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Some Philological and Linguistic Observations on the Editions of the Bible Used by the Orthodox Community in Poland and Romania¹

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Abstract

In my paper, I aim to present some philological and linguistic observations on translations of the New Testament into Romanian and Polish, focussing on translations made within Orthodox contexts. In contrast with Judaism and Islam, in Christianity individual believers have free access to a range of translations of their Holy Book, the Bible, which are considered to represent the Word of God just as much as the texts in the original languages. In Judaism only the Hebrew Torah is revered as the Word of God and used liturgically, although translations are used for personal study. Similarly, in Islamic culture, a translation of the Qur'an is no longer the sacred text, but an interpretation.

Although in Christian cultures translated Bibles are accepted as the Book of God, questions about the authenticity of the Holy Word have often been raised: is what we read in a translation exactly what the author wrote? Are we dealing with the Word of God as it was transmitted to the Apostles? We are reading the interpretation of an intermediary: that of the translators. It is obvious that translators represent their eras and use their literary language at a certain level of development. They are also part of a linguistic and cultural community, a particular belief system (or none), in other words an accumulation of ideas, values and beliefs. The choices one has to make when translating are informed by all these factors. This paper will examine

¹ Fragments of this article are part of my PhD thesis.

how the religious views of the translators surface in Romanian and Polish Orthodox translations of the New Testament. By analysing a selection of examples, it will be demonstrated how some of the choices made reflect the religious views of the translators.

Keywords

Bible Translations, Comparative Analysis, Polish Orthodoxy, Semasiology, Stylistics, Synchrony

I. The Language and the Bible

The lexicon of the Orthodox versions of the biblical text in Romanian and especially in Polish has not yet been thoroughly and systematically studied from the perspective of cultural and theological-dogmatic conditioning. Therefore, readers should be aware that the Orthodox versions of the biblical text have their own peculiarities that clearly distinguish them from the Catholic or other confessional versions of the biblical text.

The study of the Romanian and Polish versions of the New Testament from the perspective of cultural and theological-dogmatic conditioning (the Orthodox versions) is important because Bible translators, regardless of the theological and cultural space they belong to (Poland, Romania, South Korea, etc.), tend to introduce specific terminology from certain confessional dogmatics into the translated text, thus supporting or favoring their own faith teachings:

“Although a Christian dogma is not based on a single term or verse, certain verses or concepts are essential in formulating dogmas. Once a particular dogma is articulated, it becomes a canon of interpretation for other verses and concepts, which are then translated in a way that fits the previous doctrinal understanding. The effect of this process of «harmonization» is that verses that are not important in supporting a dogma become arguments that reinforce it. For this reason, the history of Christian thought is closely related to the interpretation and translation of biblical texts”².

² Emanuel CONȚAC, *Determinări culturale și teologice în traducerea Noului Testament*, Editura Universității “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” din Iași, Iași, 2015, p. 27.

Therefore, in my research, I approach the New Testament text with a prior interpretive grid, and this hermeneutical perspective will predispose me towards a certain interpretation and translation.

My interest in the history of translations of the biblical text into Romanian and Polish is motivated by the impediments that translators encounter during the translation process, the identification of semantic rendering options, and a special interest in Polish culture. This led me to engage in research on the Romanian and Polish biblical tradition. The lack of similar studies in the Romanian cultural space contributed to my decision to undertake this approach in the field of Polonistics within Romania.

The main objective of my research is to draw attention to the necessity and novelty of studying translations of the New Testament into various languages within the context of Orthodox theology.

The Bible is “an important part of our own imaginative tradition, a monumental book”³, and “although related in most of their origins, the European peoples will undergo profound transformations in terms of genetic and natural propensities, acquired traits, so that their civilization, culture, mentality will not only retain common features, but also generate individualizing peculiarities”⁴. The translation of the Bible in a developing culture is one of the most important events in the evolution of a civilization, but also a challenge for the translators of the biblical text: “the translation of sacred texts has meant for many modern European languages the test-stone and the beginning of their literary variant”⁵, requiring “a special type of approach and translation, with major cultural, confessional or political-ecclesial, but also linguistic limitations and implications”⁶.

Moreover, “along with the peoples, the languages will also be Christianized”⁷. Over time, these cultures feel the need to have a Bible in

³ Northrop FRYE, *Marele Cod. Biblia și literatura*, transl. Ioana Stanciu, Editura Atlas, Constanța, 1999, p. 8.

⁴ Alexandru GAFTON, *De la traducere la norma literară. Contribuția traducerii textului biblic la constituirea vechii norme literare*, Editura Universității “Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, Iași, 2012, p. 9.

⁵ Eugen MUNTEANU, *Lexicalizarea în limba română a conceptelor de origine biblică*, in: *TABOR*, III (2009) 1, p. 41

⁶ Eugen MUNTEANU, *Lexicalizarea în limba română...*, p. 41.

⁷ Alexandru GAFTON, *De la traducere la norma literară...*, p. 9.

their own language, a fact which signifies the maturation of the respective culture, as well as the language that carries the message of the biblical text, carving out “an identity and a path that are their own”⁸, distinguishing themselves from other cultures. Therefore, possessing a Bible in a particular language contributes to bringing out the creative capacity of a given language from a state of latency, exercising its structures, “the entire mental complex”⁹, to generate structures of expression specific to a high, cultivated, and refined level.

The literature has revealed that the earliest literary texts are translations and compilations, acting “in an initiatory, constitutive and determinative way on what was to become the literary aspect of the language in question”¹⁰. Moreover, in the early stages of a literary language, it is the biblical text that creates the language of culture and the literary norm.

II. The philological perspective

In my research, I position myself as a philologist, interpreting texts according to the general objectives of the field of research. The task of theologians is to delimit texts confessionally and

“to debate and systematize the dogmatic, canonical, ecclesiastical, or generally theological implications of the circulation and functions of the texts of Holy Scripture, as well as the significance of possible differences or divergences of opinion in the interpretation of scriptural passages”¹¹.

One of the defining elements of philology is its interdisciplinary character, and its involvement in the research of the biblical text does not require a confessional delimitation, and “it is necessarily given by the

⁸ Alexandru GAFTON, *De la traducere la norma literară...*, p. 10.

⁹ Alexandru GAFTON, *De la traducere la norma literară...*, p. 12.

¹⁰ Alexandru GAFTON, *De la traducere la norma literară...*, p. 10.

¹¹ Eugen MUNTEANU, *Receptarea Sfintei Scripturi: între filologie, hermeneutică și traductologie. Lucrările Simpozionului Național “Explorări în tradiția biblică românească și europeană”. 28-29 octombrie 2010*, Editura Universității “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” din Iași, Iași, 2011, p. 14.

objective and historical character of the material support of the scriptural message: the historical language(s) of the community(ies)”¹². The literary critic Northrop Frye proposes in the introduction to his book *The Great Code: Bible and Literature* two directions in biblical scholarship: critical and traditional. A critical approach to biblical scholarship studies the historical and cultural context of the biblical text, while a traditional approach to biblical scholarship interprets the biblical text with an eye to what theological and ecclesiastical authorities have deemed it should mean. In my approach, I will be situated within the critical direction, where I will study the historical and cultural context of the New Testament text. It is necessary to reconstruct a cultural and theological context of the main Orthodox editions in the Romanian and Polish biblical tradition.

III. Aims and Objectives

This study aims to reflect on the Romanian and Polish textual traditions of certain non-Testamentary concepts within an Orthodox confessional and cultural framework.

One important aspect I will emphasize is the Polish Orthodox lexicon. The study of religious language in Polish literature is a relatively new phenomenon, but it is very dynamic and intensively developed after 1989.

IV. Romanian and Polish Biblical Tradition

In the history of Bible translations, every act of translation has often influenced the development of literary languages, and oral cultures have been converted into written ones in order to receive the Bible. The Bible is “a fundamental text, on the basis of which the most important part of the primary intellectual vocabulary of the literary language [...] was built up through translation”¹³:

¹² Eugen MUNTEANU, *Receptarea Sfintei Scripturi...*, p. 14.

¹³ Eugen MUNTEANU, *Lexicologie biblică românească*, Humanitas, București, 2008, p. 21.

“The translation of the Bible into vernacular languages was, in one way or another, the starting point, sometimes also the touchstone, for the birth of new cultural languages which, over time, would come to replace the old «ecumenical» languages (Latin, Greek, Slavonic), not only in their primary liturgical functions, but also in the rest of their cultural functions”¹⁴.

The Romanian biblical tradition represents a vast and diverse field of research, still accepting different perspectives of approaching the biblical text.

The Romanian biblical tradition represents a vast and diverse field of research, still accepting different perspectives of approaching the biblical text. In the literature, the Romanian biblical tradition begins in the 16th century:

“The Romanian biblical textual tradition includes, without exception, all the versions of the Holy Scriptures written in Romanian, whether partial or complete, manuscript or printed, regardless of the period, political, confessional or cultural context in which they were produced”¹⁵.

The concept of tradition can also take on the meaning of

“a relatively stable stylistic and lexical-semantic paradigm, constantly maintained in successive biblical versions in Romanian, seen in their textual interconnections. [...] It is a matter of preserving [...] not only the orthography initiated by the Bucharest Bible, but also a large amount of textual elements (translation choices, terminology, semantics, phraseology, topology, biblical onomastics, etc.)”¹⁶.

The Polish biblical tradition comprises a corpus of complete and partial editions of the Bible, and the most important translations are: Neufel,

¹⁴ Eugen MUNTEANU, *Lexicologie biblică...*, pp. 21-22.

¹⁵ Eugen MUNTEANU, *Receptarea Sfintei Scripturi...*, p. 14.

¹⁶ Eugen MUNTEANU, *Tradiția biblică românească. O prezentare sintetică*, in: “Anuar de lingvistică și istorie literară” (2012) T. LII/ 2012, Editura Academiei Române, București, 2013, pp. 17-18.

Cylkow, Mises, Spitzer, Tora Pardes Lauder (Hebrew translations); *Biblia Tysiąclecia* (abrv. BT 2021), *Biblia poznańska* (abrv. BP), *Biblia Leopoldy*, *Biblia Warszawsko-Praska*, *Biblia Paulistów* (Catholic translations); *Biblia Warszawska*, *Biblia Gdańska*, *Noua Biblia Gdańska*, The modern edition of *Biblia Gdańska*, *Biblia Brzeska* (Protestant translations); *Pismo święte, Nowego Testamentu*, *Nowy Testament. Ekumeniczny Przekład Przyjaciół*, *Nowy Testament. Ekumeniczny Przekład Przyjaciół*, *Biblia Ekumeniczna* (Orthodox translations); *Pismo Święte w Przekładzie Nowego Świata* (translation of Jehovah's Witnesses).

The Romanian biblical tradition comprises a corpus consisting of both complete and partial editions of the Bible: *Noul Testament de la Bălgrad* (1648), *Biblia de la București* (1688), *Biblia de la Blaj* (1795), *Biblia de la Sankt Petersburg* (1819) – *Bibliia, ádecă Dumnezeiasca Scriptură a Legii vechi și a ceii noao, cu chieltuiala Rosieneștii Soțietăți a Bibliei, în Sanktpeterburg, în tipografia lui Nic. Grecea, în anul 1819, avgust, 15 zile*, *Noul Testament de la Smirna* (1838), *Biblia de la Buzău* (1854-1856), *Biblia de la Sibiu* (1856-1858), *Biblia sinodală* (1914), *Biblia Galaction-Radu* (1938), *Biblia sinodală* (1944), *Biblia sinodală* (1968), *Biblia sinodală* (1982), *Biblia jubiliară Anania* (2001).

V. The Diversity of Translations

The history of Bible translations, even in a brief analysis, highlights the multitude of translations, characterized not only by the diversity of languages in which they are expressed but also by the varied hypotheses and objectives of the translators. Additionally, even within the same language, multiple translations can be found, each marked by distinct hypotheses and approaches in the translation process.

The presence of numerous Bible translations in a particular language is closely correlated with the long duration of the religious tradition within that community. As the tradition of Bible translation extends over a longer period within the community, there is a noticeable increase in the number of translations and the diversity of translation traditions. The size of the community also plays a significant role.

Each new translation arises from the need—and thus the dissatisfaction with the current state of affairs—stemming from the identification of defects in existing translations or gaps between them. Thus, each new translation is brought into discussion alongside existing and anticipated translations.

Each new translation attempt also becomes a catalyst for further debates and explorations in the field, with the impetus behind these new efforts stemming from the recognition of the impossibility of achieving absolute perfection or ideal similarity with the original text¹⁷. Thus, a succession of successive linguistic adaptations emerges within a given language, with the most recent one being evaluated based on the previous ones. Translator Balcerzan emphasizes that “a series of translations always has an evolutionary character”¹⁸.

The Polish Orthodox community is a distinct religious minority, given that Catholicism is the predominant confession in Poland.

Some translations have been shaped according to specific needs, adapted to the context or intended purpose, such as explanatory translations that included text exegesis or those emphasizing heroism or moral values. Thus, translations have been created that exhibit varying degrees of divergence from the original text, such as confessional, ecumenical, or those dedicated to particular groups or specific needs. There are also other types of translations, such as free translations, characterized by flexibility and creativity.

VI. Bible editions used in the Polish Orthodox community

VI. 1. Nowy Testament. Ekumeniczny Przekład Przyjaciół (2017; abrv. NT EPP 2017)¹⁹

The translation of the New Testament was a process that took place over thirty years and is the product of the work of an ecumenical team,

¹⁷ Cf. Bożena SZCZEPIŃSKA, *Ewangelie tylekroć tłumaczone... Studia o przekładach i przekładaniu*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, Gdańsk, 2005, pp. 19-22.

¹⁸ Edward BALCERZAN, *Pisarze polscy o sztuce przekładu 1440–1974. Antologia*, Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, Poznań, 1977, p. 234.

¹⁹ *Nowy Testament. Ekumeniczny Przekład Przyjaciół*, Wydanie trzecie zmienione, Warszawa, 2017.

which was established in 1992 at the initiative of Jan Turnau, a Polish Catholic editor and writer, and a pioneer of ecumenical activities in Poland. He invited a group of several professors and theologians to work, including Rev. Prof. Dr. Michał Czajkowski (Roman Catholic Church), Dr. Jan Anchimiuk (Orthodox Church), and Pastor Mieczysław Kwiecień (Pentecostal Church).

For nearly three decades, the translation team did not find it necessary to have an official name, and subsequent translations were published only with the subtitle *Przekład ekumeniczny*. During the session in May 2010, this issue was discussed, and to distinguish it from other translations, a specific name was agreed upon: *Ekumeniczny Przekład Przyjaciół* (the Polish acronym EPP).

The translated books form the basis of the liturgical text used at Orthodox services in Poland. In 2016, members of the ecumenical collective received the news that the editors of the Catholic Publishing House M in Krakow expressed their intention to publish the second edition of the New Testament. The news that this publishing house will publish a new translation of the New Testament was unanimously accepted. The published translation was the one proposed by the publishing house.

The initiative of the team to produce a new translation from Greek of the New Testament is a private one, as Jan Turnau mentioned in the introduction, and “each translator represents only themselves”²⁰, and not the confessional community to which they belong, with its ideas, values, and beliefs. Jan Turnau himself was responsible for the beauty of the Polish language.

The translators’ collective effort aimed to be original, in the sense of not repeating the ideas of their predecessors, especially those of the most famous Bible translation—the *Biblia Tysiąclecia*. A notable example of this is the collective’s version of the prologue to the Gospel of John, where they used the present tense—*U początku jest Słowo*—instead of the past tense—*było*—because the focus is not on the chronological aspect but on the ontological one, where the Logos is the foundation of all created beings.

²⁰ *Nowy Testament. Ekumeniczny Przekład Przyjaciół*, p. 9 (the Polish translation is by the author).

VI. 2. Biblia Ekumeniczna to jest Pismo Święte Starego i Nowego Testamentu. Przekład Ekumeniczny z języków oryginalnych (2018; abrv. BE 2018)²¹

This edition represents the first ecumenical translation of the biblical text, the complete Polish version. The process of translating this edition began in 1994.

The text of the Ecumenical Bible has been given a modern form of expression, making it easier to read by the contemporary reader.

The translation was carried out by representatives of several churches operating in Poland, including the Roman Catholic Church, the Polish Autocephalous Orthodox Church, the Evangelical-Reformed Church, the Polish Catholic Church, the Baptist Christian Church, the Pentecostal Church, and the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The efforts of all the Churches represented, which contributed to the ecumenical version, were focused on the goal of producing a translation into a communicatively modern Polish language which faithfully conveys the meaning and message of the Hebrew and Greek biblical text.

VI. 3. Pismo Święte Nowego Testamentu (2022; abrv. PSNT 2022)²²

Although the Bible has been translated into Old Church Slavonic since the 9th century, it was not until the 16th century that it was translated into Polish. Since that time, the intention developed to produce complete translations of the sacred text into Polish, and at least several complete Polish translations of the Holy Scriptures have appeared, but none of them was considered suitable for the Orthodox Church in Poland for liturgical use. For this reason, for many years a conciliar commission has been working on an official Orthodox translation. Following the approval of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Polish Orthodox Church, a Polish Orthodox translation of the Holy Gospels was printed.

²¹ *Biblia Ekumeniczna to jest Pismo Święte Starego i Nowego Testamentu. Przekład Ekumeniczny z języków oryginalnych*, Wyd. Towarzystwa Biblijnego w Polsce, Warszawa, 2018.

²² *Pismo Święte Nowego Testamentu*, Wydanie pierwsze, Warszawska Metropolia Prawosławna, Warszawa, 2022.

Currently, Polish readers benefit from an official complete Orthodox translation of the New Testament in Polish.

To respond to the needs of the times, the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Polish Autocephalous Orthodox Church appointed a commission whose task was to prepare a text of the Holy Gospel in Polish that would fulfill the requirements for use in liturgical practice. Thus, the Polish Orthodox reader now also has an official Orthodox translation of the sacred text in their own language.

During the translation work, the most challenging aspect was dealing with the liturgical texts and incorporating them into the Polish biblical tradition, as well as within the

“relatively stable stylistic and lexical-semantic paradigm, consistently maintained across successive biblical versions. [...] This involves the preservation [...] not only of the initiated orientation [...], but also of a large number of textual elements (translation choices, terminology, semantics, phraseology, syntax, biblical onomastics, etc.)”²³.

The primary goal was to produce a text that would be compatible with the liturgical version.

VI. 4. Biblia jubiliară Anania (2001)²⁴

The initiative to revise the Orthodox biblical text came from Father Dumitru Fecioru, who informed Anania that the current version of the biblical text was “completely outdated, both in terms of the evolution of the Romanian language and the new critical editions of the Septuagint”²⁵. Thus, the collaboration between Fecioru and Anania emerged.

This edition was based on the 1979 New Testament text. After his death, Ananias was entrusted with the task of finalizing this project. The

²³ Eugen MUNTEANU, *Tradiția biblică românească...*, pp. 17-18

²⁴ *Biblia sau Sfânta Scriptură, versiune diortosită după Septuaginta, redactată și adnotată de Bartolomeu Valeriu Anania, Arhiepiscopul Clujului, sprijinit pe numeroase alte osteneli*, 2001.

²⁵ *Apud Emanuel CONȚAC, Determinări culturale...*, p. 72.

Biblical Institute Publishing House published several editions of the New Testament (1993, 1995). After the publication of the first edition of the New Testament, at the suggestion of Miron Scorobete, Ioan Mircea, Paulin Lecca and Vasile Muntean, some changes were made to the text.

In the introductory part of the New Testament it is mentioned that the work of revision was carried out by comparing several representative Romanian and foreign versions, and even with the original text.

The revision work consisted of lexis, syntax, orthography and style.

VII. Modernisation of the Language

The literature has raised the question of when it is possible to speak of changes within the language. Ioan Lobiuc opines that “language changes first of all because man changes physically, mentally and spiritually”²⁶.

Religious authorities are striving to create a Polish language that is comprehensible to contemporary people and they feel the need to incorporate the religious message into everyday experience. However, they also want the proposed Polish text to be written in a “language that is comprehensible, but not banal”²⁷. Therefore, the issue of the tension between modernizing the language of the biblical text and preserving the dignity of the inspired text draws attention to the colloquial aspect of language, which could lead to the rejection of a religious language that is equivalent to the rejection of a Christian worldview. However, the Bible is a cultural text, a semantic-imaginative galaxy of the respective national community. It is not only the property of believers and can be subject to measures similar to other literary texts:

“It should be added that proponents of the new adaptations have emphasized that the Bible is a cultural text, is not the exclusive property of believers and can be subjected to the same treatment

²⁶ *Apud* Mihaela BUZATU, “Teoria contactelor dintre limbi; cu privire specială asupra contactelor între română și engleză”, in: *Philologica Jassyensia*, III (2007) 2, p. 158.

²⁷ Felicia DUMAS, *Dicționar bilingv de termeni religioși ortodocși român-francez*, Editura DOXOLOGIA, Iași, 2010, p. 8.

as other literary texts, and attention has been drawn to the usefulness of paraphrasing as a tool of evangelization, albeit limited to a relatively small audience²⁸.

Supporters of new adaptations emphasized that paraphrasing could be useful as an evangelistic tool, albeit limited to a relatively narrow audience. However, the translation must be closely connected to its sources and the Orthodox tradition. Therefore, the principles of accuracy and concision are used as normative authorities to justify terminological choices in the translation of texts.

Through these cultural translations, specific lexical norms that define and individualize Orthodox religious terminology in the language are established, thus transferring a linguistic and confessional reality specific to countries with a tradition of Orthodoxy into the Polish cultural space²⁹. The confessional specificity is apparent at the lexical level, that is, in the terms representative of Orthodoxy. This means that we can speak of an Orthodox religious terminology in Polish that is specialized and precise with unambiguous names like other terminologies. Therefore, the Orthodox religious terminology in Polish is a cultural and confessional terminology constructed at the level of translations of Orthodox texts, and imposed by its use within this confessional paradigm³⁰.

In the second half of the 20th century, new Polish translations of the Bible were created (Dąbrowski, BT, BP, BW and BWP, etc.), which gradually modernized the grammatical and lexical structure of the Polish language. The Ecumenical Bible was given a modern form of expression, making it easier for contemporary readers to understand. However, the translators sought moderate modernizations, avoiding too avant-garde solutions, and some contexts did not allow for it, as they targeted words characteristic of a particular literary genre of the biblical books. As a result

²⁸ Stanisław MIKOŁAJCZAK, Małgorzata RYBKA, *Badania nad językiem religijnym w Polsce w latach 1988–2013. Osiągnięcia – perspektywy badawcze*, Poznań: Poznańskie Studia Polonistyczne, Seria Językoznawcza, t. 20 (40), z. 2, p. 151. The translation belongs to the author of this article.

²⁹ *Apud* Felicia DUMAS, *Dicționar bilingv...*, pp. 10-11.

³⁰ Felicia DUMAS, *Dicționar bilingv...*, p. 11.

of language modernization, many old terms used in the Polish language of the Ecumenical Bible (BE) were eliminated, such as: *atoli*³¹, *azali*³², *azaż*, *boć*, *bom*, *brzemienna*³³, *com*, *gumno*³⁴, *izali*, *jeno*, *onej godziny*, *onego czasu*³⁵, *otom*, *snadź*, *świekra*³⁶, *taistra*, *tedy*³⁷, *toć*, *trapić się*³⁸, *wždy*³⁹, *zawždy*⁴⁰. But there are still words in PSNT 2022 such as: *albowiem*⁴¹ (Matt 5, 3-9. 12 etc.), *godzien*⁴² (Matt 3, 11; Matt 8, 8; Matt 10, 37-38; Luke 3, 16 etc.), *laknąć*⁴³ (Rev 7, 16; Rom 12, 20; Rev 7, 16), *otom* (Acts 9, 10), *rychło* (2 Pet 1, 14), *zaiste*⁴⁴ (Heb 6, 14), *zanadrze*⁴⁵ (Luke 6, 38).

The Ecumenical Bible aims to continuously develop the language and eliminate words that are currently considered obsolete by Polish speakers. However, the translation of the Ecumenical Bible still preserves some not-so-old archaisms, biblisms, and options for a solemn sacred style. For example, *biada*⁴⁶ (but also in PSNT 2022 in Matt 11, 21; Matt 23, 13-14-

³¹ “the sender says that what he says is true, but it is not what can be known, knowing what has been said” (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/47034/atoli>; accessed at 7.03.2023).

³² “the interlocutor, in relation to what is mentioned, wishes to obtain confirmation or refutation of the content of that sentence and considers that there is nothing good in what is mentioned” (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/47035/azali>; accessed at 7.03.2023).

³³ “about woman: pregnant” (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/86423/brzemienny/5214634/ciezarny>; accessed at 7.03.2023).

³⁴ “a large farm building designed to store hay, straw and grain” (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/60965/gumno/5185580/budynek>; accessed at 7.03.2023).

³⁵ “that moment, that time”.

³⁶ “mother-in-law”.

³⁷ “the broadcaster claims that when what has been said is true, what is said is true” (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/29387/tedy>; accessed at 7.03.2023).

³⁸ “to worry about something”.

³⁹ “however, after all”.

⁴⁰ “always”.

⁴¹ “because since”.

⁴² “worthy of”.

⁴³ “feeling a strong need to have or experience something” (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/83096/laknac>; accessed at 7.03.2023).

⁴⁴ “the sender says that what is said can be said because it is so” (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/47298/zaiste>; accessed at 9.03.2023).

⁴⁵ “the outermost, upper part of clothing, behind which, closer to the body, something can be hidden” (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/82688/zanadrze>; accessed at 9.03.2023).

⁴⁶ “an expression used to express the sender’s emotional reaction to a negatively rated event that has already happened or will happen in the future” (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/52083/biada>; accessed at 2.03.2023).

15-16; Luke 11, 44; Rev 8, 13; Rev 9, 12; Rev 11, 14; Rev 12, 12; Rev 18, 10), *cudzołóstwo*⁴⁷, *miłować*⁴⁸ (usually replaced by *kochać*⁴⁹), *niewiasta*⁵⁰, *osobność*⁵¹, *ów*⁵², *przetak*⁵³, *wieczera*⁵⁴ (Matt 26, 17-18; and in PSNT 2022 Mark 14, 12; Luke 22, 8-15). However, these words are almost non-existent in modern language and their frequency in the ecumenical translation has been kept to a minimum. Biblicisms that are in line with modern language have not been changed. Therefore, the prayer formula of the Lord's Prayer has remained, as well as such biblicisms as: *Co to jest prawda, Oto człowiek*.

The translators have endeavored to preserve as many biblicisms as possible, especially those firmly established by tradition in the Polish language, making only minor changes to word order or substituting one word for another. This tendency is easily noticeable for Polish readers, for example, in the Sermon on the Mount, where a significant portion of the biblicisms have been retained with minor modifications (Matt 5, 37-48; Matt 6, 3-24-33; Matt 7, 1-5-7-21). Thus, phrases firmly established in the translation tradition have been rendered in a new language that is apparently easier to understand. Therefore, without falling into the trap of excessive modernization, efforts were made to ensure that the language of the translation was essentially more contemporary than traditional.

The Orthodox versions of Polish translations of the sacred texts are created according to Nida's principle, which prioritizes the receiver's understanding and renders the formal and conceptual content of the message in modern language that is commonly used today. This means that the forms of the language that are most commonly used and most familiar to the audience are preferred over those imposed by literary prestige or ecclesiastical tradition. Additionally, the Polish ecumenical translation

⁴⁷ "adultery".

⁴⁸ "to love (someone)".

⁴⁹ "to love (someone)".

⁵⁰ "woman".

⁵¹ "a feature of someone or something that is different from other people or objects of a similar category" (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/56569/osobnosc>; accessed at 9.03.2023).

⁵² "that; one that has already been mentioned and precisely defined, so it is known to the interlocutor" (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/54256/ow>; accessed at 9.03.2023).

⁵³ "sieve".

⁵⁴ "supper".

follows Nida's suggestion to use endocentric expressions that are familiar in the target language.

These religious authorities strive to find a Polish language that is understandable to today's people and they feel the need to incorporate the religious message into everyday experience. However, they want the proposed text in Polish to be written in a "language that is understandable, but also not trite"⁵⁵. Thus, the issue of tension between modernizing the language of the biblical text and maintaining the dignity of the inspired text has drawn attention to the colloquial aspect of language. Rejecting a religious language is equivalent to rejecting a Christian worldview.

The translators' concern for the contemporary reader outweighed centuries-old translation conventions. While aesthetic and linguistic arguments were certainly considered, the translation team prioritized religious and spiritual motives.

The ecumenical translation team has modernized some ancient terms in order to make the text more understandable to contemporary readers. For example, in Matt 27, 27, the terms *kohorta* and *praetorium* have been replaced with *oddział*⁵⁶ and *dziedziniec*⁵⁷ respectively, as the original terms may not be familiar to modern readers. Similarly, in Matt 19, 7-8, the modern terms *rozwód* (divorce) and *rozwozić się* (to divorce) have been used. The modernization trend has even extended to proposed changes such as replacing the old rooftop sermon (*rozgłaszajcie na dachach*⁵⁸, Matt 10, 27) with the terrace sermon (*rozgłaszajcie na tarasach*⁵⁹).

Another point of contention has been the division of time, as in Matthew 27, 45-46, where it has been suggested that the entire earth was covered in darkness between noon and three in the afternoon⁶⁰ (*między godziną dwunastą a trzecią po południu całą ziemię ogarnęła ciemność*).

⁵⁵ DUMAS Felicia, *Dicționar bilingv...*, p. 8.

⁵⁶ "an organised group of soldiers or other persons acting in a military capacity performing specific tasks and forming part of a larger whole" (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/10159/oddzial/4977179/w-wojsku>; accessed at 9.03.2023).

⁵⁷ "yard".

⁵⁸ "spread the word on the roofs".

⁵⁹ "spread the word on the terraces".

⁶⁰ "between twelve and three in the afternoon, the whole land was covered in darkness".

Religious and spiritual concerns have taken priority over aesthetic and linguistic arguments in the translation process. In the end, however, the old version remained. In Matt 19:5, the option *opuści mężczyzna* (the man⁶¹) was unanimously accepted as a replacement for *opuści człowiek ojca i matkę* (a man shall leave his father and mother⁶²).

In ecumenical translation, there is a tendency to modernize the language itself and move away from traditional forms, sometimes centuries-old, which are no longer widely understood. For example, in Matt 5, 29, the eye is called *członkiem* (member), as it appears in the PSNT 2022, instead of *część ciała* (a part of the body) as it appears in the previous translation. In Matt 8, 21 and Luke 9, 59, the term *pochować*⁶³ (to bury; transitive) (also in Matt 14, 12) is used instead of *pogrzebać*⁶⁴ (to bury; intransitive). However, in Matt 12, 29, the term *zagrabić jego własność*⁶⁵ (to plunder his things) is used instead of *sprzęt mu zagrabić* (tools). In Matt 3, 12 and Luke 3, 17, *przetak* (sieve) appears instead of *wiejadła*. In previous translations, *trzos*⁶⁶ was often replaced by *sakiewką*⁶⁷ in Matt 10, 9, Luke 10, 4; 22, 35. In Jas 5, 7, in BE the translation *deszcz jesienny i deszcz wiosenny* (autumn rain and spring rain) was proposed instead of *deszcz późny i deszcz wczesny* (late rain and early rain). In Jas 5:14, *prezbiter*⁶⁸ was chosen instead of *kapłan*⁶⁹ or *starszy*⁷⁰ as in previous translations. A risky change was made in Jas 1, 13-14, where *kuszenie*⁷¹ was replaced with

⁶¹ “the man”.

⁶² “a man will leave his father and mother”.

⁶³ “to place the body or ashes of a deceased person or animal in a grave” (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/29204/pochowac/4784341/zmarlych>; accessed at 9.03.2023).

⁶⁴ “to place the body or ashes of a deceased person or animal in a grave; to bury” (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/29206/pogrzebac/4777252/zmarlych>; accessed at 9.03.2023).

⁶⁵ “to rob him of his belongings”.

⁶⁶ “small leather or cloth money bag used in the past” (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/80938/trzos/5202499/na-pieniadze>; accessed at 10.03.2023).

⁶⁷ “formerly used small money pouch made of leather or cloth” (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/65275/sakiewka/5173378/na-pieniadze>; accessed at 10.03.2023).

⁶⁸ “presbyter”.

⁶⁹ “in Christian denominations, a clergyman after being ordained who has the right to celebrate mass and administer the holy sacraments” (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/18467/kaplan/4855664/katolicki>; accessed at 10.03.2023); “priest”.

⁷⁰ “the elder ones”.

⁷¹ *Kusić*: “Make a person do something he or she does not want to do or should not

*doświadczanie*⁷². The term *celnik*⁷³ was intentionally replaced by *poborca podatkowy*⁷⁴, but this idea was abandoned in the final ecumenical version of the New Testament.

Other examples of vocabulary modernization in the ecumenical edition of the Bible include the use of *nauczycieli Prawa*⁷⁵ instead of *uczeni w Piśmie*⁷⁶. The term *sparaliżowanym*⁷⁷ is used instead of *paralitik*⁷⁸ in Matt 9, 2. Well-known terms in Polish tradition are sometimes exchanged for others, such as *Dobra Nowina*⁷⁹, which is used instead of *Ewangelia* (which is not a Polish word) in most contexts. In the Gospels, the traditional phrase *zaprawdę powiadam wam*⁸⁰ is replaced with the variant *zapewniam was*⁸¹, and sometimes even *oświadczam wam*⁸².

The choice of *zapewniam*⁸³ is explained by its meaning, which implies telling someone that something undoubtedly exists or will happen, emphasizing the importance and indisputability of the statement. In the book of Revelation, the variant *cztery istoty*⁸⁴, “four beings” before God, appears, while other Polish translations of the Bible use *cztery żywe istoty*⁸⁵ (Dąbrowski),

do” (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/28312/kusic/5067026/do-zlego>; accessed at 10.03.2023).

⁷² *Doświadczać*: “experience some situation that provokes strong emotions or feel such emotions in connection with some situation” (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/11916/doswiadczac/4729466/bolu-szczescia>; accessed at 10.03.2023).

⁷³ “tax collector” (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/25001/celnik/4950724/w-biblii>; accessed at 10.03.2023).

⁷⁴ “tax collector”.

⁷⁵ “teachers of the Law”.

⁷⁶ “the scribes; teachers of the Law”.

⁷⁷ “paralyzed”.

⁷⁸ “person affected by paralysis” (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/64612/paralitik/5171701/sparalizowany>; accessed at 10.03.2023).

⁷⁹ “The teachings of Jesus Christ as contained in the four Gospels” (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/16478/dobra-nowina>; accessed at 10.03.2023); “The Good News”.

⁸⁰ “truly I say to you”.

⁸¹ “I assure you”.

⁸² “I declare to you”.

⁸³ “to tell someone that something undoubtedly exists or will happen” (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/7499/zapewniac/4387373/o-milosci>; accessed at 10.03.2023); “ensure, to assure; provide”.

⁸⁴ “four creatures; four beings”.

⁸⁵ “four living beings”.

*cztery zwierzęta*⁸⁶ (BT 2012), *cztery postacie*⁸⁷ (BW) or even *dwudziestu czterech starszych*⁸⁸ (tak ma BW), instead of *dwudziestu czterech starców*⁸⁹ (BT 2012). Verbs such as *gorszyć*⁹⁰ (imperfective aspect) and *zgorszyć*⁹¹ (perfective aspect) are retained in the contexts in which they appear with the meaning given by modern language in the New Testament: “to provoke objection or displeasure by disregarding generally accepted moral and ethical norms; to be indignant”. In this ecumenical translation, *złe duchy*⁹² appear as *demony* (Matt 8, 16). In *Kazania na Górze*⁹³ (5, 5), *cisi*⁹⁴ become *łagodnymi*⁹⁵, and in Matt 10, 16, *snakes*, (*węże*) are no longer *roztropne*⁹⁶ but *czujne*⁹⁷ and *doves* (*gołębie*) become *łagodne* from *nieskazitelne*⁹⁸. Furthermore, the term *opętanego*⁹⁹ has been replaced by *obłąkany*¹⁰⁰, *ślepego*¹⁰¹ by *niewidomy*¹⁰², *chromego*¹⁰³ by *kulawy*¹⁰⁴, *łaknącego*¹⁰⁵

⁸⁶ “four animals”.

⁸⁷ “four figures”.

⁸⁸ “twenty-four elders”.

⁸⁹ “twenty-four old men”.

⁹⁰ “to shock, to scandalize, to offend”.

⁹¹ “to shock, to scandalize, to offend”.

⁹² “evil spirits”.

⁹³ “Sermons on the Mount”.

⁹⁴ “one that behaves calmly and does not draw attention to itself” (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/24949/cichy/4966030/chlopak>; accessed at 10.03.2023); “quiet, silent”.

⁹⁵ “one who is calm, understanding and good to others” (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/3942/lagodny/4979783/spokojny>; accessed at 13.03.2023).

⁹⁶ “one whose actions are guided by reason and reflection” (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/353/roztropny/5185181/czlowiek>; accessed at 13.03.2023); “thoughtful, wise”.

⁹⁷ “one who is attentive and careful to avoid trouble” (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/3371/czujny/1665354/czlowiek>; accessed at 13.03.2023), “vigilant”.

⁹⁸ “impeccable”.

⁹⁹ “a person who behaves incalculably because they are under the influence of evil powers” (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/112041/opetany>; accessed at 13.03.2023), “possessed”.

¹⁰⁰ “mentally ill” (<https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/52027/oblakany/5152707/czlowiek>; accessed at 13.03.2023), “insane, demented, madman, lunatic”.

¹⁰¹ “blind”.

¹⁰² “blind”.

¹⁰³ “lame”.

¹⁰⁴ “lame”.

¹⁰⁵ “hungry”.

by *głodny*¹⁰⁶, *kupiectwo*¹⁰⁷ by *handel*¹⁰⁸, *roztropnego*¹⁰⁹ by *rozsądny*¹¹⁰ or *rozumny*¹¹¹. Some of these innovations introduced in the ecumenical translation have become well-known and established in the Polish biblical tradition, albeit rarely in earlier translations.

However, it should be noted that although work has been done to provide a modern version of the language and it is a completely new translation, some interdependencies of the text between previous translations can be identified¹¹², thus preserving the various Polish traditions of indigenous translation. Therefore, readers will find elements of the tradition of the *Biblia Wujka* and the *Biblia Gdańska*, as well as elements of translations from the end of the 16th century, such as the Calvin Bible of Geneva (1588), which was never published in Polish.

The ecumenical version of the New Testament in Polish introduced a number of expressions that are characteristic of contemporary Polish language, which were not present in Polish translations of that time, such as: *kobiety ciężarne*¹¹³ (Matt 24, 19; Mark 13, 17; Luke 21, 23), *łamać wierność małżeńską*¹¹⁴ (Matt 5, 27-28), *ożenić się*¹¹⁵ (Matt 22, 25; Luke 14, 20), *podżegacz ludu*¹¹⁶ (Luke 23, 14), *spowodować śmierć*¹¹⁷ (Matt 10, 21), *wprowadzać słowa w czyn*¹¹⁸ (Matt 7, 24; Luke 6, 49), *zyskać poklask u ludzi*¹¹⁹ (Matt 6, 2).

In another context, for example in Matt 25, 16, the translators of the ecumenical version intended to use the term *zainwestować*¹²⁰, but

¹⁰⁶ “hungry”.

¹⁰⁷ “merchandising”.

¹⁰⁸ “trading”.

¹⁰⁹ “wise”.

¹¹⁰ “reasonable, rational”.

¹¹¹ “intelligent, rational”.

¹¹² Bożena SZCZEPIŃSKA, “O słownictwie polskiego przekładu ekumenicznego «Ewangelii św. Mateusza»”, in: *Tysiąc lat polskiego słownictwa religijnego*, red. B. Kreja, Gdańsk, 1999, p. 224.

¹¹³ “pregnant women”.

¹¹⁴ “to break marital fidelity”.

¹¹⁵ “to marry, to get married”.

¹¹⁶ “instigator of the people”.

¹¹⁷ “to cause death”.

¹¹⁸ “to put words into action, put words into action”.

¹¹⁹ “to gain people’s applause”.

¹²⁰ “to invest”.

eventually abandoned it because it was too avant-garde, opting for some moderate modernization. Thus, they resorted to earlier, already known translations, using a word already fixed in the tradition, but which is nevertheless ambiguous: *obracac*¹²¹.

During the process of translating the biblical text, the team of translators often wondered whether the language used was contemporary and in use today. However, the focus was on written language as it is more formal and precise than spoken language. The language used in the ecumenical translation is contemporary Polish, which is commonly used in writing by modern-day Poles. However, it is not a colloquial or slang language and is not intended to be a “dynamic” or functional translation that seeks an identical response from the target language receivers, where meaning and style take priority. The ecumenical version of translation limits paraphrasing to an absolute minimum. The intention of the ecumenical translation was for the language to be accessible to the modern generation, so that people would come to it not solely for the beauty of the language, but also for spiritual benefit and to work on their own sanctification. Linguists believe that since language is constantly changing, the biblical text should be updated every few years to remain relevant to future generations. Therefore, the arguments of linguists who appreciate the Old Polish language cannot overlook the theological truth that God’s Word must be living, effective, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart (Heb 4, 12).

VIII. Biblical phraseological structures

In our analysis, lexical considerations will be made with a view to noticing analogies or differences between the languages compared.

VIII. 1. The Gospel of Matthew

Matt 6, 25

Biblia 2008: “De aceea zic vouă: **Nu vă îngrijiți** pentru sufletul vostru ce veți mânca, nici pentru trupul vostru cu ce vă veți

¹²¹ “to turn, to spin”.

îmbrăca; au nu este sufletul mai mult decât hrana și trupul decât îmbrăcămintea?”

Anania: “De aceea vă spun: **Nu purtați grijă** pentru viața voastră ce veți mânca și ce veți bea, nici pentru trupul vostru cu ce vă veți îmbrăca; oare nu este viața mai mult decât hrana și trupul decât îmbrăcămintea?”

BT 2012: “Dlatego powiadam wam: **Nie troszczcie się zbytnio o swoje życie**, o to, co macie jeść i pić, ani o swoje ciało, czym się macie przyodziać. Czyż życie nie znaczy więcej niż pokarm, a ciało więcej niż odzienie?”

BE 2018: “Dlatego mówię wam: **Nie martwcie się** o swoje życie, co będziecie jeść i pić, ani o swoje ciało, w co się ubierzecie. Czy życie nie znaczy więcej niż jedzenie, a ciało niż ubranie?”

PSNT 2022: “Dlatego mówię wam: - **Nie martwcie się** o życie wasze, co będziecie jedli lub pili, ani o ciało wasze, w co je przyodziejecie. Czyż życie nie jest czymś większym niż jedzenie, a ciało niż odzienie?”

PSNT EPP 2016¹²²: “Dlatego mówię wam: - **Nie martwcie się** o życie wasze, co będziecie jedli lub pili, ani o ciało wasze, w co je przyodziejecie. Czyż życie nie jest czymś większym niż jedzenie, a ciało niż odzienie?”

NT EPP 2017: “Dlatego mówię wam: - **Nie martwcie się** o życie wasze, co będziecie jedli lub pili, ani o ciało wasze, w co je przyodziejecie. Czyż życie nie jest czymś większym niż jedzenie, a ciało niż odzienie?”

In Anania's case, the author is the only one who opts for a phraseological construction in his translation. In Biblia 2008, a single-verb equivalent is chosen, similar to the versions in Polish. In BT 2012, PSNT 2022, PSNT EPP 2016, and NT EPP 2017, the imperfective reflexive verb *troszczyć się* is used, meaning “to care for, to look after, to show concern for someone or something” according to SJP PWN. The versions used by the Orthodox

¹²² *Pismo Święte Nowego Testamentu. Ekumeniczny Przekład Przyjaciół*, Wyd. M w Polsce, Kraków, 2016.

choose the imperfective reflexive verb *martwić się*, which means “to be sad about something, to worry about someone or something, to be concerned”.

Matt 5, 33

Biblia 2008: “Ați auzit ce s-a zis celor de demult: «**Să nu juri strâmb**, ci să ții înaintea Domnului jurămintele tale»”.

Anania: “Ați auzit că s’a spus celor de demult: **Să nu juri strâmb**, ci jurămintele tale să le ții înaintea Domnului”.

BT 2012: “Słyszeliście również, że powiedziano przodkom: **Nie będziesz fałszywie przysięgał**, lecz dotrzymasz Panu swęj przysięgi”.

BE 2018: “Wiecie, że powiedziano ojcom: **Nie dopuść się krzywoprzysięstwa**, a to, co ślubowałaś Panu, wypełnisz”.

PSNT 2022: “Słyszeliście jeszcze, że powiedziano przodkom: - **Nie będziesz przysięgał fałszywie**, lecz dotrzymasz Panu przysięgi twoje”.

PSNT EPP 2016: “Słyszeliście jeszcze, że powiedziano przodkom: - **Nie krzywoprzysięgaj**, lecz złożysz Panu przysięgi twoje”.

NT EPP 2017: “Słyszeliście jeszcze, że powiedziano przodkom: - **Nie krzywoprzysięgaj**, lecz złożysz Panu przysięgi twoje”.

In Romanian, the construction is rendered by a verbal locution in the conjunctive mood, having the meaning of an imperative in this context, in Polish it is rendered by a verb in the negative form and an adverb, *Nie będziesz fałszywie przysięgał*, or a verb in the negative form and a noun, *Nie dopuść się krzywoprzysięstwa* (“do not swear a lying oath”), or a verb in the negative form *Nie krzywoprzysięgaj* (“do not swear a lying oath”).

If the general meaning of this phrase is “to lie”, in the biblical context it takes on different connotations: “The prohibition is not against any oath in general, but only against false oaths. It is not the oath itself that is condemned, but only the false one”¹²³. The oath is not a mere formality but

¹²³ Aleksandr Pavlovich LOPUKHIN, *Comentar la Evanghelia de la Mateiu*, traducere de Patriarhul Nicodim, Editura Secției Culturale a Sfintei Arhiepiscopii a Bucureștilor, București, 1948, p. 138.

a solemn declaration by which the individual commits to telling the truth. Through the act of swearing, the person assumes moral responsibility to be honest and not deceive. Violating an oath through lying or perjury is considered a serious offense against God and society.

The theologian and translator Cristian Bădiliță follows a similar line in his exegesis: “All things invoked in oaths ultimately reflect the glory of God, since they were created by Him. But the believer does not have the right to swear even by his own ‘head,’ by his life, because he himself is a creature of the same God”¹²⁴. Beyond their immediate and visible impact, our actions can have significant symbolic resonance, with moral and spiritual implications that may surpass our expectations.

VIII. 2. The Gospel of Mark

Mark 4, 22

Biblia 2008: “Căci nu e nimic ascuns ca să nu se dea pe față; nici n-a fost ceva tăinuit, decât ca să vină la arătare”.

Anania: “Că nu este ceva ascuns care să nu fie dat pe față; nici nu a fost ceva tăinuit decât ca să vină la lumina zilei”.

NT EPP 2017: “Nie ma bowiem nic tajemnego, co by nie miało być ujawnione. Ani też niczego nie da się ukryć, co by nie miało być odsłonięte”.

BE: “Nie ma bowiem nic ukrytego, co nie stałoby się jawne, ani nic zakrytego, co nie miałoby wyjść na jaw”.

The selected verb is an attention-grabbing one. Thus, the authors of both the Romanian and Polish translations opted for rendering the idea by phraseological constructions or by verbs on their own. While in the Romanian edition, the verbal locution *să nu se dea pe față* stands out, in the Polish edition of the New Testament the idea is rendered in verbs. In the Polish ecumenical translation of the New Testament, the structure *nie miało być ujawnione* (from the verb *ujawnić* “to make known to others what had been kept secret until now, to reveal”) and *nie miało być odsłonięte*

¹²⁴ Cristian BĂDILIȚĂ, *Noul Testament – Evanghelia după Matei*, ediție bilingvă, introduceri, traduceri, comentarii și note patristice de Cristian Bădiliță, prefață de Theodor Paleologu, Editura Curtea Veche, București, 2009, p. 178.

from the verb *odstłonić* “to reveal” are chosen, while in the full ecumenical translation of the Bible, the following options are chosen: *co nie nie stałoby się jawne* “would not be revealed” (adjective *jawne* “known”) and *nie miałoby wyjść na jaw* “would not be revealed”.

On a semantic level, the locution can be equated with the verb “to discover”. In those days, light was provided by small clay lamps which had to be placed on a candlestick to shed more light. Covering the lamp with a shutter would suffocate the flame. Thus the hidden light shines for nothing. God wants the light of His Word to be received by people.

Mark 6, 7

Biblia 2008: “Și a chemat la Sine pe cei doisprezece și a început să-i trimită doi câte doi și **le-a dat putere** asupra duhurilor necurate”.

Anania: “Și i-a chemat la Sine pe cei doispre zece și a început să-i trimită doi câte doi și **le-a dat putere** asupra duhurilor necurate”.

BT 2012: “Następnie przywołał do siebie Dwunastu i zaczął rozsyłać ich po dwóch. **Dał im** też **władzę** nad duchami nieczystymi”.

BE 2018: “Wezwał też Dwunastu i zaczął ich posyłać po dwóch. **Dał im** również **moc** nad duchami nieczystymi”.

PSNT 2022: “Przywołał do siebie dwunastu i począł rozsyłać ich parami. **Dał im władzę** nad duchami nieczystymi”.

PSNT EPP 2016: “Przywołał do siebie Dwunastu i zaczął rozsyłać ich parami. **Dał im władzę** nad duchami nieczystymi”.

NT EPP 2017: “i przywołał do siebie Dwunastu i zaczął rozsyłać ich parami. **Dał im władzę** nad duchami nieczystymi”.

In this context, the locution is rendered under close formulations. If in the Biblia 2008 and Anania the rendering is identical, he gave them power, in the Polish versions, in BT 2012, PSNT 2022, PSNT EPP 2016, NT EPP 2017 a variant with a slightly different meaning from the Romanian one is opted for, *Dał im władzę*, leading one to think more towards a military

terminology even: “to give the right to rule over something; to give the leadership”. In BT 2012 the plural personal pronoun in dative *im* is interposed. In BE 2018 the particle *również* (“also”) is interposed, opting for another term, the noun *moc* (“power”). The difference between the two options in Polish is one of nuance: *władza* means “a strong influence that something exerts on a person and limits him or her”, while *moc* has the meaning of “power”, *mocny*, meaning “to be strong”.

Analyzing the biblical context and referring to the previously mentioned verse, a combination of the meanings of the two lexemes is most appropriate. This is because the apostles are tasked with combating unclean spirits, and where authority alone is insufficient, power intervenes.

VIII. 3. The Gospel of Luke

Luke 6, 11

Biblia 2008: “Ei însă **s-au umplut de mânie** și vorbeau unii cu alții ce să facă cu Iisus”.

Anania: “Ei însă **s’au umplut de mânie** și se vorbeau unii cu alții ce să-I facă lui Iisus”.

BT 2012: “Oni zaś **wpadli w szal** i naradzali się między sobą, co by uczynić Jezusowi”.

BE 2018: “A oni **wpadli we wściekłość** i naradzali się, co mogliby zrobić Jezusowi”.

PSNT 2022: “Oni zaś jakby **rozum postradali** i naradzali się, co by zrobić Jezusowi”.

PSNT EPP 2016: “Oni zaś jakby **rozum postradali** i naradzali się, co by zrobić Jezusowi”.

NT EPP 2017: “Oni zaś jakby **rozum postradali** i naradzali się, co by zrobić Jezusowi”.

In Luke 6, 11, the Romanian phrase presents different forms and stronger meanings. For example, in the BT 2012 translation, the phrase carries an extremely strong semantic load: *wpadli w szal*, meaning “went mad; went berserk”, with the noun *szal* referring more to a mental state, “a psychological state caused by something that has a very strong impact on

us, characterized by uncontrolled behavior and exaggerated reactions”. The option in the BE 2018 translation seems closer to the one in the Romanian Biblia 2008 and Anania, *s-au înfuriat*, where the noun *wściekłość* means an outburst of anger, “a violent and strong explosion of anger, manifested through aggression and the fact that the person has no control over what they do and say”.

If in the Biblia 2008 and Anania, a gradual increase in anger is indicated, in the BE 2018 we are presented with “a strong explosion of anger” through the option proposed by the translators. In the PSNT 2022, PSNT EPP 2016, and NT EPP 2017, the phrase formed by a noun and a verb suggests a type of mental illness, *ktoś stracił zmysły*, meaning “someone lost their mind; someone stopped thinking logically due to a mental illness”. The anger in the Biblia 2008 and Anania turns into an explosive outburst, a strong fury in the BT 2012, BE 2018, PSNT 2022, PSNT EPP 2016, and NT EPP 2017, while in the Polish versions, phrases that are closer to the language of contemporary Polish speakers are used.

Anger, as a complex emotional state, is a frequent topic in biblical exegesis. Both human beings and divinity are described as experiencing anger, but with significant interpretations that differentiate the two perspectives.

Luke 2, 1

Biblia 2008: “În zilele acelea **a ieșit poruncă** de la Cezarul August să se înscrie toată lumea”.

Anania: “Iar în zilele acelea **a ieșit poruncă** de la cezarul August să se înscrie toată lumea”.

BT 2012: “W owym czasie **wyszło rozporządzenie** Cezara Augusta, żeby przeprowadzić spis ludności w całym państwie”.

BE 2018: “W tamtych dniach **wyszedł dekret** cesarza Augusta, aby w całym imperium przeprowadzić spis ludności”.

PSNT 2022: “I stało się w owe dni, że **wyszedł dekret** cesarza Augusta, aby spisać wszystkich mieszkańców świata”.

PSNT EPP 2016: “I stało się w owe dni, że **wyszedł dekret** cesarza Augusta, aby spisać wszystkich mieszkańców świata”.

NT EPP 2017: “I stało się w owe dni, że **wyszedł dekret** cesarza Augusta, aby spisać wszystkich mieszkańców świata”.

The phrase *a ieși poruncă* from the Biblia 2008 and Anania appears in the same form, verb+noun, in the Polish versions, but in Polish, nouns that belong to the semantic field of official acts, *rozporządzenie* and *dekret*, are used, which do not carry the same official and authoritative character as the Romanian noun *poruncă*. The term *rozporządzenie* from the BT 2012 means “an official decision made by authorized persons to order, prohibit, or change the way something is done”, a “normative act of lower rank than an act, issued based on the authorization contained in the act”, and refers more to the field of law. The noun *dekret* in BE 2018, PSNT 2022, PSNT EPP 2016, NT EPP 2017 refers directly to a “legal act having the force of law, issued by a body of the executive power”. In Romanian, the sacred text employs lexemes of Slavic origin used in its older variants: *a porunci* from Slavic *porončiti*.

VIII. 4. The Gospel of John

John 8, 7

Biblia 2008: “Și stăruind să-L întrebe, El S-a ridicat și le-a zis: **Cel fără de păcat dintre voi să arunce cel dintâi piatra asupra ei**”.

Anania: “Dar cum ei stăruiau întrebându-L, El S’a ridicat și le-a zis: «**Cel fără păcat dintre voi să arunce cel dintâi cu piatra asupra ei**»”.

BT 2012: “A kiedy w dalszym ciągu Go pytali, podniósł się i rzekł do nich: «**Kto z was jest bez grzechu, niech pierwszy rzuci na nią kamień**»”.

BE 2018: “Kiedy nadal Go pytali, podniósł się i powiedział: **Kto z was jest bez grzechu, niech pierwszy rzuci w nią kamieniem**”.

PSNT 2022: “Gdy zaś nie przestawali Go pytać, wyprostował się i powiedział im: - Ten **kto z was bezgrzeszny, niech pierwszy rzuci w nią kamieniem**”.

PSNT EPP 2016: “A gdy nie przestawali Go pytać, podniósł się i powiedział do nich: **Kto z was jest bez grzechu, niech pierwszy rzuci w nią kamieniem**”.

NT EPP 2017: “A gdy nie przestawali Go pytać, podniósł się i powiedział do nich: **Kto z was jest bez grzechu, niech pierwszy rzuci w nią kamieniem**”.

This expression from John 8, 7 presents similar formulations in the Romanian and Polish versions.

In BT 2012, BE 2018, PSNT EPP 2016 and NT EPP 2017 the preposition+noun in the genitive case, *bez grzechu* (“without sin”) is used, while in PSNT 2022 the adjective *bezgrzeszny* is used, meaning “one who does not commit sins – acts in contradiction with the principles of religion or other principles established in society; to prove that one does not commit a sin – an act not in conformity with the principles of religion or other principles established in society; unrepentant, pure”.

The meaning of the expression is linked to the specifically human trait of judging others, often based on appearances. In theory, since no one is without sin, judging people should be done only by God; however, without judgment, law would disappear, creating chaos. Referring back to the biblical quote, the woman is like all other people, that is, sinful: “According to the Law of Moses, the sinful woman was to be stoned. According to the internal law, which involves an activation of one’s own conscience, the woman cannot be stoned except along with ourselves, who are just as sinful as she is”¹²⁵.

John 13, 18

Biblia 2008: “Nu zic despre voi toți; căci Eu știu pe cei pe care i-am ales. Ci ca să se împlinescă Scriptura: «Cel ce mănâncă pâinea cu Mine **a ridicat călcâiul** împotriva Mea»“.

Anania: “Nu despre voi toți grăiesc; Eu îi știu pe cei pe care i-am ales; ci ca să se plinescă Scriptura: Cel ce mănâncă pâinea cu Mine **a ridicat călcâiul** asupra Mi”.

¹²⁵ Cristian BĂDILIȚĂ, *Noul Testament – Evanghelia după Ioan*, ediție bilingvă, introduceri, traducere, comentarii și note patristice de Cristian Bădiliță, Editura Curtea Veche, București, 2010, p. 266.

BT 2012: “Nie mówię o was wszystkich. Ja wiem, których wybrałem; lecz [potrzeba], aby się wypełniło Pismo: Kto ze Mną spożywa chleb, ten **podniósł** na Mnie swoją **piętę**”.

BE 2018: “Nie mówię o was wszystkich. Wiem, kogo wybrałem, ale aby się wypełniło Pismo: Ten, kto spożywa Mój chleb, **wystąpił przeciwko Mnie**”.

PSNT 2022: “Nie o wszystkich was mówię. Ja wiem, kogo wybrałem. Ale niech się wypełni Pismo: Ten, kto jadł ze Mną chleb, **podniósł** na Mnie swą **piętę**”.

PSNT EPP 2016: “Nie o wszystkich was mówię. Ja wiem, kogo wybrałem. Ale niech się wypełni Pismo: Ten, kto jadł ze Mną chleb, **podniósł** na Mnie swą **piętę**”.

NT EPP 2017: “Nie o wszystkich was mówię. Ja wiem, kogo wybrałem. Ale niech się wypełni Pismo: Ten, kto jadł ze Mną chleb, **podniósł** na Mnie swą **piętę**”.

The expression from John 13, 18 is rendered almost in the same form in the versions selected for comparison. The biblical passage depicts the moment when Jesus announces Judas' imminent betrayal. Sharing bread, equivalent to having a meal together, was a specific practice of the Middle East. In this region, friendship was strengthened through the act of consuming bread with a close person, thus establishing a lasting bond.

In the BT 2012, PSNT 2022, PSNT EPP 2016, and NT EPP 2017, the formulation is identical to that in the Biblia 2008 and Anania, verb+noun *podniósł piętę* (“lifted his heel”). However, in the BE 2018, a different formulation was chosen that does not contain the noun *piętę* (“heel”), but rather the construction *wystąpił przeciwko Mnie*, which has a much more general meaning: “turned against Me”.

The phrase *a ridica călcâiul* symbolizes betrayal, the act of turning against those close to you. In philology, *Iuda* can also be considered a biblicism, a term that designates an emblematic character of betrayal, universally recognized in any society. Using this expression alongside Judas' name only emphasizes the idea of betrayal mentioned earlier: “By attributing this verse from the psalm to Jesus, John emphasizes once again

Judas' betrayal, even though the struggle will be between Jesus and the devil"¹²⁶.

IX. Conclusions

Bible translations are typically done by translators belonging to a specific denomination or Christian orientation. However, in modern times, especially for those who doubt and seek, this can easily raise suspicions of partiality. An ecumenical translation, whose text has been prepared by translators from different Christian traditions, avoids this issue and is more likely to be perceived as objective and universal by the reader. In the case of the ecumenical translation, effort was made to modernize archaic terms or phrases that are incomprehensible to the modern reader. However, the translators did not opt for too avant-garde solutions, preferring moderate modernizations. In some contexts, this was not possible, as the translators aimed to maintain words characteristic of a particular literary genre of biblical books.

As for my own approach, I aimed to present the text-based relationship between the Romanian and Polish editions, as well as the political, confessional, and cultural constraints on the versions of the biblical text. I approached the New Testament text with a preliminary interpretation grid based on the Orthodox versions in both languages. The texts of the Romanian and Polish biblical traditions provide philologists with materials for studying the evolutionary dynamics of the norms of literary Romanian and literary Polish, including phonetics, morphology, lexicon, and syntax.

¹²⁶ Cristian BĂDILIȚĂ, *Noul Testament – Evanghelia după Ioan*, p. 334.