-based orthographic practices as ‘repellent’ (O’Rahilly 1932: 20), ‘debased’ (Mac Lochlainn 1968: 116) or ‘barbartha’ (Ó Muraíle 2004: 79) has perhaps had the unfortunate result that such material, including many sermons, has been deemed less worthy of study.

Extant Scottish Gaelic sermons of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are, unsurprisingly, overwhelmingly Presbyterian. The earliest surviving printed collection is that printed in North Carolina in 1791, having been preached at Raft Swamp, inland from Cape Fear (Meek 2002: 97). As with the Irish manuscripts, Scottish Gaelic manuscript sermons do not approach the volume of those found in Manx. A number of significant collections associated with individual clergymen nonetheless exist. Besides a single seventeenth-century outlier (Ó Baoill 1983: 96), the largest collections are those of the eighteenth-century clergymen Rev. Donald MacNicol of Lismore and Rev. Archibald McLea of Rothesay (approximately 90 and 37 respectively) (Gunderloch 2007: 19, 26–7). A manuscript containing 36 sermons composed by Rev. Hugh MacDiarmid during the 1770s has been preserved in Inverness Library but has largely evaded scholarly notice to

¹²Neither does the figure include the multiple copies of individual sermons found in the extensive Irish manuscript record of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. For printed Catholic sermons of the period in Irish, see especially Mac Murchaidh (2004; 2009; 2012).

date.¹³ To these one may add other eighteenth-century collections such as the eight sermons in the McFarlan papers in Glasgow University (Gunderloch 2007: 14), four sermons of Rev. Charles Stewart of Strathchur (Ó Baoill 1983: 92–3) and a smaller number composed by the Sutherland cleric Rev. John Mackay which are to be dated slightly earlier in the eighteenth century and are some of the ‘earliest examples of extended vernacular [Scottish] Gaelic prose’ (Thomson 1961). Of these Scottish Gaelic manuscript sermons, only the latter have been printed, and all await any detailed scholarly analysis.

Thus, in a greater Gaelic context, the volume of the Manx manuscript sermons is entirely exceptional. Not only does the absolute number of manuscript sermons found in Manx greatly exceed that found in either Irish or Scottish Gaelic, no individual Irish or Scottish sermon author produces the volume of sermons produced by the most prolific of the Manx authors. So too does the Manx manuscript sermon corpus, both geographically and diachronically, provide a density of coverage which is not found in the other Gaelic languages, and is rare elsewhere. The extensive paratextual apparatus relating to authorship and date of preaching so readily available in the case of Manx is generally not found in Irish and is only sporadically found in Scottish Gaelic (cf. Gunderloch 2007: 27). It is likely that the survival of so much sermon material in Manx is, in part, a fortuitous side-effect of the paucity of other genres and text types in the language, and the complete absence of the secular vernacular manuscript tradition found in Gaelic Ireland and Scotland. As a result, Manx sermons, as well as the carvals, seem to have attracted greater attention during the early period of antiquarian and revivalist interest in the language from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, while comparable material in the other Gaelic languages has ranked lower in the estimation of collectors and scholars.

3. ORTHOGRAPHY

Despite a tendency in scholarship to view Manx orthography as ‘an English monstrosity which obscures both pronunciation and etymology’ (Jackson 1955: 108), more balanced assessments (Thomson 1984: 307; Broderick 2009: 306–7; Lewin 2020: 58–80; 2022) have acknowledged that the system represents a sophisticated attempt to represent Gaelic sounds using adapted English-based conventions, balancing phonological transparency with other concerns such as semantic differentiation of homophones, real or presumed etymologies, and accommodation of different idiolects and dialects, as demonstrated in the discussion below. Extensive variation in orthography can be observed in the early manuscript sermons and other texts dating from before the publication of the Book of Common Prayer in 1765 and the final part of the Bible in 1772, alongside gradual crystallization of norms and conventions. Table 2 (pp. 136–43) shows the spelling of frequent lexical items in pre-1772 Manx sermon manuscripts and certain other texts (the Phillips

¹³Our thanks to Dr Domhnall Uilleam Stiùbhart for bringing this material to our attention. The manuscript sermons in Inverness Library are distinct from the volume of sermons printed in 1804, after MacDiarmid’s death.

Prayer Book manuscript and five printed texts).¹⁴ Dates for the sermon authors are of their earliest extant dated sermon; for other texts it is the date of printing, or probable date of composition (the Manx retelling of *Paradise Lost*).¹⁵ For the forms cited from Phillips, the extremely variable diacritics of this text (Wheeler 2020a) are ignored except in a couple of instances where they illustrate an affinity with Woods.

To gain an approximate measure of the degree to which the orthography of these texts and authors conforms to the standard of the completed Bible, each entry in Table 2 was given a score of 1 (full or substantial agreement with the standard), 0.5 (partial agreement; either an intermediate form or forms, or variation between standard and divergent forms), or 0 (full or substantial divergence from the standard). The results are shown in Chart 1 (p. 144). A second measure uses average Levenshtein distances (Sankoff and Kruskal 1983: 18; Kessler 1995) in 200-word samples from the relevant texts or authors,¹⁶ that is, the number of one-character additions, subtractions or substitutions necessary to turn the original spelling into the Bible standard orthography (see Table 3, p. 144).¹⁷ The results are shown in Chart 2 (p. 145).

The following sections discuss specific patterns which can be observed in the data.

¹⁴At the time the data were assembled, transcription of the sermon sub-corpus was approximately 85% complete. It is thus possible that some variant forms have been overlooked, although in general this is unlikely to affect the results substantially.

¹⁵Wheeler (2020c) makes a strong argument that this text was composed not by Thomas Christian (1754–1828, vicar of Marown 1779–99), as previously assumed (e.g. by Thomson 1995), but by his paternal grandfather, also Thomas Christian (vicar of Rushen 1713–27, vicar of Marown 1734–52). See also Ó Muircheartaigh (2020) for recently discovered details of the textual history of the poem. As Wheeler (2020c: 5) observes, linguistic, orthographic and typographical features of the 1796 version suggest it was printed from a manuscript of early to mid-eighteenth century provenance, and ‘appears not to have been proof-read or corrected by anyone’.

In fact, the text closely matches the orthography of one of our sermon writers, William Crebbin (curate of Jurby 1743–51; Vicar of Jurby 1751–1803). Shared forms include *caerraghey* ‘punish(ment)’ (*kerraghey*, G. *caireaghadh*), <ch> for word-internal /x/, *ec eh* ‘at him’ (*echey* ‘at him’, G. *aige*), *eiee* (*ee* ‘eat’, G. *ithe*), *goayll* (*goaill* ‘take’, G. *gabháil*), *hein* (*hene* ‘self’, G. *féin*), word-final <h> e.g. *gooh* (*goo* ‘word’, G. *guth*), <iea> for /iə/ (G. *ia*, *éa*), *unaan* (*unnane* ‘one’, G. *aonán*), *veeys* (*vees* ‘will be’, G. *bhías*, *bhíos*), *wheeish* (*wheesh* ‘as much’, G. *a choibhéis*).

It is likely, then, that the lost manuscript which formed the basis of the 1796 printed version of the Manx *Paradise Lost* was a copy in the hand of William Crebbin, or at least that Crebbin’s own orthographic practices and those of the putative manuscript are closely connected (perhaps having acquired Manx literacy from a common source). Crebbin appears to have been a particularly conscientious and methodical writer, translator and copier of his own large corpus of bilingual sermons, which seem to be neat copies with few errors and emendations, so he fits the profile of someone who might have taken an active interest in the poem.

¹⁶With regard to the sermon writers, in most cases the opening section of the earliest dated extant text was taken. Certain words, notably proper names without specific Manx forms, were omitted as they were unlikely to show variation.

¹⁷Levenshtein distance is better known in historical linguistics as a means for measuring interrelationships between dialects (cf. Ó Muircheartaigh 2015: 65–6).

Table 2. Spelling of frequent lexical items in pre-1772 Manx sermon MSS and other texts.

<i>Bible spelling</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>Gaelic cognate</i>	<i>variable</i>	Phillips prayer book	John Woods	COYRLE SODJEH
1772 / 1819				c. 1610	1696	1707
1 aym; ayd	at me; you	agam; agad, -t	spelling	aym; ayd	ayds	aym; ayd
2 ayn; ayns	in him, it; in	ann; ins-	spelling	ayn; ayns	on; ayns (<i>Ipl</i> aynin)	ayn; ayns
3 ayrn	part	earrann	spelling	ayrn, arn, æarn	ayrn	ayrn, y niarn
4 beayn	eternal	buan	spelling	buan, byan	–	beayn
5 cha	not	cha	spelling	gha	gha	cha
6 clagh	stone	cloch	/a/, /o/	klagh	chlagh	–
7 cur; coyrt	give, put, send	cur, tabhairt	spelling	kurr, kur; toyrt	curr; hoyrt, choyrt	cur; choyrt
8 deiney	men	daoine	spelling	dene, deney	denya	deney
9 dooinney	man	duine	spelling	duyne, duyney, duny, dyne, duiney, duinyney, duyiny	dwyne, gwyne	dooinney, doinney
10 dtY	your <i>sg</i>	do	spelling	dy, tdy, thy, dthy, t'	tdy	dtY, dy
11 e	his, her, its	a	spelling	y, ý	ý	e
12 echey	at him, it	aige	spelling	agge, aggy	agge	echey
13 eh, e	he, it	é	spelling	e, é	é, e	e ‘he’, eh ‘it’
14 -ey	<i>final</i> /ə/	-a, -e, -adh	spelling	-y, -ey, -iy, -e, -a	-ey, -a, -e, -y	-ey, -eh
15 fakin	see <i>vn</i>	<i>SGc</i> faicinn	spelling	fak(k)in, fak(k)yn, fackin	fackin	fakin
16 goaill /go:ɫ/	take <i>vn</i>	gabháil	spelling	goyl	goyl	goal
17 gow /gau/	take	gabh	spelling	gou	gow	gow, gou

Philip Moore	<i>PARADISE LOST</i>	William Crebbin	<i>NOO MIAN</i>	William Mylrea	Robert Christian
1722	c. 1730–50 [pr. 1796]	1743	1748	1752	1752
aym; aad, aid	aym; ayd	aym, ayd	aym, ayd	ayd's	–
ayn, ayns	ayn; ayns	ayn; ayns	ayn; ayns	aun; ayns (<i>2pl</i> ayneeyn, <i>3pl</i> ayn-dhoosyn)	ayn; ayns (<i>3pl</i> aundoo)
aarn, arn, airn, niarn	ayrn, aarn	ayrn	–	arn	aarn
bean	beayn, bean(tys)	beoyrn	veayn	–	bean
ha, cha	cha	cha	cha	cha	cha
cloagh, chloghey, chloaghey	clagh, cloghe	–	clagh, clogh	–	–
cur; coart, coyrt	cur; curt, coyrt	cur; choyrt	cur; coyrt	chur; coart	cur; choyrt
deaney, -eh, deney, deiney, -eh	dieney	deney	deney	dheaney	yeigney, yeigne
doinch, -ey, dooineh, doinneh, dooinneey	dooinneey, doinney	dooinneey, dionney, doinney, dioonneey	dooinneey	dooinneey, ghoiney	doigne, h, dooigneey
dt, dy	dt, dy	dthy, dt, dy	dt, dy	–	dy, dt, dy
eh, e, y	eh, e, 'e	eh	e	y	y
eckey	echey, ec eh, ecca	ec eh, ec e	echey	ecchey, eckey, ecche(h)	eggey
eh	eh, e	eh 'he', e 'it'	e 'he', eh 'it'	eh	eh
-ey, -eh, -y, -a, -ah, -ea	-ey, -eh	-ey, -eh	-ey	-ey, -eh	-ey, -eh
fakin	fakin, fackin, aikin	faikin, fakin	fakin	fackin	faakin
goal, goail	goayl(l), goaill, goal(l), goail	goayll, goayl, goall	goall	goal, goayl	goal, yhoal, ghoal, ghoall
gou, ghow	gou, gow	gou, gouh, gow	gow	gou	gow

<i>Bible spelling</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>Gaelic cognate</i>	<i>variable</i>	NLW Rhŷs A3/10	James Wilks	MSS 05727/1, /10
1772 / 1819				1752	1753	1756
1 aym; ayd	at me; you	agam; agad, -t	spelling	aym	ayms	ayms; ayd
2 ayn; ayns	in him, it; in	ann; ins-	spelling	ayne; uns, ayns	ayns (<i>Ipl</i> aynin; aynshoh 'here')	oan; ayn (ayn shoh 'here')
3 ayrn	part	earrann	spelling	ayrn	ayrn, arn, aryn, airn	arn
4 beayn	eternal	buan	spelling	–	vean, veayn	beayn
5 cha	not	cha	spelling	cha	cha, ha	ha, cha
6 clagh	stone	cloch	/a/, /o/	–	–	clogh
7 cur; coyrt	give, put, send	cur, tabhairt	spelling	cur; corte	cur; coyrt	cur; coyrt
8 deiney	men	daoine	spelling	deney	deiney, gheney	deinney
9 dooiney	man	duine	spelling	dooney, doney	dooine(n)ey, ghoine(n)ey	doinney, dooiney
10 dt̩y	your <i>sg</i>	do	spelling	dy	dt̩y, dy	dt̩y, dy
11 e	his, her, its	a	spelling	ay	e	eh, y
12 echey	at him, it	aige	spelling	eggey	echey, eggey	echey
13 eh, e	he, it	é	spelling	ey, ay	eh, e	eh
14 -ey	<i>final</i> /ə/	-a, -e, -adh	spelling	-ey	-ey	-ey, -eh, -ah, -a
15 fakin	see <i>vn</i>	<i>SGc</i> faicinn	spelling	fackin	fackin, faikin	fakkin
16 goaill /go:ɫ̪/	take <i>vn</i>	gabháil	spelling	goal, goall	goail, goaill, ghoaile	goal
17 gow /gau/	take	gabh	spelling	gow	gow	gow

Joseph Cosnahan	Henry Corlett	Thomas Quayle	Charles Crebbin	YN FER- RAAUEE CREESTEE	GOSPELS & ACTS	Thomas Cubbon
1756	1758	1760	1763	1763	1763	1765
aym; ayd	aym	aym	aym; ayd	aym; ayd	aym; ayd	ayms; ayd
ayn; ayns	aun, ayn; aunz, auns	ayne: ayns (1pl. ainde(e)n, aindi/yn, 3pl. aindoo)	ayn; ayns	ayn; ayns	ayn; ayns	oan; ayns, oans
aarn	ayrn, arn, aarn	arn	aarn, arn, ayrn, niarn	ayrn	ayrn	arn, aarn, ayrn, airn
—	beon	—	beayn, vean, beon	beayn, vean	beoyrn	biean, beayn
cha	cha	cha	cha	cha	cha	cha
—	—	—	cloghyn	clagh	clagh	—
cur; corte	cur; coyrt, curt	cur; choyr	cur; coyrt, curt	cur; coyrt	cur; coyrt	cur; coyrt, coart
deiney	deiney, dteniey, deniey	deiney	deiney, deinney	deiney	deiney	deiney, deineh, deeneh
doinney, dooiney	dooiney, dooinney, dtoinn(i)ey, dtuinn(i)ey, dtoo(n)ey, dtooniey	dooiney, dooinney	dooinney, dooiney	dooinney	dooinney	dooiney, dooinney
dt	dt, dth, dy	dt	dt, dth	dt, dy	dt, dy	dt
e, y	e, eh	e	e, y	e	e	y, eh, e
ecchey	echey, ecchey, ecchysyn	echey	echey	echey	echey	eckey
eh, e	eh, y	eh, e	eh	eh	eh	eh, e, y
-ey, -eh	-ey	-ey	-ey, -eh	-ey, -eh	-ey	-ey, -eh
fakin	fakin, fagyn, fakyn	fackin	faikin, akin, fackin	fakin	fakin	fakin
goal, goaill, goail	goail, goaill	goal	goaill, goal, goall	goaill, goail	goaill	goail, goal, goaill
ghow	gow	gow	gou, gow	gow, ghoul	gow	gow, ghoul

<i>Bible spelling</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>Gaelic cognate</i>	<i>variable</i>	Phillips prayer book	John Woods	<i>COYRLE SODJEH</i>
1772 / 1819				c. 1610	1696	1707
18 hene	self	féin	spelling, form	heyn, hæyn, hæyn hiyn, hieyn	hæyn	hene
19 jeeagh	look, show	déach	spelling	jeagh, jagh	jaghin	jeagh
20 lheid	such	leithéid	spelling	leid, leyd, leidg	læid	leid
21 lhisagh	should, ought	dhleasadh	spelling; /e, i, a, o/ /s, ʃ/	lessagh, le(s)shagh(t)	lissiagh	lishagh
22 (ny) lomarcan	alone, only	ina lomracán	spelling	lymyrkan, lymarkan, lomarkan, lomyrkan	lomarkyn	lomarcan
23 mastey	among	i measc	/e/, /a/ /sk/, /st/	masky, maskey	masty	maskey
24 mooar	big, great	mór	spelling; /ua/, /o:/	muar, muyr	moara, woar	mooar
25 (dy/nagh) nee, re	<i>copula</i>	an é, gur é	<i>nee</i> v. <i>re</i> , spelling	næ, ni(i), ræ, re(e)	ny, nee, ne	nee
26 ny	do not	ná	spelling	na	–	ny
27 ooilley	all	uile	spelling, /-u/, /-ə/	ully	ullu	ooilley
28 peccah	sin	peacadh	spelling	peky, pecky, pecca peke	pecca	peccah
29 seihll	world	saoghal	spelling	syyl	syyl	seihl, seihll
30 seose, heose, neose	up, down	suas, thuas, anuas	spelling <eo>	s(h)uas, syas, shus	seas; neas	seose
31 shass	stand	seas(amh)	/ʃ/, /s/	shassu	–	shassoo
32 shenn	old	sean	/e/, /a/	shan(n), shen(n)	shan	–
33 smessey	worse. worst	is measa	/e/, /a/	smassey	–	smassey
34 veagh, beagh	would be	bheadh, bhiadh	spelling, form	veagh, beagh	beagh	veagh, beagh
35 wheesh	as much	a choibhéis	spelling	ghuish, ghuis, ghuæis	wheesh	chooish
36 yeearree	desire	iarraidh	spelling	yieri, ieriji	–	gearee, gearree

Philip Moore	<i>PARADISE LOST</i>	William Crebbin	<i>NOO MIAN</i>	William Mylrea	Robert Christian
1722	c. 1730–50 [pr. 1796]	1743	1748	1752	1752
hene	hein, heen	hein, hene, heen	hene	hene	hene
jeagh	jeagh, jeeagh, jieagh	jieagh, jeagh, jeeagh	jeagh	yeaghyn	yeagh
lleid, leid	leid	leyd, leid	leid	lheid	lheid
lissagh, liassagh, lishagh	lishagh	lishagh	lishagh	lhissagh	lishagh, lhishagh, lhissagh
lomarcán, lommarcán	lomercan	lomercan, lomarcán	lomarcán	lomarkyn	lomarcán
maskey, mastey	mastey, maskey	meskey	mastey	maskey	mastey
moar, mooar	mooar	mooar, moar	moar	moar	vooar
ny, ne, nee, re, ry, reh	nee	nee, re	nee	—	ne, re
na, nah	ny, nagh	ny, na	ny	nagh, \ny/ ooilley, ooilleu, oilleu	neh, nagh ooilley, oilley
ooilley, ooilleh	ooilley	ooilley, ooilleu	ooilley		
peccah	peccah	peccah	peccah	peccah, pecca	peccah
sei(h)l	seihll	seihl(l)	seihl(l)	seihl	seyll, teill
seose; neose	seo(y)se; heose; neoy(s)e	seoyse	seose	seose	seouse
shassoo, sassoo	shassoo	shassoo	shassoo	sassoo	—
shen, shendiaght, \chandiaght/	shen, chenn	shian, chian	shen	—	—
smessey, smassey/h	smassey, smessey	smessey	smessey	smassey	—
ve(e)agh, vagh; be(e)agh, chooish, wheesh	veagh, bieagh(t) wheesh	vieagh; bieagh, beeagh wheesh	veagh wheesh	beagh wheesh	veagh, beagh whoosh
gearree, yearee, yeearreenyn	gearree, earree	yearee	yearree	yearry, yeareey, — \geearree/	

<i>Bible spelling</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>Gaelic cognate</i>	<i>variable</i>	NLW Rhŷs A3/10	James Wilks	MSS 05727/1, /10
1772 / 1819				1752	1753	1756
18 hene	self	féin	spelling, form	hene	hene	hene
19 jeeagh	look, show	déach	spelling	jeaghyn	jeeaghyn, jeaghyn	jeaghyn
20 lheid	such	leithéid	spelling	leid	leid	leid, liead, lied
21 lhisagh	should, ought	dhleasadh	spelling; /e, i, a, o/ /s, ʃ/	–	liosagh	lishagh
22 (ny) lomarcan	alone, only	ina lomracán	spelling	–	lomarcyn, lomarkyn, lomarcan	lomarcan
23 mastey	among	i measc	/e/, /a/ /sk/, /st/	maskey	maskey	mestey, mesty
24 mooar	big, great	mór	spelling; /ua/, /o:/	mooar	moar	mooar, moar
25 (dy/nagh) nee, re	<i>copula</i>	an é, gur é	<i>nee</i> v. <i>re</i> , spelling	–	ne, re	nee, re
26 ny	do not	ná	spelling	na	na, nagh	–
27 ooilley	all	uile	spelling, /-u/, /-ə/	ooilley	ooilley, oilley, ooilleh	ooilley
28 peccah	sin	peacadh	spelling	peckey, <i>adj.</i> peckoill	peccah, pecca	peccah
29 seihll	world	saoghal	spelling	seill	seihl(l), seiltagh ‘worldly’	seihll, teihll
30 seose, heose, neose	up, down	suas, thuas, anuas	spelling <eo>	seose	seose; neose	seose
31 shass	stand	seas(amh)	/ʃ/, /s/	sassoo	sassoo	shashoo
32 shenn	old	sean	/e/, /a/	–	shen, chen	shenn
33 smessey	worse. worst	is measa	/e/, /a/	smassey	–	–
34 veagh, beagh	would be	bheadh, bhiadh	spelling, form	veagh, veeagh	veagh, beagh	veagh, beagh
35 wheesh	as much	a choibhéis	spelling	–	whoish	wheesh, wheish
36 yeearree	desire	iarraidh	spelling	yeariyn	yearee, yearynyn	–

Joseph Cosnahan	Henry Corlett	Thomas Quayle	Charles Crebbin	YN FER- RAAUEE CREESTEE	GOSPELS & ACTS	Thomas Cubbon
1756	1758	1760	1763	1763	1763	1765
hene	hene	hene	hene	hene	hene	hene, heen
jiaghyn	jeaghyn	jeaghyn	jeaghyn, jeeaghyn	jeagh, jeeagh	jeeagh	jeaghyn, jeeaghyn, yieaghyn
lheid	leid, leide	leid	leid	leid	leid	leid
lishagh	lishagh, liasagh, lhisin	lhisagh	liasagh, lishagh	lhisagh	lhisagh	lhyssagh, lhyssagh, lhyshagh
lommarcan, lomarcán	lommarkyn, lomarkyn, lommarkan	lomarcán	lommarcan, lomarcán	lomarcán	lomarcán	lomarcán
—	maskey	mast	mastey	mastey	mastey	mastey
moar	mooar, voar	mooar, moar	mooar, woar	mooar	mooar	mooar, moar
re	re, \reh/ \nee/	nee	nee, re	nee	nee	nee, re, reh
na, nagh ooilley	nagh ooilley	nagh, ny ooilley	ny, nagh ooilley	ny ooilley	ny ooilley	ny, nagh ooilloo, ooilley
peccah	peccah, pecca	peccey	peccah, phēcchah	peccah	peccah	peccaa, peccah
teihl	\seihl/ seilltagh	seihl, seiltagh	seihll	seihll	seihll	seihl, seihll
seoyse, seose	seose	seose	seose	seose	seose	seose, seeose
sassoo	sassoo	sassoo	shassoo	shassoo	shassoo	shassoo
shan, chan	chen	shan, chan	shan, chen	—	chen	chen
smessey	smessey	smassey	smessey, smassey	smessey	smessey	smesseh
viagh, biagh	veagh; beagh, beeagh	veagh, vagh; beagh	veagh; beagh, beeagh	veagh; beagh	veagh	veagh, vieagh
whoosh	wheesh, wheish, chooish	wheish	wheesh, wheish	whoosh	wheesh	wheesh
yearee	yeearee	yearee, gearree	yearee, yearree, yeearee, yeearee	yeearee	yeearee	yearree, yearee, giearee, gearee

Table 3. Levenshtein distances showing divergence between the opening sentence of MS 13221/2/1 (John Woods, 1696) and standard orthography

original orthography	standard orthography	Levenshtein distance
Vel	Vel	0
shiu	shiu	0
quilleena	cooilleeney	5
yn	yn	0
Chairn	Chiarn	2
mar	myr	1
sho	shoh	1
O	O	0
sley	sleih	2
ammijagh	ommijagh	1
as	as	0
gun	gyn	1
tushta	tushtey	2

Chart 1. Adherence of Manx texts c. 1610–1765 to norms of Manx Bible orthography, in 36 frequently-occurring lexical items

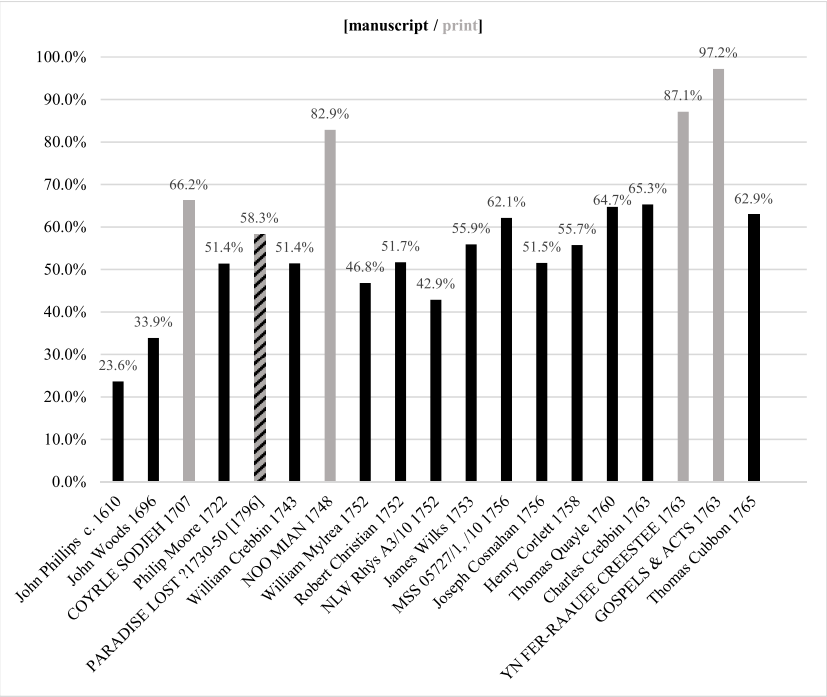
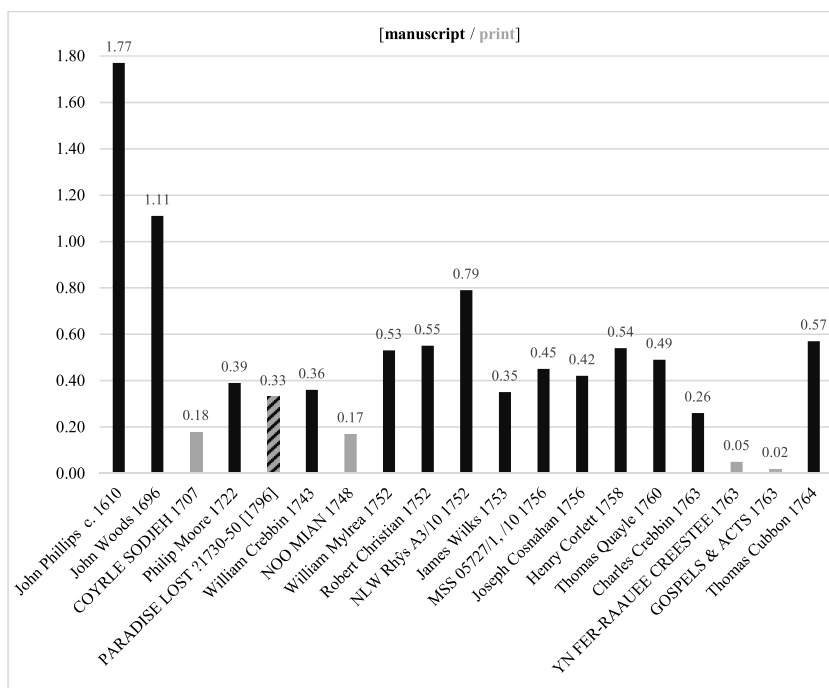


Chart 2. Divergence of Manx texts c. 1610–1765 from norms of Manx Bible (1819) orthography, Levenshtein distances in 200-word samples



3.1. Distinctiveness of Phillips

The biggest watershed is plainly between the seventeenth-century texts of Phillips and John Woods on the one hand (23.6% and 33.9% agreement with the standard respectively), and all the eighteenth-century texts on the other, all of which have scores over 40%, and most over 50%. In terms of Levenshtein distances, the two seventeenth-century texts are the only ones which score over 1, while most of the sermons range between 0.3 and 0.6, and the printed texts (other than *Paradise Lost*) are all under 0.2. It is clear that John Woods deliberately patterned elements of his orthographic usage on the Phillips manuscript which he read and revised (Lewin 2015); apart from this the Phillips system is independent of the later tradition to a significant extent, notwithstanding certain specific continuities discussed below (§3.3). Distinctive spellings shared by the two seventeenth-century texts against all or most of the later texts include:

(5) *cha* ‘not’ (G. *cha*): Phillips / Woods *gha*, rest *cha* or *ha* (reflecting the divergent representation of initial /x/ in the two systems);

(11) *eh* ‘he, him, it’ (G. *é*): Phillips / Woods, *y*, *ý*, rest *e*, *eh*, *y*;

(12) *echey* ‘at him, it’ (G. *aige*): Phillips / Woods *agge*, rest mostly *echey*, *eckey*;

(16) *goaill* ‘take’ (G. *gabháil*): Phillips / Woods *goyl*, rest mostly with <oa>, termination variable;

(29) *seihll* ‘world’ (G. *saoghal*): Phillips / Woods *syyl*, rest mostly with <ei>.

On the other hand, for (28) *peccah* ‘sin’ (G. *peacadh*), where Phillips has *pe(c)ky*, Woods goes with the later norm with <cca>. Similarly for (35) *wheesh* ‘as much’ (G. *a choibhéis*), Phillips has *ghuish*, against Woods and later *wheesh*; although some of the eighteenth-century texts, including notably *Coyrle Sodjeh*, have *chooish*, *whooish*, apparently agreeing with Phillips in pronunciation but not in orthography.

3.2. Printed and manuscript texts

Apart from the major division between the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century texts, the printed texts are notably closer to the standard than contemporary manuscripts: the three later printed texts (excluding *Paradise Lost*) all score above 80%, a figure not approached by any of the manuscripts, and the 1765 Gospel and Acts almost entirely adheres to the standard. The score of 66.2% for the 1707 printed text *Coyrle Sodjeh* is high for its period, and is not exceeded by any of the sermon writers. Charles Crebbin (fl. 1763–1802) has the lowest Levenshtein measure of any of the identified sermon writers (0.26). The level of orthographic standardization in the sermon manuscripts from Philip Moore onwards does not change dramatically, with the partial exception of Crebbin’s Levenshtein score. Crebbin’s earliest work dates from the 1760s, the period of intensifying activity on Bishop Mark Hildesley’s translation project when a number of near-standard works were published. The relatively high Levenshtein distance for Thomas Cubbon (fl. 1765–1812) shows that increasing print standardization was not necessarily followed in manuscripts, however, a discrepancy which persists through the nineteenth century.

3.3. Continuity from Phillips

Despite the general orthographic distinctiveness of Phillips (and Woods) in comparison with the eighteenth-century texts, the two groups of texts do share some idiosyncratic spellings at the level of individual items or conventions which are unlikely to be coincidences. However, whether these reflect a shared origin predating Phillips, or that the Phillips text itself had some influence on the later norms, is difficult to determine owing to the scant survival of textual material before the mid-eighteenth century, as discussed above. Perhaps the most striking is the 2 sg. possessive (10) *dt̩y* ‘your’ (G. *do*), Phillips *tdhy* etc., Woods *tdy*, later *dt̩y* (also *dthy*). Although the order of the letters and presence or absence of <h> varies, initial *dt̩-* / *td̩-* is idiosyncratic both from English norms and within Manx orthography.¹⁸ The probable motivations are the existence of

¹⁸However, the use of initial <dt̩-> in other words is a notable feature of the manuscript sermons of Henry Corlett, e.g. *dt̩aa* ‘two’ (*daa*, G. *dá*), *dt̩aue* ‘to them’ (*daue*, G. *dóibh*), *dt̩aney* ‘bold’ (*daaney*, G. *dána*), *dt̩eney* ‘men’ (*deiney*, G. *daoine*), and is found occasionally in other texts. The motivation of this usage is presumably to emphasize the dental articulation of Gaelic /d/, as

allomorphs /də/ and prevocalic /t-/ (G. *do*, *t'*) (Lewin 2015: 72–3); disambiguation from the many homophones /də/ spelled *dy* (G. *do*, *de*, *go*, *dá* etc.); and possible association with English *thy*. The convention **(14) -ey** for final schwa, which is uniformly observed in the eighteenth-century standard with a handful of lexical exceptions, is a further example of a distinctive grapheme common to the Classical Manx orthography and the Phillips text (where however it coexists with a number of other options, as it does in some of the eighteenth-century manuscripts).

In **(1) *aym*, *ayd*** ‘at me, you’ (G. *agam*, *agad*), **(2) *ayn*, *ayns*** ‘in’ (G. *ann*), and **(3) *ayrn*** ‘part’ (G. *earrann*), the eighteenth-century standard displays a further convention from the earlier period, the use of <y> as a marker of length, a feature of northern Middle English and Older Scots orthography (Vikar 1922: 9–10, 93–94; Kniezsa 1997; Williams 1994: 705). This remains straightforwardly functional in *ayrn* /a:rn/ ‘part’, with regular lengthening before the sonorant cluster (G. *earrann* > **eārn*). In *aym*, *ayd* the usage is explicable if we assume Early Manx */a:m, a:d/ with long vowels after the elision of original intervocalic /g/ (<*agam*, *agad*), although these are found with short /e/, /a/ or /i/ in Late Manx (HLSM ii, 16). Similarly, the spelling *ayn* (*ayns*, *ayndoo* etc.) for G. *ann* makes sense if we assume /a:N/ in Phillips’ time (or somewhat earlier, if Phillips was himself drawing on an established convention); compare Phillips *kian* ‘head’ (G. *ceann*) */k^ja(:)N/, eighteenth-century *kione*, the later spelling reflecting lengthening and rounding to southern Manx /k^jo:n/, diphthongal in northern Manx /k^jaun/ (HLSM i, 161). In Late Manx *ayn* is realized as southern /o(:)n/, northern /u(:)n/ (? < */aun/) (HLSM ii, 16). Possibly the spelling *ayn* was retained as a distinctive compromise spelling bridging fluctuating pronunciations, although some sermon authors have spellings such as *aun*, *oan*, *on*, which better reflect the phonetic reality.

3.4. Conventional spellings of individual lexemes

Although the sermon manuscripts in our period display significant orthographic variation, there appears to have been a feeling that certain frequently occurring items had standard spellings, or at least standard elements, which even the more orthographically divergent writers tend to observe:

- The idiosyncratic spelling **(12) *echey***¹⁹ ‘at him’ (G. *aige*) is found in *Coyrle Sodjeh* and the later Biblical standard, and it or close variants (e.g. Joseph Cosnahan’s *ecchey*) are used by most of the sermon authors,

opposed to the English alveolar stop also found in Manx in loanwords (Lewin 2020: 96). Although Corlett employs <dt> in nasalized forms such as *er nyn dtayrn* (G. *iarna dtarraing*), this is almost certainly a coincidence rather than any reflection of Irish orthographic influence.

¹⁹It is difficult to explain the spelling *echey*. Possibly it represents a folk etymology incorporating English *he*. The apparent indication of an unvoiced consonant probably represents the analogy of the simple preposition *ec* (with devoicing of final /g¹/ found also in e.g. *aspick* ‘bishop’, ScG *eas-baig*), and/or hypercorrection owing to incipient medial lenition; (cf. William Crebbin’s *omichagh* for *ommijagh* ‘foolish’, G. *amaideach*); more tentatively we might link the use of <ch> with the realization of the medial stop as a fricative [ɣ] attested in Late Manx (HLSM ii, 141).

although other spellings occur, including the more phonologically transparent *eggey*, the more orthographically rule-conforming *eckey*, and the semantically decomposed *ec eh*.

- Similarly, for **(16) goaill** ‘take’ (G. *gabháil*) most writers have standard <oa>, although there is variation as to the presence of <i> and single or double <l(l)>.
- Most writers have standard **(18) hene** ‘self’ (G. *féin*) *hene*, rather than the less ambiguous *hein* or *heen* (see below §3.8).
- **(29) seihll** ‘world’ (G. *saoghal*) usually has <ei>, often with <h>, and with variation as to single or double <l(l)>, even though a spelling such as Robert Christian’s *seyll* would less ambiguously represent the pronunciation /sə:l/.²⁰
- Most writers have standard **(28) peccah** ‘sin’ (G. *peacadh*) or a close variant thereof (*pecca*, *pecchah*, *peccaa*), consciously reflecting the ultimate Latin etymology *peccatum*, although the anonymous NLW text has *peckey*, the expected spelling under the wider conventions of the orthography.
- **(30) seose** ‘up’ (G. *suas*) is usually spelt with <eo>, even by authors who do not otherwise make extensive use of this digraph (see below).
- One might also cite the use of **(15) fakin** ‘see’ (SGc *faicinn*) ‘see’, one of the spellings in Phillips, and widely observed in the pre-1772 texts alongside other variants such as *fackin*, *faakin*, *fagyn*, *faikin*. The expected spelling in line with the historical short vowel is *fackin*; the spellings *fakin* and *faakin* may reflect incipient vowel lengthening (Lewin 2020: 406–7) (*faikin* probably represents the medial slender /k^l/), while Henry Corlett’s *fagyn* represents medial voicing; both developments are universal in the attested realizations from the last speakers (HLSM ii, 157).

3.5. Phonological transparency

The Biblical standard represents certain contrasts more unambiguously than some of the earlier eighteenth-century texts, demonstrating that a concern for sound-symbol transparency was certainly one of the pressures influencing the evolution of the orthography, if not always the decisive one (Lewin 2022: 43–5). For example, the digraph <ea> is used indiscriminately in the majority of the pre-1772 texts for both the long monophthong /e:/ and the diphthong /iə/ (G. *ia*, also ‘broken’ *é*), the latter being generally represented by <eea> in the standard orthography, as in **(19) jeeagh** ‘look’ (G. *déach*) and **(36) yeeearree** ‘desire’ (G. *iarraidh*), as well as <ia> in a couple of items, e.g. *grian* ‘sun’, Philip Moore *grean*. Indeed <eea> is absent or rare in many of the manuscript texts except where there is a syllable (and morpheme) boundary, e.g. *Creesteeaght* /'kri:sti.axt/ ‘Christianity, Eucharist’ (G. *Críostaidheacht*). It is possible that

²⁰The digraph <ei> is also used for /e:/, and tends to indicate a following slender consonant (Lewin 2020: 220–1); possibly the use of <h> in *seihll* was felt to block the latter effect.

some instances of *jeagh* represent a conservative pronunciation with unbroken /e:/, as indicated by some of Phillips' spellings of this lexical set (e.g. *beal*, *béal*, *béyl* for standard *beal* 'mouth' G. *béal*) (Lewin 2020: 158–62); but in texts which do not robustly distinguish between /e:/ and /iə/, this cannot be determined one way or the other. Similarly, some writers do not distinguish consistently between <oa> and <ooa>, so an instance of *moar* for (24) *mooar* 'big' (G. *mór*) (Munster Ir *muar*) cannot necessarily be taken as evidence of */mo:r/ over /muər/, although it is possible both forms existed.

The digraph <ea> can also represent the long central vowel /ə:/ (G. *ao(i)*, *uai*) and the fronted diphthong /iə/ (G. *ua*), a usage which persists in the standard orthography in a few items, e.g. *eash* 'age' (G. *aois*), *leagh* 'reward' (G. *luach*). However, this ambiguity is more extensive in some of the early authors, e.g. (4) *beayn* 'eternal' (G. *buan*) which appears as *bean* (Philip Moore, Robert Christian, James Wilks). The sequence <eay> in the standard predominantly represents the *ao(i)* and *ua(i)* vowels (it does not help in distinguishing between them), although it does also represent /e:/ and /iə/ in some words (Lewin 2020: 218). It is worth noting that some of the sermon authors make wider usage of the still more unambiguous digraph <eo> (including <eoy>, <eoh> etc.) for /ə:/ and /iə/, which is not used for the front vowels at all. This grapheme is found in the standard in a few words (ibid., 220), notably (30) *seose* 'up' *suas* etc. discussed above (§3.4),²¹ but finds more extensive use in some of the pre-1772 texts, e.g. *beon* (Charles Crebbin, Henry Corlett), *beoy* (William Crebbin) 'eternal' (*beayn*, G. *buan*); *seorey* (James Wilks), *seoyrey* (Henry Corlett) 'free, acquit' (*seyrey*, G. *saoradh*); *cleonagh* (Henry Corlett) 'coax, seduce' (*cleayn(agh)ey*, G. *claon*).²² The apparent disfavouring of <eo> in the standard may simply be happenstance, but possibly reflects an aversion to graphemes or graphotactic usages which are unusual or absent in English orthography (Lewin 2020: 224; 2022: 51).

Other such usages found in some of the texts, but not adopted in the standard despite their potential utility for increasing phonological transparency, include:

- initial <tch-> for /tʃ/ (G. /tʃ/) (William Crebbin, Robert Christian, Thomas Cubbon, occ. Philip Moore, Joseph Cosnahan) where the standard has <ch>, the latter being used also for initial lenited /x, ç/;
- <kh>, used by certain writers (Henry Corlett, William Crebbin, occ. Philip Moore, Thomas Cubbon) for initial /x, ç/;²³ and

²¹It also has a clearly distinct use for /o:/ in a handful of items, e.g. *ben-treoghe* 'widow' (G. *baintreabhthach*).

²²In *Coyrle Sodjeh* we find *feosle* 'relieve' for standard *feayshil* (G. *fuascail*) and *leoi* 'sooner' (standard *s'leai*, G. *is luaithe*); in *Paradise Lost* there is *cheoy* 'sea' (*keayn*, G. *cuan*), *feon* 'expansive' (*feayn*, G. *fao(i)n*), *beoy* 'eternal' (*beayn*, G. *buan*), *chleosh* 'ear' (*cleaysh*, G. *cluais*), *feoyr* 'cold' (*feayr*, G. *fuair*).

²³Found in print in Psalm 19. 10 *y khere-volley* 'the honey-comb' (G. *an chíor mheala*); <kh> also appears occasionally for unlenited /k, kʲ/ as in *khyrloghe* 'brokenhanded' (G. *?cearr-*, *?corr-*, *?criothlámhach*) (Leviticus 21. 19); and both lenited and unlenited *khing* 'heads' (G. *cinn*) (standard *king*, lenited *ching*) in the 1765 Prayer Book edition of the Psalms.

- <gn> for /nʲ/, as in *gniart* ‘strength’ (standard *niart*, G. *neart*), *gne* ‘thing’ (standard *nhee*, G. *ní*) (Phillips, John Woods, William Crebbin, Robert Christian), found in the standard only in *veign* ‘I would be’ (G. *do bhiainn*), and perhaps *beign* ‘had to’ (SGc *b’ éiginn*).

3.6. Lexical contrasts

As Thomson (1984: 307) notes, Manx ‘spelling [...] has developed an iconic element, in that words of similar or identical pronunciation are as far as possible deliberately spelt differently’ (cf. Lewin 2022: 45–6). Some lexical contrasts are more robustly distinguished in the standard than in the pre-1772 texts, notably in frequently occurring function words. Compare for example the consistent use of (10) *dt̩y* ‘your’ (G. *do*), as opposed to fluctuation between *dt̩y* and *dy* in many of the pre-1772 texts. For the possessive (11) *e* ‘his, her, it’ (G. *a*) and the pronoun (13) *eh* ‘he, him, it’ (G. *é*), some of the earlier texts use *e* or *eh* or both indiscriminately for these two items; some texts make an artificial orthographic distinction between ‘he’ and ‘it’ (maintained in the standard only in contracted forms of the substantive verb, viz. *t’eh*, *v’eh* ‘he is, was’ and *te*, *ve* ‘it is, was’); and there is sometimes conflation between the possessive and the definite article as *y*, with only their differing mutational effects and context distinguishing them. This tendency is also seen in open-class words; for example, the homophones *leih* ‘forgive(ness)’ (G. *logh(adh)*) and *leigh* ‘law’ (SGc *lagh*) (both /l̩əi/) are often conflated orthographically in pre-standard texts.

3.7. By-forms

In many cases the evidence of the sermon manuscripts and the wider Manx corpus shows that two or more by-forms (some of them dialectal variants) were in widespread use in eighteenth-century Manx. In such cases, unless a compromise spelling is available (see below), the standard orthography by necessity comes down in favour of one form or the other, as in:

- (5) *cha* ‘not’ (G. *cha*) representing conservative /xa/, v. *ha* /ha/ — by Late Manx /h/ or complete loss is universal (Rhÿs 1894: 72; *HLSM* ii, 62–68);
- (6) *clagh* ‘stone’ (G. *cloch*, *clach*) with /a/ (northern pronunciation), v. /o/ in *clogh*, *clough* ‘stone’ (southern) (Rhÿs 1894: 161; *HLSM* ii, 80);
- (21) *lhisagh* ‘should’ (G. *dleasadh*), with variation in the stressed vowel and /s/ v. /ʃ/ (see discussion below §4.1);
- standard /e/ v. variant /a/ < G. *ea* in (32) *shenn* ‘old’ (G. *sean*) (southern), variant *shian* (northern) (*HLSM* ii, 398), and (33) *smessey* ‘worse’ (G. *is measa*), variant *smassey*;
- standard /a/ v. variant /e/ < G. *ea* in (23) *mastey* ‘among’ (G. *i measc*), variant *meskey*;
- (23) *mastey* ‘among’ (G. *i measc*) with /st/, more conservative *maskey*, *meskey* with /sk/;

- **(31) *shassoo*** ‘stand’ (G. *seasamh*) with initial /ʃ/ v. *sassoo* with /s/, a back-formation from neutral lenited /h/ (Rhys 1894: 75).

3.8. *Compromise spellings*

In certain items, phonologically ambiguous spellings appear to have been favoured in order to bridge different by-forms:

- We have already mentioned **(2) *ayn, ayns*** (G. *ann*) in this regard as bridging dialectal variants with /o(:)/ and /u(:)/.
- Likewise, the very consistent use of <eo> in **(30) *seose*** ‘up’ (G. *suas*) may be intended to bridge by-forms in /iə/, /uə/ and /o:/, reflecting fronted and back reflexes of G. *ua* and a variant with *ó* (HLSM ii, 389; Lewin 2020: 224).
- **(18) *hene*** ‘self’ (G. *féin*) has /i:/ in attested Late Manx (HLSM ii, 220) (cf. SGc *fhìn*), clearly indicated by *heen* (Thomas Cubbon, *Paradise Lost*) and is found already in Phillips as *hiyn*; however, the older form with /e:/ is indicated by *heyn* (Phillips), *hein* (*Paradise Lost*, William Crebbin). The spelling *hene* exploits the layers of origin and ambiguity of the Manx orthography since it is interpretable under the earlier English and latinate value as /e:/ (cf. *feme* ‘need’ /fe:m/ G. *feidhm*, SGc *feum*) or under the Late Modern English sound-symbol correspondence <e_e> = /i:/.
- The conditional forms of the substantive verb **(34) *veagh, veign*** (G. *do bhiadh, do bheinn*) similarly have spellings capable of bridging by-forms reflecting the historical conditional *do bhiadh*, past subjunctive *do bheadh* (cf. ModIr. *bheadh*), and perhaps past habitual *do bhíodh* (cf. HLSM ii, 471; Broderick 2011), whereas the manuscript spellings *veeagh, vieagh, viagh* more specifically indicates a realization with /iə/; similarly *vagh* must be interpreted with /a/ (*bheadh*) or perhaps /e(:)/.

It was presumably desirable that the orthography of the printed Prayer Book and Bible should be acceptable and minimally confusing to clergy and laity across the island, hence there may have been an impetus to adopt spellings inclusive of differing pronunciations at the expense of some phonological transparency (Lewin 2020: 223–4; 2022: 51). The manuscript sermons, on the other hand, were primarily for the writer’s own personal use, rendering such concerns less relevant. Even so, the incipient standard forms are favoured in many instances. It is likely the ambiguity of these spellings would have caused little difficulty — bearing in mind that practically everyone producing or using these texts was a native or near-native speaker who knew how to pronounce the language — and indeed, such ambiguity may have been less troublesome than specifying a dialectal or idiolectal pronunciation unfamiliar to the individual reader.

4. LINGUISTIC VARIATION AND CHANGE

4.1. Variant forms, dialect and idiolect

It is clear from non-standard writing as well as recorded speech from Late Manx speakers that there was considerably more variation in word forms than is revealed in canonical printed texts. Given the degree of microdialectal variation between settlements and even households in Gaelic-speaking areas studied in recent decades (e.g. Ó Curnáin 1997, 2007; Ó Direáin 2015), it would be unsurprising if a similar degree of variation existed in eighteenth-century Man. While we cannot recover details of the spoken language with the degree of detail possible with access to living speakers and contemporary methodologies — Labov’s (1972, 1994) ‘bad-data problem’ — a good deal can nonetheless be gleaned from the orthographic and other linguistic variation in the manuscript corpus. Frequently, such variation can be traced to by-forms of long standing in the wider Gaelic speech area and literary tradition.

A useful example is the case of the defective verb spelled *lhisagh*, 1sg *lhisin*, in the standard orthography, which is the usual means of expressing ‘should, ought to’ in Manx (item (21) in Table 2). This is a conditional form of the verb *dlighidh*, originally ‘to deserve, merit’, used since Middle Irish in the sense ‘ought’ (*eDIL* s.v. *dligid*, III), a remodelling of an earlier passive construction (*dleaghar damh*). It lacks other tense or non-finite forms in Manx, although *lhiastyn* exists as a verbal noun ‘to owe’. At least six variant forms of *lhisagh* appear to be attested in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century orthographic forms, with variation in the stressed vowel between /i/, /e/, /a/ and /o/, and between /s/ and /ʃ/ for the medial consonant (Table 4):

Table 4. Forms of *lhisagh* in pre-1772 Manx texts

ʃes-	lessagh
ʃef-	leshagh
ʃas-	liassagh, liasagh
ʃis-	lhisagh, lhyssagh, lhissagh
ʃif-	lissiagh, lishagh, lhyshagh
ʃos-	liosagh

The /ʃef-/ and /ʃas-/ forms correspond directly to two forms *do dleisinn* and *do dleasaind* prescribed in *IGT* III, §35 (Bergin 1949–50: 188). On the currently available evidence, the <e> forms are restricted to the Phillips Prayer Book (c. 1610), which is unsurprising given that G. *ea* gives /a/ in most environments in the later language (Lewin 2020: 110–24), although there is a spoken form [l'ɛðq̤x] from the native speaker Thomas Christian (*HLSM* ii, 275). However, this should possibly be analysed as a particularly lax [ɪ] = /i/. The vowel /i/ may have spread from other tenses with *dligh-* forms, and similarly the /o/ form may represent *dleagh-*, if it is not an irregular development from /a/ (or from analogy with another word, perhaps *fod* ‘can’ G. *féad*). Other than the possible /e/ in Thomas Christian’s form, all the attested spoken forms from Late Manx

represent /'lʲisax/ (*HLSM* ii, 275; Broderick 2019: 56). It is quite likely then, that the standard spelling *lhisagh* represents the form which was already the most widespread in the mid-eighteenth century and was chosen on this basis, although conversely the influence of literacy in the standard orthography on spreading this form cannot be ruled out.

Some of the variant forms constitute clearly defined dialect shibboleths in Late Manx between broad northern and southern varieties, such as *clagh* ‘stone’ (G. *cloch*, *clach*), northern /a/, southern /o/ (*clogh*, *cloagh*); and *shenn* ‘old’ (G. *sean*), southern /e/, northern /a/ (*shian*, *shan*) (Rhys 1894: 161; *HLSM* ii, 80, 398). Presumably the usages of individual writers reflect to some extent their own geographic origin; for example, Philip Moore’s use of the spelling *cloagh* accords with his southern origins in Douglas.²⁴ Nevertheless, such evidence should be treated with caution: while a form at variance with the standard may be taken as positive evidence of its existence in the writer’s idiolect, incipient standardization means that use of the standard form is not necessarily evidence that this was the predominant spoken usage of the writer or his district. Moreover, the clergy may be less than ideal witnesses to local usage, given their relative mobility during their careers (they were liable to be appointed to whatever parish was vacant, and promoted to better livings), and in some cases, perhaps, suboptimal linguistic competence (see below §5.3).

It must also be borne in mind that the relatively clear-cut isoglosses between northern and southern forms identified in the speech of the last native speakers (*HLSM* ii, 160–6) may in part reflect the fact that, by their generation, Manx had largely retreated to certain rural districts of the south-west and the north. We have considerably less data from central and eastern parts of the island where language shift appears to have occurred somewhat earlier. Rhys (1894: 15), whose geographic coverage is more comprehensive (Lewin 2019a; Broderick 2019; 2021), provides some evidence that the central eastern parish of Kirk Braddan was a transitional zone, exhibiting the northern diphthongal realization of *doo* ‘black’ /dəu/ (G. *dubh*), but southern monophthongal *ooh* ‘egg’ /u:/ (G. *ugh*). It is interesting to note that Philip Moore’s usage, as a native of Braddan, appears to conform to this mixed pattern; he has *ska dow* ‘[black] shadow’ (standard *scadoo*, G. *scáth dubh*) (MS 05729/2, p. 6) with apparent representation of the northern diphthong, alongside typically southern /o/ in *clough* (standard *clagh*, G. *cloch*) and /e/ in *shen* ‘old’ (standard *shenn*, G. *sean*).

Similarly, the variant of *shassoo* ‘stand’ (G. *seasamh*) (item (31) in Table 2) with initial /s-/ represented by the frequent manuscript spelling *sassoo* appears to have been in free variation with the historical form with /ʃ-/ . Rhys (Broderick 2019: 64) reports fluctuation within a single family and the language of an individual speaker, and conflicting evaluations by his informants as to whether the /s-/ variant was a northern or southern feature. The fact that the *sh*- spelling

²⁴For the traditional delineation between the north and south sides of the island, see Broderick (1999: ix).

was selected in the standard and the existence of such dialectal perceptions may indicate that the /s-/ form had attracted a negative sociolinguistic evaluation.

In some cases, the sermon manuscripts provide evidence that certain forms remained in use which the evidence of printed texts might lead us to suppose were already obsolete. For example, Phillips *gygh yn, dygh yn* ‘each, every’ (G. *gach aon*) is not found in the Classical Manx printed corpus of the eighteenth century, as far as is known, where only *dagh, gagh* (G. *gach*) and *dy chooilley* (G. *gach uile*) appear. However, attestations in the sermons (*dy chun, chun* Philip Moore, *dy cun*, NLW John Rhŷs papers A3/10) show that this form remained current for at least some speakers in the mid-eighteenth century.

On the other hand, forms largely absent from the written record but later dominant in spoken Late Manx are also attested, such as *cha nel* ‘is not’ (G. *chan fheil*) (*gha nell*, Phillips, *cha nell* NLW John Rhŷs papers A3/10), whereas *cha vel* (*cha bhfeil*) is the usual written form. In the language of the last speakers, *cha nel* is universal (HLSM i, 75; ii, 321). According to Cregeen (1835) *cha nel* ‘in colloquial talk, is often the negative answer to the interrogative *vel*’, while ‘[*cha*] *vel* is always used in sacred or solemn discourse’, but Rhŷs (1894: 160–1) records that *cha vel* was still in colloquial use in the south of the island, alongside *cha nel*. The available evidence is consistent with a gradual diffusion of the *n-* form across the Manx speech area during the attested period, as well as the variant forms being a marker of register.

Sometimes an awareness of an incipient standard is shown by revisions within the manuscript texts, where divergent forms are ‘corrected’, whether by the author or a later user of the manuscript. For example, the inflected 3 pl. forms of the substantive verb *taddy* (*tá* + *-adar*) and metathesized *tar ad, tar-rad* (also past *vaddy, varrad*) which are attested into the nineteenth century (Lewin 2014: 4), are sometimes emended to the form used in the Bible and other standard texts, *t’ad* (Ir *tá siad*, SGc *tha iad*):

ga ~~tarad~~ > **t’ad**/ nish goll er nyn doshiagh keaney foast dy jean Jee cur orroo mess y ymmirkey lesh gerjagh; as ga ~~tarad~~ > **t’ad**/ cuirr ayn\\$/ jeir, dy jean ad fy yerrey buinn lesh boggey.
(Charles Crebbin 1764, MS 09608/4: 14)

‘though they now proceed crying yet that God will cause them to bear fruit with comfort; and though they sow in tears, that they will at last reap with joy’.²⁵

It is also common to find interpolated modifications to the rendering of Biblical passages to make them agree with the official printed translation as installments of this became available, although this often applies more strictly to the wording than to the orthography.

²⁵Extracts from the sermon manuscripts are transcribed diplomatically, with deletion of material shown with strikethrough and inserted text given in strokes thus \/. All alterations in these extracts are in the hand of the original scribe, although it is not always possible to tell whether they were made during original composition or at a later date. English texts provided are translations by the present authors, except where an original English text is available and included in the reference, as in the excerpts from the work of William Crebbin below.

4.2. Morphosyntactic variation and change

The eighteenth century was a period of considerable syntactic variation and change in Manx, especially in the verbal system (Thomson 1984: 310, 313; Lewin 2016). Inflected verb forms in the past, future and conditional tenses and the imperative and optative moods were fully interchangeable with a ‘do’-periphrasis construction involving the auxiliary *jean* (G. *déan*) and the verbal noun (e.g. *voyll mee* and *ren mee moylley* ‘I praised’, Ir *mhol mé, rinne mé mol-adh*). The latter became dominant in Late Manx, without, however, ousting the inflected forms entirely, especially in irregular verbs (*HLSM* i, 82–7, 103–4). Furthermore, in constructions involving the verbal noun there was considerable variation in direct object constructions: nominal objects can precede or follow the verbal noun (*Jee y voylley* and *moylley Jee* ‘(to) praise God’, Ir *Dia a mhol-adh, moladh Dé*),²⁶ and pronominal objects can be expressed by a possessive proclitic, a following personal pronoun, or a combination of both; preposed personal pronouns, as in Modern Irish, are also possible (*nyn moylley; moylley shin; nyn moylley shin / y voylley shin; shin y voylley* ‘praise us’, cf. Ir *ár mol-adh, sinn a mholadh*) (Lewin 2016: 181). The following examples from Philip Moore’s sermons illustrate these possibilities:

Possessive proclitic, no pronoun:

lhig doin beaghey ayns ghrai myr ta’n ostyl **dyn goyrlaghey**.
(MS 00277/4, pp. 138–9)

‘let us live in love as the apostle advises us.’

Agreeing proclitic with pronoun:

tra te **dyn vreal ad** vei chingys & \vei/ trimshey. (MS 05729/2,
p. 39)

‘when he keeps them from sickness and from sorrow.’

Generalized third person singular masculine proclitic with pronoun after verbal noun:

ta Jee **dy harey shin** dy ghellal rish, as dy herveish nyn naboo.
(MS 00277/1, p. 5)

‘God commands us to deal with, and to serve our neighbour.’

Pronoun after verbal noun:

As ta’n psalmist **ginsaghey shin**, dy lissagh shin gagh lhaa goal
padjer gys Jee. (MS 00277/2, p. 49)

‘And the psalmist teaches us, that we should each day pray to God.’

²⁶In the progressive, perfect and purposive constructions (*ta mee moylley Jee* ‘I am praising God’, *ta mee er voylley Jee* ‘I have praised God’, *dy voylley Jee* ‘to praise God’) the object can only follow the verbal noun, not precede it.

Pronoun before verbal noun:

nee shoh **shin y yinsaghey** dy ve jeh'n yn \>unn/ chree, jeh'n un
aigney, as yn un annym (MS 00277/1, p. 29)

‘this will teach us to be of the same heart, of the same mind, and
the same soul’

Unlike other aspects of variation discussed above (orthography, word forms, and to some extent morphology), syntactic variation of this kind seems to be fairly freely accepted in the standard language of the printed Bible and other works, and appears to be exploited for stylistic purposes, especially in rendering the characteristic *parallelismus membrorum* of Hebrew poetic diction (Lowth 1753: 177–96):

Shey laa nee oo gobbraghey, agh er y chiaightoo laa **gowee oo fea**.
Ayns yn niarragh, as 'syn ouyr, **nee oo fea y ghoaill**.

‘Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest:
in earing time and in harvest thou shalt rest.’ (Exodus 34.21)

Ta'n Chiarn yn Ree, foddee'n seihll **goaill boggey** jeh: dy jarroo
foddee ny ymmodee ellanyn **boggey 'ghoaill** jeh.

‘The Lord is King, the earth may be glad thereof: yea, the multitude
of the isles may be glad thereof.’ (Psalms 97.1)

We know from the surviving Bible manuscript drafts that the editors often revised these constructions, often in a more conservative direction, and towards more concise forms (such as the inflected verb forms rather than the periphrastic constructions), perhaps with a view to reducing printing costs (Lewin 2019b; 2021). Consequently, for most of the Manx printed material, where drafts do not survive, we cannot be sure to what extent the grammar reflects the usage of the original translators. The advantage of the sermons here is that they show the writer's original usage, word count pressures were less relevant, and they allow us to track changes in the frequency of these constructions in the work of writers born over a period of almost a century and a half (John Woods, b. c. 1665 to Thomas Caine, b. 1809). While it has not yet been feasible within the scope of the current project to employ quantitative methods to investigate these topics in more detail, the potential of the corpus in this regard is clear.

5. TRANSLATION, LANGUAGE CONTACT AND BILINGUALISM

A central issue in considering Manx literature of all genres and periods is the relationship between Manx and English, both intertextually — given that most of the corpus is translated from, or at least closely follows, English models (see §2.2 above) — and in terms of the diglossic relationship between the two languages in Manx society, as well as in the bilingual linguistic competences and practices of particular social classes and individuals. The sermon corpus provides considerable insight into these questions.

5.1. Translation and transfer

Apart from certain shorter texts dating from the nineteenth century (Lewin 2014), the majority of Manx prose consists of translated material, including the Bible, the Book of Common Prayer, and various other devotional and catechetical texts. At first glance the sermons appear to buck this trend, given that most of the extant manuscripts contain monolingual Manx texts, with no explicit acknowledgement of an English original. However, there is substantial evidence that a considerable proportion of them, at least, are in fact translations or adaptations from English sources. That some Manx sermons were translations is explicitly stated or alluded to in contemporary sources. Bishop Hildesley (1761, in Bray 2005: 268) refers in relation to preaching to ‘the trouble of composing or transposing into Manx’ (see below §5.3). Three of John Clague’s Manx sermons are translations from the printed sermons of Bishop Wilson,²⁷ and Clague entitles his catalogue of his own sermon collection as ‘An Account of The Sermons I have put together & Translated from several Authors’.²⁸

Then there are the bilingual sermons with parallel English and Manx versions, which in the pre-1772 sub-corpus comprise a single sermon by Joseph Cosnahan and most of William Crebbin’s output. In some cases there are also English and Manx versions of the same sermon in separate notebooks,²⁹ which was John Clague’s practice, judging from his catalogue and extant *œuvre*. Examination of William Crebbin’s work has shown that many of his English sermons consist of (often abridged) reproductions of English printed sermons, sometimes patched together from different sources, with the parallel Manx being a translation of these composite texts.³⁰ Similarly, the anonymous sermon in the NLW John Rhŷs papers A3/10 preached at Maughold in 1752 is an abridged translation of *A dissuasive from stealing* (White 1747), by Stephen White (d. 1773), Rector of Holton in Suffolk.

Often, passages in the Manx versions read as paraphrases of more technical or abstract language in the English, a strategy obligated by the relative ‘impoverishment’ of Manx literary and technical vocabulary (Thomson 1969: 180). For the most part these paraphrases are skilful and natural enough in Cosnahan and Crebbin’s sermons, as in the latter’s discourse on the ‘perfections of God’, based on a series of four sermons by Archbishop of Canterbury John Tillotson (1630–94) (1717: 676–88, 696–701), one of the most celebrated sermon authors of the period (Gibson 2012: 3, 20):

²⁷ MSS 05727/14, 00174/14, 05727/32.

²⁸ MS 00268/47.

²⁹ Only a relatively small proportion of English sermons from the Manx clergy of our period have survived, probably reflecting the greater value placed on the Manx compositions or translations both in their original context and by later antiquarian collectors.

³⁰ We are grateful to Professor Max W. Wheeler for bringing this to our attention and identifying several of the sources for William Crebbin’s sermons.

The goodness of God is *the* foundation of our hopes & *the* fountain of our happiness, our greatest comfort & our fairest example, the joy and rejoicing of our hearts. Therefore to meditate upon it should be very pleasant & delightful to us.

The Lord is good to all: & his tender mercies are over all his works. These words are a very great argument to stir up & incite each of us to the praise of God.

In the third verse of this psalm we are told *that* great is *the* Lord, and greatly to be praised.

In the eighth & ninth verses the reason hereof is given from those properties & perfections of the divine nature which declare his goodness.

The Lord is gracious, & full of compassion; slow to anger, & of great mercy[.] The Lord is good to all: & his tender mercies are over all his works.

From which let us consider.

1. The proper notion of goodness, as it is attributed to God.
2. That this perfection belongeth to God.
3. The effects & extent of it.

Miehyss Dyee bun yn treishteil ainyn, as veih ta nan maynryss, yn ger-jaghey smoo ain, as yn sampleyr shaar dooin, e, boggey as gennallys na creechyn ain.

Shen y fa lishagh smooïnaghtyn dowin er, as dy chlashtin jeh, y ve feer vooisal as laan taitnyss dooin.

Ta'n Tchiarn mie rish ooilley: as ta eh vighynyn mneih harrish ooilley eh obbraghyn. Ta ny goayn shoh oyr feer wooar dy ghriennagh shin seoyse as dy chur er dagh unaan jin Djee y voylley.

Sy trass verse jeh'n psaum shoh, ta er na insh dooin dy vel yn Tchiarn mooar, as moylley mooar dy ve er na chur da'h.

Sy hoghtoo as yn neighoo verse ta oyr son shoh er na chur veih graysyn as ard phooaryn yn dooghyss flaunyssagh ta soilshagh magh eh viehyss.

Ta'n Tchiarn graysoil, as laan tchimmey, moail gys chorree, as jeh mighyn mooar. Ta'n Tchiarn mieh rish ooilley: as ta eh vighynyn mneih harrish ooilley eh obbraghyn.

Veih na goayn shoh lig dooin smooïnaghtyn dy dowin er.

1. Cre smoo ta dy ve toiggyt liorish miehyss, myr te ayns Djee.
2. Dy vel yn ard ghrayse shoh bentyn da Djee.
3. Na obbraghyn ta liorish as yn moads as roshtyn ec e.

(William Crebbin 1753, MS 05724/4, pp. 2–4)

In this extract, the theological terms ‘properties’ and ‘perfections’ are translated as the somewhat vaguer, but less abstract *graysyn* ‘graces’ and *ard phooaryn* ‘high powers’ respectively; similarly ‘effects & extent of it’ is expanded to *na obbraghyn ta liorish as yn moads as roshtyn ec e*, lit. ‘the works that are by it and the size and reach of it’.

Crebbin closely follows the Tillotson source text,³¹ except that certain more intellectually demanding passages are omitted; notably he omits the fourth of Tillotson's sub-topics, namely, to '[a]nswer some Objections which may seem to contradict and bring in question the Goodness of God', and the entirety of Sermon CXLV which is dedicated to this point. Knotty and potentially controversial questions of theodicy were possibly considered to risk going over the heads of the parishioners of Jurby, or awakening unedifying questions and doubts.³² Similarly, the anonymous translation of White (1747) includes the original's treatment of the more straightforward worldly and spiritual consequences of stealing, but omits, for example, a lengthy counterfactual discussion of 'the natural Tendency of Theft [...] to subvert all Government; dissolve the Bands of Society; and turn the good Order of the World, into a lawless State of Rapine and Violence' (White 1747: 10). John Clague's manuscript translation, MS 05727/14, of one of Bishop Wilson's published English sermons is likewise abridged in comparison with the full translation by Henry Corlett printed in Wilson (1783).³³ In all of these cases, some of the more intellectual or abstract digressions or flourishes in the original are omitted, but the included

³¹The corresponding passage in Tillotson (1717: 677) is as follows, with the sections reproduced more or less exactly by William Crebbin in bold:

The Goodness of God is the cause, and the continuance of our Beings, **the Foundation of our Hopes, and the Fountain of our Happiness; our greatest Comfort, and our fairest Example,** the chief Object of our love and praise, and admiration, **the joy and rejoicing of our Hearts; and therefore the Meditation and Discourse of it must needs be pleasant and delightful to us;** the great difficulty will be to confine our selves upon so copious an Argument, and to set Bounds to that which is of so vast an extent, **the Lord is good in all, and his tender mercies are over all his Works.**

Which Words are an Argument, which the Divine Psalmist useth, **to stir up** himself and others **to the praise of God:** At the 3. v. he tells us, **that the Lord is great, and great, and greatly to be praised;** and he gives the reason of this, v. 8, and 9. **from those Properties and Perfections of the Divine Nature, which declare his Goodness, the Lord is gracious, and full of compassion, slow to anger, and of great mercy; the Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies of over all his works;** where you have the Goodness of God declared, together with the amplitude and extent of it, in respect of the Objects of it; *the Lord is good to all.*

In the handling of this Argument, I shall do these *four* Things.

First, Consider what is **the proper Notion of Goodness, as it is attributed to God.**

Secondly, Shew **that this Perfection belongs to God.**

Thirdly, Consider **the Effects and the Extent of it.**

Fourthly, Answer some Objections which may seem to contradict and bring in question the *Goodness of God.*

³²This kind of simplification for particular audiences was not restricted to the Manx context; indeed, Tillotson himself 'often preached an erudite sermon to them on a Sunday and then, stripped of its learning, Latin, and legal language, preached it to a parish later in the week' (Gibson 2012: 13).

³³Clague preached his manuscript translation at Rushen, 12 January 1783. The original English sermon is Wilson (1782b), sermon 57, 'On the due observance of the Sabbath'. The printed Manx translation of this appeared the same year as Wilson (1783), sermon 17, 'Yn Aght cooie dy reayl yn Doonaght'. Possibly Clague preached his manuscript version only once because it was then superseded by the printed version. Clague's enthusiasm for this material is revealed in a recently discovered letter (Tuck 2021: 104) (MS 15116) in which he writes that the late Bishop Wilson's 'Discourses ... are, in my weak opinion inimitable — I have already begun to translate them into Manks verbatim, & the easiest I ever met with — they tell in Manks equal to the English, I might also

passages are generally translated as closely as the linguistic resources of Manx allow.

That the Manx clergy had access to extensive collections of printed sermons, and circulated these sermons among themselves, is demonstrated by Philip Moore's catalogue of his personal library (MS 00178A; cf. Ó Muircheartaigh 2020), which includes notes of loans to his colleagues. The provision of libraries for the use of clergy and students for the ministry had been a diocesan preoccupation since at least the mid-seventeenth century (Hoy 2015: 170, 187). As well as staple sermon collections such as those of Tillotson, William Crebbin's use of Burkitt's (1709) Biblical commentary as well as Beveridge's (1728) *Private thoughts upon a Christian life*,³⁴ demonstrate that other genres of devotional texts could equally be adapted for the Manx pulpit.

5.2. *Transfer features*

Even where a source text has not so far been identified, there is often internal linguistic evidence strongly suggesting that the Manx is a translation of the English and not *vice versa*. Given the cultural and functional dominance of English as the language of literacy and intellectual pursuits, the opposite direction is in any case hardly likely. On occasion we find somewhat more clumsy or slavish renderings of English phrasings, as in the nominal constructions with possessives highlighted in the following passage from Joseph Cosnahan's bilingual sermon, where verbal constructions would be more in accord with usual Manx idiom:

This is much the case of us all at **our baptism, or first entrance** into covenant with God:— By virtue of that divine institution we are cleansed & purified from the stain & guilt of original sin & tho' born in sin & the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace, i.e. we are taken into *favour* with God, and are his children by adoption: so that by a constant application to God for his timely aid & assistance, we are also put into a capacity of presuming our innocence;— but if we do not duly consider the blessings and privileges of our adopted state, the continued help of our great Creator in all our dangers & temptations **upon our own clearly seeking for it**, we are also in a way of falling from our former happy state, & thus likewise lyable to the justice of God, for breaking his holy Law.

Ta shoh laan yn chooish ain ooilley eg **nyn mashteh, ny'n ched entreil ain** ayns conaant marish Jee: liorish bree yn ordaghey flaunyssagh shen ta shin er nyn ghlenney vei loght peccah nyn ged ayraghyn as gy dy vel shin ruggit ayns peccah as nyn gloan dy chorree, ta shin liorish shoh jeant nyn gloan dy ghraase, i.e. ta

presume to say, better — they are friendly & fatherly admonitions calculated to give information to every capacity & I am determined they shall not be lost on this Parish'.

³⁴For example, material from these two volumes as well as Tillotson's (1717) sermon 135 form the basis of MS 05727/3, first preached in 1764.

shin goit stiagh ayns foar Yee, as jeant e chloan liorish daltanys: myr shen liorish jiaghyn dy kinjagh gys Jee son e chooney as e vannaght femoil, ta shin myrgeddin currit ayns aght dy rheal shin hene gyn loght; agh managh vel shin jan'noo soiagh myr lishagh shin jeh bannaghtyn e state dy ghaltynys ain, jeh cooney kinjagh nyn Fer-croo smoo mie as niartal ayns ooilley ny gauenyn as ny miolaghyn ain, **er nyn ghearey breeoil as jean hucchey**, ta shin myrgeddin ayns raad dy huitchym veih'n ched state mainrey ain, as myr shen nheesht cur shin hene fo corree Yee, son brishey e leih-yn casherick. (Joseph Cosnahan 1763, MS 00147/11, pp. 270–1)

Other rather close renderings of English phraseology in this passage include *ta shoh laan yn chooish ain ooilley* ‘This is much the case of us all’, *currit ayns aght* ‘put into a capacity’, *ayns raad dy huitchym* ‘in a way of falling’. This is not unexpected, and a similar phenomenon is found in Irish sermons of the period, translated from English (Ó Súilleabháin 1965: 21). On the other hand, there are some freer paraphrases, such as *cur shin hene fo corree Yee*, lit. ‘put ourselves under the wrath of God’, translating ‘lyable to the justice of God’; and a verbal rendering *jiaghyn dy kinjagh gys Jee*, lit. ‘looking constantly to God’, is preferred for the original nominal construction ‘a constant application to God’.

In cases where only a Manx text is extant, too, there are often clear cases of phraseology based on English. Thomas Quayle, for example, has deverbal nominal constructions similar to those discussed above:

Cre erbee ny lhestallin od mad y yannoo, ta **nyn cooleeney niau-cairalagh jeh curmyn nyn gredjue**, as nyn claghtaghin peccoil, rogh flain soiljaghey, ad shoh, ny nyn leid, dy ve nyn smooiinaghtin. (Thomas Quayle 1760, MS 05903/2, pp. 3–4)

‘Whatever excuses we may make, our careless fulfilling of the duties of our faith, and our sinful habits, too plainly show these, or such as these, to be our thoughts.’

Natural idiom here would probably prefer a verbal construction, e.g. **tra ta shin cooilleeney curmyn nyn gredjue dy kiaralagh* ‘when we fulfil the duties of our faith carefully’, or perhaps **shin dy chooilleeney...* ‘(for) us to fulfil...’.

The above example also illustrates the use of the preposition *jeh* ‘of’ in place of the genitive, which is fairly widely attested in the sermon corpus:

vaddyr geagnyt dy ghoal rish dy ry shoh **va'n er casherick jeh Jee**. (Philip Moore 1723, MS 05729/2, p. 32) (cf. *fer casherick Yee*, Mark 1. 24, Luke 4. 34)

‘They were forced to admit that this was the holy one of God.’

kymmyrk na fasthee veih'n **kerraghey shickyr jeh Jee jummoosyt!** (Henry Corlett 1768, MS 00174/5)

‘refuge or shelter from the sure punishment of an angered God!’

Shaw **yn jerrey, jah leid shen dy slie**, shaw yn \jerrey/ shine daue buin, tra hig ny obbraghyn ock gyss soilshey. (anon. 1752, NLW John Rhŷs collection A3/10, p. 21)

‘This is the end of such people, this is the end they must reap, when their works come to light’

Note that at least in the last example the *jeh* construction is not directly prompted by the source text:

These are the known Fruits, which all who follow such wicked Courses, may expect to reap, whenever their Crimes are discovered. (White 1747: 17)

Overall, the expected genitive construction remains predominant at all periods, and many texts rarely if ever employ the *jeh* construction, so it is quite clear that it was not integrated as a usual part of the grammar of vernacular Manx. Another such construction occasionally attested is the use of the interrogative form of the verb in ‘if’-clauses in apparent imitation of the conditional inversion construction in English:

Cre’n soarts dy ghellal oddy’ns (dy cairal) jercal er y hon, **bea’yn** ayns condition \ny stayd/ yn dooiny shoh? (Philip Moore 1723, MS 00277/1, p. 11)

‘what sort of treatment could I (justly) hope for, were I in the condition or state of this man?’

beagh shin dy firrinagh er ny hickraghey, dy vel peccey whetal da, jannoo shine douaiagh ayns e hilley, as gin arriss ve goit er y hon, niaufit son niau as yn vainriss dybraghfarraghtin: **jennagh** shin consideral, mar \nn/agh jen mad tregail nyn claghtaghin peccoil, agh cur le’n ad maren gys yn naiey; as dy jen, cre erbee ny yeareenin, nee mad geddin baase aindoo, freal shedjaght rooin ayns seihl ny spirridin: **jinnagh** shin, ta mee gra, dy dowin smooinghtin er ny reddin shoh, as consideral ad lesh craweeaght erbee; te niaufossible, agh dy beagh shin trimsagh son nyn peccahin, ta fegooish arriss ny ynrican oirin jeh nyn toyrtmow shicker as dybraghfarraghtin. (Thomas Quayle 1760, MS 05903/2, pp. 15–16)

‘were we truly convinced that sin is abominable to him [God], makes us hateful in his sight, and without being repented of, unfit for heaven and everlasting happiness: were we to consider, if we do not forsake our sinful habits, but take them with us to the grave; and that, whatever desires we die in will accompany us in the world of the spirits: were we, I say, to think deeply on these things, and consider them with any godliness, it is impossible but

that we should be sorrowful for our sins, which without repentance are the sole causes of our certain and eternal damnation.’

The normal construction here would be *dy beign* (Ir *dá mbeinn*) or possibly *my veign* (with generalization of *má*). It is worth noting that in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, conditional inversion was possible with a wider range of auxiliaries than in present-day English (Denison 1998: 298–9), hence Quayle’s *jennagh shin consideral* would correspond word-for-word to eighteenth-century English ‘did we consider’, i.e. ‘if we considered’.

A further example of apparent transfer of an English construction is the use of the interrogative *quoi* ‘who’ (SGc *cò e*) as a relative pronoun:

Lhig dooin tastey y ghoal jeh Lot **quoi** va cummal ayns ardvalley moar, as niaughlen (William Mylrea 1752, MS 05722/19, p. 9)

‘Let us take notice of Lot who dwelt in a great and unclean city’

dy vel Gee myghynagh ain dy yellal rish, **quoi** nagh vel shirrey baase peccagh, agh **quoi** nee goal shin stiagh ayns e oar’ (Thomas Quayle 1760, MS 05903/2, p. 3)

‘that we have a merciful God to deal with, who does not seek a sinner’s death, but who will take us into his favour’

Agh eshyn nagh vel ny er-chlashtyn ny lommarkyn, agh myrgeddyn jeantagh jeh’n Ghoo, teh solyt rhish unaane ta jeaghyn aunz leigh firrinagh eh remyss, as tannaghtyn aun; — **quoi**, myr nagh vel eh ny er-chlashtyn jarroodagh, agh jeantagh jeh’n Ghoo, bee eh bannyt aunz eh obbyr. (Henry Corlett 1761, MS 00269/6, pp. 114–15)

‘But he who is not only a hearer, but also a doer of the Word, [he] is likened to one who looks into the perfect law of liberty, and continues therein; who, as he is not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the Word, [he] will be blessed in his work.’ [paraphrase of James 1. 23–25]

Like the other constructions considered above, this use of *quoi* is sporadic in the corpus. It is principally found in sentences with complex syntax where the relative verb phrase is some distance from its antecedent, or from the position where the relative pronoun would appear in English; moreover, it is generally restricted to human or divine antecedents, as with English *who* and the reference of interrogative *quoi*. However, in NLW Sir John Rhŷs papers A3/10 (1752), the use of *quoi* is much more frequent, and sometimes has inanimate reference, thus equating to English ‘which’:³⁵

³⁵This text also has *cre* (*caidé*) ‘what’ as a relative ‘(that) which’, for usual *ny* (SGc *na*), e.g. *cha nee woish shen cre tamish er raa* ‘not from that which I have said’ (p. 31), *Ta shiu er clashtin cre tamey er gra riu* ‘You have heard what I have said to you’ (p. 35). Overall, this text is particularly divergent from the norm in respect of orthography (see Chart 2), lexical choice (strikingly free use of loanwords), and grammatical features. It is hoped to edit this text fully in the future, as a particularly intriguing example of the phenomena under discussion here.

Tra honnick oo marlagh ren oo consentall, huggey. **Loirish quoi** tamey smooïnaghtyn ta tuiggitt, dy cooney ny dy keilthin marlagh; **quoi** ta raw vennick jant, liorish goal as freil, ny keiltchin yn cooid gedditt eggey. (anon. 1752, NLW Sir John Rhŷs papers A3/10, pp. 10–11)

‘When thou sawest a thief, thou consentedst unto him [Psalm 50. 18]. By which I think is meant, to aid or to conceal a thief; which is too often done, by taking and keeping, or hiding his stolen goods.’³⁶

The use of *quoi* as a relative pronoun appears sporadically in printed texts (Lewin 2011: 187), including very occasional instances in the Bible, and is also fairly widespread in the carvals.³⁷ In general, however, it appears not to have been a natural part of the vernacular language: it is not attested in Late Manx speech (*HLSM* ii, 358–9), nor in the original nineteenth-century prose texts edited in Lewin (2014). There are cases of editorial removal of relative *quoi* in the extant manuscript drafts of parts of the Bible translation (MS 05690C; Lewin 2019b), suggesting it was regarded as sub-standard:

Jee, **qui** ta raunsaghey nyn greeaghyn > Jee, ta trial nyn greeaghyn
 ‘God, which trieth our hearts’ (MS 1 Thessalonians 2.4)

This is true also of the possessive construction with *jeh*:

’n sallan **jeh** connaant dy Yee > sollan conaant dy Yee
 ‘the salt of the covenant of thy God’ (MS Leviticus 2.13)

5.3. Bilingualism, diglossia and language shift

As well as features of what might be termed ‘translationese’ — that is, obviously unidiomatic renderings of English phraseology — the language of the sermons sometimes displays more subtle indications of the diglossic sociolinguistic situation of Manx and English, in the form of linguistic features which may reflect incomplete control of the grammar on the part of the authors. For example, Philip Moore frequently has idiosyncratic forms of the substantive verb which have not been noticed in other authors or texts, namely the use of the relative form *vees* (G. *bhias*) in absolute position where the independent form *bee* (G. *bídh*, *biaidh*) would be expected, and use of the unlenited dependent conditional form *beagh* (G. *go mbiadh*)³⁸ rather than the expected independent form *veagh* (G. *do bhiadh*):

³⁶Original English source text (White 1747: 7): ‘by which, I suppose, is meant the aiding or abetting a thief: which is too frequently done by receiving and concealing his stolen goods.’

³⁷We are grateful to Professor Max W. Wheeler for discussion on this point.

³⁸Nasalization or eclipsis in dependent verb forms in Manx is restricted to unvoiced stops, /f/, and initial vowels, while voiced stops remain unmutated (Thomson 1984: 314).

Veis dy chooilley ghooiney eist strieu dy ve dooie, as dy yannoo dy mie, as **veis** eh myr \carrey &/ fer-choyrlagh da eh heshey Creestee \& y naboo/. (Philip Moore 1723, MS 00277/1, p. 8)

‘Every man will then strive to be kind, and to do well, and he will be as a friend and advisor to his fellow Christian and his neighbour.’

As myr-shen, liorish tastey eh coart da’n sarey \bannee/ shoh **beagh** yn theil vee-chrauee \shoh/, (ta nish, myr dy beagh eh, roit harish lesh tranlaase, mee-chairys, as dy chooilley olkys) **beagh** shiu (ta my graa) chooish shen bannit lesh shee, lesh graiah as giastalys, as dy chooilley graase flaunyssagh. (ibid., p. 8)

‘And so, by attending to this blessed commandment this ungodly world (which is now, as it were, overrun with oppression, injustice, and every evil) [would be] you would be (I say) so much blessed with peace, with love and charity, and every heavenly grace.’

The use of *beagh* is sometimes emended in Moore’s hand to expected *veagh*, showing a conscious awareness of the standard form, at least at a later stage of revision. The opposite development, *cha veagh* with lenition after the negative particle rather than usual *cha beagh*, is found in a sermon by Henry Corlett (1759, MS 00174/1, pp. 13, 17) and the anonymous sermon dated 1752 (NLW Rhŷs A3/10, p. 8). This is perhaps more likely to be a genuine by-form, given variable mutation after *cha* in Ulster Irish (*cha bheadh*, *cha mbeadh*) and Scottish Gaelic (*cha sheas*, *cha seas*) and sometimes in adjectives in Manx after *cha* as negative copula (e.g. *cha vooar*, *cha mooar*, Ir *cha m(h)ór*); there are also cases of *dy veagh* for usual *dy beagh* from several sermon authors, which could have spread from the *cha* forms. Moore’s use of unlenited *beagh* is more striking however; while inconsistent application of productive mutations is not unusual in the corpus as a whole (Thomson 1969), delenition of permanently lenited irregular forms is more exceptional, and seems more likely to reflect a lack of control of morphosyntactic categories on Moore’s part.

As for Moore’s use of the future relative of the substantive verb, in the wider Manx corpus there are cases of substitution of relative *-ys* (G. *-as*) for *-ee* (G. *-idh*) in the future independent (as in certain Scottish Gaelic dialects (Watson 1994: 688–9)), including in the final printed Bible, although generally with non-lenited initial consonant (e.g. *Tayrnys e voyrn dooinney sheese dy injil* ‘A man’s pride shall bring him low’ Proverbs 29.23, for independent *tayrne*), and this development has not been otherwise noticed in the substantive verb. Beyond the verbal system, Moore frequently has non-lenition with feminine nouns, a feature associated in Late Manx with semi-speakers from the period of language obsolescence, as well as speakers from higher socioeconomic class backgrounds whose dominant language was English (Lewin 2017: 191–3; 2019: 79–82). Less frequently, Moore displays hypercorrect lenition, as in *yn theil vee-chrauee* (with expected masculine *seihll* ‘world’, G. *saoghal*) in the second example cited above.

It would not be surprising if some, at least, of the clergy who were writing Manx texts in the eighteenth century were English-dominant bilinguals with some degree of incomplete control of more opaque, late-acquired components of Manx grammar. Such subtle features of incomplete acquisition are well documented in contemporary situations of minority bilingualism, including heritage speakers of immigrant languages (e.g. Montrul 2008; 2015; Unsworth et al. 2014) and cases of ongoing language shift, such as contemporary Irish (Ó Curnáin 2012; Nic Fhlannchadha and Hickey 2017). In the case of Philip Moore, it is probably relevant that he was a member of a fairly wealthy, property-owning family (Crowe 1985) based in Douglas, the commercial capital of the island. Already several decades before Moore's birth, it had been observed that the Manx elite spoke English well, indeed indistinguishably from native Englishmen:

For their gentry are truly gentle, courteous, affable, and more willingly will discourse with you in the English than in their own language, whom I observed even of all them, not only to speak true English, but to pronounce so naturally as *that* I cou'd not observe any different tone in their pronunciation of our English as is comonly noted, both in the Irish, Scots, and Welsh, and in all strangers, neither any of these to be distinguished from our English, either by the countenance, carriage, apparel, diet, or housekeeping, but in most imitating, as Speed well observed, *the Lancashire gentry*. (Blundell 1648–56, in Harrison 1876: 55)

Notwithstanding their increasing preference for English, the Manx-born gentry from whom Moore and many of the other clergy were drawn were generally able to speak Manx in the eighteenth century, and regarded it as *tchengey ny marey* 'the mother tongue' (Philip Moore 1768, in Butler 1799: 568–9) or 'their native tongue' (Bishop Hildesley 1761, in Bray 2005: 268; see below). In many cases, however, English was likely to have been their stronger language, whether in terms of order and manner of acquisition, or later socialization, education and habitual use, as Thomson (1969: 193–4) discusses:

The clergy who undertook this translation work were locally educated, it is true, but through English and in the classics, only informally and occasionally through or in Manx, and for some of them, depending on their upbringing, it must have been a second rather than a first language in terms of status if not always in terms of order of acquisition. (Thomson 1969: 193–4)

As far as is known, there are no explicit accounts providing details of the acquisition environment and type of input in the case of the bilingual gentry of Moore's time, but some later evidence from the following century hints that members of such strata may have acquired Manx primarily through interaction with lower-status, largely monolingual individuals such as servants and labourers in their own households and the extended community, for example in the

words of the clergyman J. T. Clarke (b. 1798, chaplain of St Mark's, Malew, 1827–65):

Ec jeih bleeaney dy eash va mee abyly dy loayrt dy floaill ayns
Gailck rish cotlaryn my yishig nagh rou baarl erbee oc, as roish
va mee feed blein dy eash, va ymmodee lioaryn-veggey vaarlagh
chyndaait aym dys Gailck as er nyn gloughey son ymyd y theay.
(J. T. Clarke, *Mona's Herald* 21 February 1872)

'At ten years of age I was able to speak fluently in Manx to my
father's cottars who had no English, and before I was twenty years
old, I had translated many English pamphlets into Manx which
were printed for the use of the people.'

Clarke was later known for 'administer[ing] that consolation to the sick and dying, the poor and bereaved, in their own native tongue — a language with which they were most conversant, and in which Mr. Clarke excelled both colloquially and grammatically above all his contemporaries of the present day' (Harrison 1878: 77); we may compare Philip Moore's reputation among his contemporaries as an expert in Manx, discussed below. Like Moore, however, Clarke's grammatical usage shows morphological idiosyncrasies with regard to lenition in noun phrases,³⁹ which may reflect a lack of fully native-like intuitions owing to suboptimal acquisition conditions, although Clarke justifies these features with explicit metalinguistic beliefs (Wheeler 2020b: ii; 2021c: 2; Clarke 1872).

Some of the more middle-class individuals interviewed by Sir John Rhys in the 1880s and 1890s also provide evidence of this kind of scenario. We may take the example of William Killip of Clyeen, Kirk Michael (b. 1834), a 'yeoman farmer' employing a Manx-speaking maid and with a wife whose dominant language may have been English,⁴⁰ and later noted as a founder member of the revivalist Manx Language Society (Broderick 2021: 123). Rhys described Killip as 'one of the best readers I have heard of his language' (Lewin 2019a: 79–80), but observes that he does not consistently maintain gender concord with feminine singular nouns, in contrast to the retention of this feature among individuals of more humble background such as the fishermen of the hamlet of Bradda in Rushen (cf. Broderick 2021: 141). In addition to English-dominant native bilinguals, there are also explicit cases in the nineteenth century of clergy learning Manx as a second language for the purposes of ministering effectively to their congregations (Lewin 2014: 18).

Returning to the case of Philip Moore, an explicit comment in one of his letters may be understood as an acknowledgement of weakness in his ability in Manx:

³⁹ As exemplified by unexpected lenition in the plural adjectives (*lioaryn-veggey vaarlagh* lit. 'small English-language books') in the extract above.

⁴⁰ She is recorded as an English speaker in the 1901 census, but as bilingual in 1911 (Broderick 2021: 123).

I do not pretend to a profundity of skill in our language, being only a plain Manks-man. My brethren, some of them, could persuade me to think otherwise,—*at non sum credulus illis* [‘but I give no credence to them’];⁴¹ They know not my imperfections half so well as I do myself. I feel them; they don’t. (Philip Moore > Bishop Hildesley, 21 January 1764, Butler 1799: 467)

This passage can be read as a general expression of modesty or insecurity,⁴² but it may also be consistent with the profile of an unbalanced bilingual speaker who is aware of some deficit in linguistic production, but is nonetheless generally able to pass as a fully fluent native speaker in the perception of others (‘I feel them; they don’t’). The morphological and morphophonemic features which mark out Moore’s language as divergent may not have been particularly salient to his contemporaries; compare Dorian’s (1977: 30) remarks on the difficulty of identifying semi-speakers on the basis of community perceptions:

Some [kinds of changes] may be more “visible” than others; that is, they become linguistic *stereotypes* (Labov 1970: 73). Analogical leveling proved to be a stereotypical form of reduction in East Sutherland Gaelic, whereas morphophonemic confusions, which are rife in the speech of semi-speakers, seem to produce no comment. (Dorian 1977: 30, original emphasis)

That some of the junior clergy had difficulty ‘composing or transposing into Manx’ is explicitly recognized by Bishop Hildesley in a letter to the clergy in 1761. Hildesley nonetheless insists in the strongest terms that it is their responsibility to their Manx-speaking congregations to overcome this and provide sermons in the native tongue:⁴³

I am very sensible that the trouble of composing or transposing into Manx is rather more than the furnishing English discourses. For doubtless [it is] such to the young clerks, lately called out from a town school education, who find it difficult to recover their native tongue, yet I shall hope that from the motive of charity to the souls of the greater number committed to their charge, the reasonableness of the thing itself, the flagrant absurdity of the reverse,

⁴¹ A reference to Virgil, *Eclogue* 9.

⁴² According to Gelling (1998: 37), Moore possessed ‘a sensitive and emotional temperament. His introspection was morbid, he continually blamed himself for real or imaginary faults, and was always afraid of incurring criticism or anger’.

⁴³ In this sense, the Church in the Isle of Man can be said to be broadly in line with the Scottish case where ‘at all levels within the Church of Scotland some importance was attached to providing a Gaelic ministry for Gaelic speakers’ (Durkacz 1981: 154). Similarly, preaching in the vernacular was well-established in the Welsh dioceses of the Church of England in our period (Morgan-Guy 2012: 184), even if exhortations similar to Hildesley’s were sometimes necessary; the founder of the Welsh Circulating Schools, Griffith Jones (Rector of Llanddowror, Carmarthenshire 1716–61), expressed the view that ‘English sermons to Welsh congregations are neither less absurd, nor more edifying than Welsh preaching would be in the centre of England, or Latin service in the Church of Rome’ (Williams 1938: 45).

and the express appointment of the ordinary [the bishop], all taken and considered together will readily determine them to act in this point, as shall be most consonant to their duty, be the trouble of their strict regard to it what it will. (Hildesley 1761, in Bray 2005: 268)

Hildesley thus suggests that it is the anglophone urban educational environment of the grammar schools which has led to rustiness in ‘their native tongue’; as Hamer (2004: 292) notes, ‘the towns functioned as vectors of linguistic change’ in the later eighteenth century. However, it should be borne in mind that lack of practice and rustiness is often appealed to as a rationalization for deeper-rooted acquisitional deficits in the absence of a full understanding of the dynamics of bilingualism in a context of diglossia and language shift (Lewin 2017; 2020: 85–9).

If little is known in detail about the clergy’s acquisition of spoken competence in Manx and broader patterns of bilingualism in the population, we are not much the wiser regarding the teaching and learning of literacy in Manx. Passive literacy, at least, seems to have been taught through the parochial schools and catechizing, with Bishop Wilson’s bilingual *Coyrle Sodjeh* being instituted for this purpose since its publication in 1707 (Keble 1863: 250–5; Hoy 2015: 191–2), and Hoy (2015: 192) remarks that the demand for Manx Prayer Books in 1763 suggests ‘a significant number of lay people could already read at the beginning of Hildesley’s episcopate’. As for more active writing skills, given that translation of texts was a core part of the classics curriculum in the period (Saunders 1993: 386–7), it is a reasonable supposition that any explicit training in Manx writing included translation exercises, most likely involving sermons and other devotional texts. Indeed, some of the manuscript sermons date from their writers’ early twenties or even teens, which may suggest they originated as translation or composition exercises in an educational context.⁴⁴ More generally, as previously noted, translation or paraphrase of scriptural, liturgical, catechetical and homiletic material, whether scripted or extemporaneous, had already been a central part of the Manx clergy’s pastoral activities for several

⁴⁴For example, the earliest date of preaching in Philip Moore’s sermons is 22 July 1722 at Ballaugh (MS 05728/1), when Moore was only sixteen years old, and a student at the Douglas grammar school; the same sermon is recorded as having been preached a further four times in different parishes the same year. Seven of Moore’s sermons are recorded as having been initially preached in the 1720s, all prior to Moore’s ordination as deacon in 1729 at the canonical age of twenty-three. Similarly, William Walker, a probable contributor to *Coyrle Sodjeh* as well as the translation of the Gospels, was appointed by Wilson to the chaplaincy of Douglas in 1700 when he was eighteen (Hoy 2015: 164), while in 1754 Henry Corlett was given a licence at the age of nineteen ‘to read the prayers and service of the Church as by law established, as also to read an Homily or some other practical or instructive book, as you shall be directed by the Vicars General of the Isle for the time being in such churches or chapels as you shall be desired by the said Vicars General’ (Moore 1901: 28). These practices, though irregular in the wider context of the Church of England, seem to have been necessitated by the poverty of the diocese and the difficulty of recruiting clergy (Moore 1893: 207). Keble (1863: 249) suggests that Wilson’s practice of taking prospective clergy under his wing for training in his own home gave him confidence to discern which individuals were worthy of such charges.

generations before the period in which extant sermon manuscripts become more plentiful (Grass 2021: 99).

Individual variation in skill and experience must also be borne in mind when considering variation in the quality of the sermons. It did not go unnoticed that particular individuals' aptitude for Manx writing and translation varied, as shown by the following comment by the mature Philip Moore in his role as general editor of the Manx Bible:

Tell Jack [John] Kelly [1750–1809, Moore's assistant], I have finished [revising the translation of] Ezekiel in 15 days, this day, Sunday, not reckoned. More than one half than ever was done before in the same time, considering the visionary nature and obscurity of the subject with the poor miserable translation furnished by the Rabbi of Rushen [Nicholas Christian, vicar of Rushen 1748–1782]. (Moore 1771)

Of course, it is not surprising that special care was taken in preparing official translations of Holy Scripture for publication, which could be expected to reach a reasonably wide readership and be held up to public scrutiny and criticism if they were found defective. In contrast, manuscript sermons were intended for more transitory and limited consumption, primarily as oral performances, in which any flaws could potentially be rectified in delivery or subsequent revision of the manuscript. Sermon composition (or compilation and translation) could be a very time-consuming process (Gibson 2012: 14), and the pressure of pastoral duties and worldly responsibilities may have left limited time to spare on perfecting sermons.

5.4. Lexical borrowing

Although Manx in general possesses a significant component of borrowed English lexis of late medieval and early modern provenance (Thomson 1991), relatively free use of unassimilated English items unattested in printed sources is a striking feature of some of the manuscript sermons, for example the following items are found in Philip Moore's sermons (Table 5), together with the more widely attested equivalents.

Some of these items replace, or complement, longer-established and more assimilated borrowings, e.g. *sober* for *sheelt* (< 'civil'), *spendeil* for *baarail* (< 'wear'), *condition* for *conaant* (< 'covenant'). Certain loanwords are widely attested in the printed texts in other senses, such as *condition* 'condition, state', while *conaant* is used in the sense 'requirement, term of agreement', also 'covenant'. *Possession* is used extensively in the Bible in the sense of taking or holding possession of land and goods, but other locutions are preferred to *possessit* to denote demonic possession.

Extensive lexical borrowing appears nonetheless to have been widely accepted with little reservation, at least in the earlier eighteenth century. As Wheeler (2020c: 7–8) notes in respect of the Manx *Paradise Lost*, in some contexts it may even have had prestigious connotations given the high status of English:

Table 5. Some English loanwords in Philip Moore's sermons.

Moore	Usual equivalent in printed texts
<i>ayns force</i> 'in force'	<i>ayns bree</i>
<i>belongal gys</i> 'belonging to'	<i>s'lesh, ta lesh, bentyn da</i>
<i>difference</i>	<i>caghlaa, lhiетtrimmys, lheamys, rheyynn</i>
<i>er condition dy</i> 'on condition that'	<i>er conaant dy</i>
<i>g'actal</i> 'acting'	<i>gymmyrkey oo hene</i> lit. 'carrying oneself'
<i>lake</i>	both <i>logh</i> and <i>lake</i> in Bible ⁴⁵
<i>niau-fit</i> 'unfit'	<i>neu-chooie</i>
<i>onesty</i> 'honesty'	<i>ynrickys</i> 'righteousness'; <i>onneragh</i> 'honest'
<i>possessit</i> 'possessed [by devil]'	<i>seaghnit lesh drogh-spyrryd</i> 'troubled with an evil spirit'; <i>va drogh-spyrryd ayn</i> 'who had an evil spirit in him'; <i>possession</i> [=holding of land] frequent in Bible
<i>sober as sheelt</i> 'sober'	<i>sheelt</i> (< <i>siobhalta</i> 'civil')
<i>spendyt</i> 'spent'	<i>baarit</i> (< Eng. 'wear')

To understand the significance of the density of Anglicisms in P[argeiys] C[ailit] we need an effort of imagination, to contemplate a time, in the first half of the 18th century, when Manx, though it was a culturally subordinate language, was not an endangered one. In such a sociolinguistic context, lexical borrowing from the culturally 'superior' language can be a display of learning, or of the writer's status as a person in touch with international culture. In this respect, then, Christian's borrowings from English are similar in nature to Milton's own borrowings from Latin, or, in earlier periods, Chaucer's from French, or Cicero's from Greek. (Wheeler 2020c: 7–8)

Nevertheless, more purist stances begin to become apparent later in the century and into the next. For example, the 1777 edition of the Prayer Book replaces many English loanwords with native equivalents (e.g. *beam* > *darrag*; *couchyn* > *lhiaghtyn*; *sinkeil* > *goll fo*; *watchal* > *freyall arrey*) (Wheeler 2021b: 4). This was tempered with a desire for semantic precision or cultural specificity, however; the same text also replaces *captan-keead* (lit. 'captain of a hundred') with *centurion*, *cayrn* ('horn') with *trumpet*, *gorrym-jiarg* ('blue-red') with *purple*, and *craue-roih* ('arm bone') with *cubit* (ibid., 5).

⁴⁵The use of the English term perhaps reflects the lack of large inland bodies of water in the Isle of Man, with *logh* (G. *loch*) in place-names often referring instead to wet, marshy land (Broderick 1994: xxv).

The lexicographer Archibald Cregeen (1835: ix, xv) explicitly condemns the use of the *-al* suffix (G. *-áil*) to incorporate English verbs into Manx, and commends the translators for choosing a native paraphrase *goaill padjer* ‘take prayer’ rather than ‘mongrel’ *prayll*, *prayal*:

AL, added to a verb, has the same meaning as *AIL*, *ing*, in English, and may be termed the grand Manksifier-general of English verbs; as, *trying*, *TRYAL*; *fixing*, *FIXAL*, &c., &c.; but not to the credit or honour of those who so make use of it. (Cregeen 1835: ix)

The verb *to pray* occurs above two hundred times in the English Scriptures; yet the translators have not once used that mongrel word, *PRAYLL*, or its parent, *PRAYAL* [...], which, and the like, are now generally used without reserve. I do not, however, allude to the Clergy, who, to their credit, always say *GOAILL PADJER*; *EC PADJER*; *JANNOO PADJER*, &c.; and when there is no necessity, we should not borrow from the English, but endeavour to keep the language as pure as possible. (Ibid., xv)

In general it seems that pragmatism and a desire to be understood by ordinary people — the primary purpose of Manx writing — trumped incipient purism. *Goaill padjer* and *prayal* would have been equally comprehensible and therefore the choice was a matter of functional indifference, but there seems to be no attempt to revive or devise native replacements where a loanword or calque had established itself as the only, or dominant, means to express a concept, in which case even Cregeen accepts the ‘necessity’. We may compare the explicit comment of the Irish bishop James Gallagher in the introduction of his 1736 volume of sermons:

I have sometimes made use of Words borrowed from the English, which Practice and daily Conversation have intermixed with our Language: Choosing with St. Augustine, rather to be censur’d by the Criticks than not to be understood by the poor and illiterate. (Gallagher 1736: iv)

Gallagher’s loanwords include *dragáil* ‘drag’, *druincéir* ‘drunkard’, *siútáil* ‘shoot’ (Mac Mathúna 2007: 212). According to Doyle (2015: 101), Gallagher ‘seems to have felt that a word like *druncaeir* would be more accessible to his audience than *pótaire*, even though *pótaire* does not seem to be a particularly learned word, judging by the genres in which it occurs’. It should be borne in mind, however, that once a loanword is an established part of the lexicon, the choice of a loan or native item may be essentially arbitrary, as both items may be considered equally appropriate for a given occasion; only a purist stance gives cause for a specific preference for the native (or older) word.

6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this article has demonstrated the wide interest of the Manx manuscript sermon corpus on several accounts, including the sheer volume

and scope of the material, both within the context of the Gaelic languages and in comparison with English-language collections, and its nature as a closed linguistic dataset with identifiable authors, dates and locations for most texts, enabling us to chart change in progress at both the individual and community level. We have also highlighted the sociolinguistic complexity of the material and the wide scope to explore issues of translation and adaptation, language contact, diglossia and language shift, as well as the value of the material for ecclesiastical and social history both in a Manx and a wider British, Anglican, Gaelic or European context. The project to transcribe the pre-1772 sub-corpus of sermon manuscripts, upon which the present article is based, has made only a relatively small dent in the larger corpus of unedited and unstudied Manx manuscript material, and the avenues for future research indicated above cannot be exhaustive. Nonetheless, in this initial linguistic and sociohistorical examination, we have demonstrated the substantial contribution the corpus of Manx manuscript sermons can make towards addressing the relative neglect of Manx within Celtic Studies and linguistics, as well as the interdisciplinary and international study of religious literature in the long eighteenth century. We have also highlighted the extensive scope for further research on the sermon as a genre within wider Gaelic literature, and on the use of English-based orthographies in the Gaelic world.

ABBREVIATIONS

- G. (Early Modern) Gaelic
 HLMS BRODERICK, GEORGE 1984–6: *A Handbook of Late Spoken Manx*, 3 vols (Tübingen).

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