Terminological Connotations of the Translation of Dosoftei's *Psalms*

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Toutes les traductions des textes bibliques nationalisent le trésor de la fois de l'humanité, mais une equivalence en verses des psaumes ayant les mouvements internes du home de letters est le Psautier en verses du métropolite Dosoftei. Il a été écrit entre 1660-1666, pendant la deuxième moitié de son épiscopat à Roman, édité en 1673 à Uniev, en Polonie, pendant son premier réfuge. Dans la feuille de titre, l'auteur confesse que le livre „a été le résultat de son grand effort de le traduire en verses à partir des saints livres." En plus, Dosoftei caractérise son œvre comme une „tâlcovanie", ayant le sens „d'interprétation" qui est aussi trouvé dans d'autres contextes dans le Psautier en verses: „Voit l'interprétation du livre saint", „l'interprétation de ce psaum" ou dans l'affirmation explicite de Dosoftei qui dit qu'il s'agit „du Psautier de prophète et empéreur David qui a été traduit en verses en roumain". A partir de ces deux formules, on constate qu'il y a deux directions, l'une est esthetique et l'autre herméneutique, toutes les deux ont été utilisées par le métropolite.

Mots-clés : traduction, Métropolite Dosoftei, le Psautier en verses.

Aesthetic aspects

Though it has been discussed (Ion Bianu[1], Gheorghe Perian[2], Dan Horia Mazilu[3], Petru Caraman[4], Al. Andriescu[5], probably by the others) his fidelity to the original text, we notice that, in reality, the Romanian version is the result of some partial transformations which can be explained, on the one side, for Dosoftei „is the first poet who dresses the deep lyric throught of David's psalms in the coat of the Romanian verse"[6] and thus he had to deal with elements which had not been

[1] I. Bianu, *Introduction to the Quoted Edition*, p. XXXII.

[2] Gheorghe Perian, *Our First Poet*, in „Vatra", 1994, nr. 3, p. 3.

[3] Dan Horia Mazilu, *Introduction to the Work of Dosoftei*, „Minerva" Publishing House, Bucharest, 1997, p. 107.

[4] Petru Caraman, *Kochanowski – Dosoftei. The Psaltery in Lyrics*. An edition and a chronological table by Ion Ciubotaru, Foreword by Al. Andriescu, „Trinitas" Publishing House, Iaşi, 2005, p. 58.

[5] Al. Andriescu, *The Psalms in the Romanian Literature*, The Publishing House of „Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University, Iaşi, 2004, p. 18.

[6] I. D. Lăudat, *350 Years from Dosoftei's Birth, the Metropolitan of Moldavia*, Iaşi, 1975, p. 16.

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recorded before him; on the other hand, he creates new words, necessary for transforming the psalms into verses.

Dosoftei introduced, as he confessed, numerous original verses, for example those referring to peace and unity between peoples, representing a commentary on Psalm 132: „Who makes his wall of peace,/ Towers of brotherhood,/ Has a guiltyless life/ And one is rich./ Because it is better, together,/ Brotherhood and sisterhood/ Than the gun whicj destroys/ The courageous soldiers".

Furthermore, Dosoftei's originality can also be seen in the fact that Dosoftei introduced verses referring to personal bitterness due to the love for his country while he was a refugee with Petriceicu Vodă in Poland in 1673. These lyrics have the aspect of a folklore doina, a specific Romanian song expressing sorrow: „Ohhh, my will is sour/ Being away from the country/ Being so far away" (Psalm 119, Bianu, Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, p. 430). Dosoftei cries for his own situation, that of feeling as a stranger out of his country, while David talks about another „estrangement", that from God, having the same consequences in both cases, living in „Chedar's place"- the prototype of fatal places[7], just like in the lyrics below: „Oh, my roguery has worsened; inhabiting me as if I am Chidar's place" (Psalm 119, *The Bible from 1688*, p. 332). The same originality comes from being away from the country (Moldavia, in the case of Dosoftei, and David mentions Jerusalem) as we can see in the following lyrics: „How strange it feels/ To sing in a foreign country./ If I forget you, holy country,/ It would be as if I forget what's right/ Therefore, I change my words into lyrics, /So that I can cry my sorrow" (Psalm 136, Bianu, Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, p. 463). „How will we sing God's song in a foreign land?/ If I forget you, Jerusalem, punish me with taking my right hand!/ May my tongue be stuck in my throat, if I do not remember you" (Psalm 136 from *The Bible from 1688*, p. 344).

If in some psalms, melancholy or personal thorough of the authors appear (David and Dosoftei), in others, the oppression of their own country is felt, passing through hard times, like in the lyrics: „They quickly invaded,/ Your holy country having dark thoughts./ - «damn, let's annihilate them, / So that not even their tongue remains" (Psalm 82, Bianu, Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, p. 278) or „They had hiiden plans for you people, and they talked about your saints./ They said: «Come and make all of them disappear, So that the name of Israel is no longer mentioned»" (Psalm 82, *The Bible from 1688*, p. 276). In these moments, Dosoftei forgets about the feeling of holiness and meekness and violently asks the divinity: „Until when, Holy God,/ The hot anger is going to be here/ Together with the fury/ Which is like a fire spilt over us?/ God, have no mercy of the pagans/ And spill your anger on them" (Psalm 78, Bianu, Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, p. 267) or in the verses: „Until when, you, merciful one, are you going to hide your holy face/ From me, the fiend,/ Until when the poor soul receives advice/ Though

[7] Ioan Sorin Usca, Ioan Traia, *The Old Testament in the Interpretation of the Saint Parents*, XIII, Psalms, „Christiana" Publishing House, Bucharest, 2009, p. 596.

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one's conscience is full of pain in the night?/ Until when the evil is supposed to grow?" (Psalm 12, Bianu, Dosoftei*, The Psaltery in Lyrics*, p. 39).

Moreover, David's sincerity should be appreciated. He, the emperor of Israel, the liked singer of his people, the one named by God „a man liked by My heart" (Facts 13, 22) does not hide his troubled soul. The psalms 12 and 82 are a proof in this respect: „Until when, God, we are going to feel your fire anger?/ Have no mercy on those who do not know you and on the emperors that did not call for your name" (Psalm72, *The Bible from 1688*, p. 272); „Until when, God, I am going to be forgotten?/ When are You going to turn Your face towards me?/ Until when Am I going to give myself pieces of advice, when is the pain going to go away from my heart, day and night?/ Until when is the evil going to have power over me?" (Psalm 12, *The Bible from 1688*, p. 182). The mentioned psalms are the expression of an aggrieved heart full of troubles and doubts before God. The four questions from Psalm 12 which start with the same expression- „Until when?" –are, in reality, some indirect accusations addressed to God who forgets His subjects, hides His face, does not make their burden easier and does not protect them from their enemies. Consequently, the Psaltery does not contain only mystical chants, but different feelings determined by the historical vicissitudes of ancient peoples. The victories over the enemies brought the psamists's cry for joy, while the endured abasement lead to curses and rebellions against destiny, this is the reason why Dosoftei is called „an exceptional political poet"[8].

We notice that Dosoftei has the extraordinary quality of writing, based on different moods or feelings: joy, lament, prayer, delicacy, the state of sin etc. Here is a solemn-sour portrait of the sinner in Psalm 9: „One's mouth is full of bitterness,/ Of curse, of blasphemy and deceit" (Bianu, Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, p. 33). In a metaphorical way, it is presented the one who feels abandoned by God, left alone and threatened in Psalm 21. In an original way and full of details is expressed the thirst of God, both of body and soul: dryness, ugliness of the body just like in the desert is impressive: „For my body yearns for God so much/ It, the lamb, becomes ugly,/Just like in the desert and in dry places,/ Without any water and people" (Psalm 62, Bianu, Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, p. 201). In another psalm, we feel fatigue, the fear which follows the committed sins (Psalm 68). Various feelings are reproduced and nuanced by the psalmist interpreter who preserves the Biblical essence unbroken. People pray to God and they do not bring only „greasy sacrifice" like in the Old Testament, but also „sweet wheat", sometimes even braids like in the Psalm 50 of both editions taken into account: „Braids and gifts as You like them", Bianu, Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, p. 171); „will bring calves to Your sacrifice table" (*The Bible from 1688*, p. 234). During the reading of the psalms, one can meet various specific Romanian words.

Regionalisms, folklore words or those created by Dosoftei from various languages, make the *Psaltery* special, as the following verses say: „The unseen

[8] Dan Zamfirescu, *A Hero of the Spiritual: Dosoftei*, in „The Daystar", year XVII, 1974, no. 42, p. 8.

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evil"- still burning from the verb „to burn down" the coals with water (Psalm 78, Bianu, Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, p. 267); „To make me think my words before I say them/ .../ I am as silent as a mute" (Psalm 38, Bianu, Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, p. 129). The same verses are written by David: „I do not want to make sins with my tongue" (Psalm 38, *The Bible from 1688*, p. 218), „Punish those people who do not know You" (*The Bible from 1688*, p. 272). Moreover, we notice that the *Psaltery* in lyrics has a fluent and expressive style through which Dosoftei expresses the beneficence of the nature through local elements: „Sheep and oxen and everything from the holy sun,/ The wild animal from the field" (Psalm 8, Bianu, Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, p. 28). We notice in Dosoftei's lyrics folklore terms from the peasant's daily life (oxen, sheep, animal, field) and from the world of fairy tales. The expression „animals that destroy"[9] is used even today by the pople from the countryside, when the wolf, the bear, the boar attack the cattles from the yard or from the fold. In *The Bible from 1688*, „man- the prototype of the human specie"[10] was made the master of the all-created ones, this idea is to be found also in Dosoftei, but David reminds us of the nature ust as it is presented in the Book of Genesis: „And they made him master over the results of Your hands./ Everything was put at his feet./ Sheep and cows, all of them, and even the animals of the earth./ The birds in the sky and the fish of the sea, everything that is to be found on water paths" (Psalm 8, *The Bible from 1688*, p. 178).

Unlike David, Dosoftei uses an extremely rich vocabulary, combining folk terms with neologisms and inventing terms based on the languages that he knew, adapting the Biblical vocabulary to the images of autochtonous realities. The one who first discussed the problem of the „Romanianization" of the Psaltery was Hasdeu[11] in the 19th century, he noticed that the nature described by the Romanian translator was not the one specific to the Orient, but to Moldavia. Dosoftei has a text which is full of images from the nature, with equivalents of the Moldavian scenery in the Hebrew world. From the analyzed editions, we remark that Dosoftei's „Palestina" is marked by winters with dark forests haunted by bisons, with high cliffs and rapid springs. The Biblical nature in a warm country is coloured in the Romanian way, with winters, freezing cold and ice; the sea is transformed into rivers or in large forests; the desert becomes high mountains with grass.This type of lyrics give us the chance to admire an authentic Romanian creation having an original landscape and fauna. Thus, poetry has fresh, unexpected images of „localizations" which give it an unseen charm. In other cases, the images are extremely concrete, even characterized by a dense materiality, sometimes having Apocalyptical nightmare forms: „Oxen and cows surround me,/ Having their opened mouth that threaten to kill me./Like the lions which roar/ Having their savage mouth open, towards the pray,/ Just like water I

[9] Dan Simonescu, *art. cit*, p. 350.
[10] Ioan Sorin Usca, Ioan Traia, *op. cit*., p. 58.
[11] Hasdeu at Antonio Patraş, *Dosoftei – the discovery of poetry*, in „Literary Discussions", 2003, no. 5, p. 69.

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was pushed outside/ And my bones were spread./ My heart melts,/ Just like a burning candle./ My virtue is like a bag,/ My tongue and my gums stuck on my sleeve" (Psalm 21, Bianu, Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, p. 66).

The originality of Dosoftei also consists in catching the atmosphere of the simple life from the countryside, it becomes obvious in the used comparisons which contain rustic images such as the frequency of fences which are about to fall in order to translate ruin („Do you think that it is going to be like a broken fence", Psalm 61, Bianu, Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, p. 199; „No boundaries fixed by fences", Psalm 88, Bianu, Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, p. 308), the wine cellars whose wine is stolen („Like a wine cellar in the moment when its wine is stolen", Psalm 78, Bianu, Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, p. 267), of the cut wheat, to underline the reduced number of fighters just like in the Romanian ballads (Psalm 54), of the buciums instead of bugles, a very often used term (Psalms: 46, 97, 136, 150) and of other folklore instruments, like in the following examples: „Play for God/ Having good lyrics,/ And from closed buciums/ The psalm lyrics should triumph,/ Using an ox's horn,/ Let it be heard up in the clouds"[12](Psalm 97, Bianu, Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, p. 336); „With clarions and with the voice of a horn's clarion" (Psalm 97, *The Bible from 1688*, p. 296); „On mountain peeks/ Many voices are heard/ Of large buciums/ With a high voice" (Psalm 46, Bianu, Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, p. 154); „And closed buciums/ Let alone among the willows" (Psalm 136, Bianu, Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, p. 463); „Praise God/ By playing the bucium" (Psalm 150, Bianu, Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, p. 496). In the psalms from *The Bible from 1688*, the Romanian instrument called „bucium" is represented by a clarion or a tool, as the above lyrics present it: „At the willows, in the middle, we hanged our tools" (Psalm 136, *The Bible from 1688*, p. 344); „The Lord having a trumpet voice" (Psalm 46, *The Bible from 1688*, p. 228).

Unlike David, „Dosoftei discovers the mistic poetry of patriarchal life which is for him a way of getting closer to the Biblical model, meaning the first step towards the nationalization of the message."[13] Autochtonizations and updated are considered „vocabulary effects"[14], which are not that importantto include *The Psaltery in Lyrics* from the literate and religious tradition. Though it is faithful to the text –as I. D. Lăudat remarks on the occasion of the commemoration of the Moldavian poet - „as a man of the Orthodox church, he sometimes allows himself some liberties in the text, but they do not alter true faith"[15]. Therefore, in the previously presented comparisons and in others to be found in the same editions,

[12] It is here an ingenuity and unseen onomatopoeia in other translations, see Anca Podgoreanu, *Dosoftei. Bibliography*, Bucharest, 1994, p. XV.

[13] Aureliu Gogi, Edition, afterword, chronological table, critic references in *Dosoftei, The Psaltery in Lyrics*, „Gramar" Publishing House, Bucharest, 2004, p. 293.

[14] Gheorghe Perian, *art. cit*., p. 3.

[15] I. D. Lăudat, *op. cit.*, Iaşi, 1975, p. 15.

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we notice that the *Psaltery on verses* is adapted with more images than the original had, just like he personally did in more cases.

Regarding the „liberties" that Dosoftei allowed himself to make by versifying the psalms, there was a debate in our literary history. His mistakes – shows Ioan Bianu – were the necessity of „winning against the difficulties of creating verses that he obviously was not a master of. Generally speaking, Dosoftei did not affect the meaning of the psalms and did not change it"[16]. The position of Eugen Negrici[17] can be considered correct only if we interpret it in general terms and we put it in connection with an object which refers to the semantic field of the texts (the rules of versification allow some deviations) that Dosoftei managed to encapsulate in verses. But, it loses this assumed availability, if we try to apply it to the way in which Dosoftei approached the psalms as microunities and the Psaltery as a carefully organized macrounity.

As a translator and a creator of verses, Dosoftei is not always as inspired in choosing or creating words, in creating rhymes, in the spontaneous creation of the rhythm. This fact can be explained by the fact that one cannot achieve performance at the beginning of poetry, as it was the case of the moment when Dosoftei started to create lyrics. Beyond the problem of the „incorrect" rhyme, which can be taken as a prejudice of literary historians, Dosoftei is a creator of rare rhymes, just like Titu Maiorescu remarked[18]. Even if Dosoftei adopted all the forms of versification of the Polish poet Jan Kochanowski, almost all forms of versification (the length of the verses, the division in stanzas and sometimes the type of rhyme) are marked by the poet's influence of the folklore verses that he sometimes imitates (Psalm 36, Bianu, Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*). Regarding the length of the verses from Psalm 50 in which the first four verses have ten syllables each, the rhythm is trochaic, specific to the folklore poetry and the rhyme is successive. This perfection of the syllables is not constant, because it is related to the form of the verses which differs from one psalm to another. For example, in Psalmul 46, said by the carrol singers, the verses are short, of six syllables, but they have melody. The rhythm of these verses is also trochaic, and in this case, we can speak about monorhyme. Some fragments from the psalsm which were insignificantly transformed became star songs or carrols. In this respect, there are four examples from his psalms („Should tongues go up"- Psalm 46, „Can you, people, hear this" - Psalm 48, „Come all together to be joyful"- Psalm 94 and „God is the ruler of the country" - Psalm 98), which became carrols after they were transformed by Anton Pann.

[16] Ion Bianu, *Introduction to the critical edition*, p. XXXII.

[17] „The target from the end of the verse", rhyme was the element under whose pressure took place not only the „movements" from the linguistic structures (with some remarkable, but unsearched for, involuntary stylistic victories), but also enough deviations from the „original spirit of the text" – believes Eugen Negrici, *Medieval Poetry in the Romanian Language,* Polirom Publishing House, Iaşi, 2004, p. 51-53.

[18] Titu Maiorescu, *Critic Works*, An Edition and Chronological Table by Domnica Filimon, „Eminescu" Publishing House, Bucharest, 1978, p. 61.

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Not only star songs were enriched due to Dosoftei's psalms, but also the entire Romanian language and literature because the poet worked the language as an artist and as an educated man. His culture and sensitivity helped him obtain some equivalents, having the same meaning as the Liturgical one and resistant in themselves, having a specific language, rhymes, syntactic formulas, fluency and usage of a tonic accent. Dosoftei knew not only folklore poetry and archaic language in local and dialectal expression, but he also had knowledge about versification (having Kochanowschia as a model) and the exercise of versification norms. Some mistakes are almost normal for a poet, since they were misunderstood by some researchers (Bianu)[19] who accused him of lack of knowledge of the Romanian language. But, they state the opposite: „Dosoftei was a man who loved books, a scholar of the best"[20]. Dosoftei is an authentic poet, a logo-type, that when he creates and modifies a canonic text, he cannot refrain from experimenting. This is why we agree with Aureliu Gogi's opinion: „referring to the modern acception of the word, the cultural act of Dosoftei has the value of an experiment"[21].

Consequently, in *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, Dosoftei is the first Romanian poet who enriches our literature with a remarkable poetic work whose original and beautiful parts can be considered innovative creations of his time in the Romanian and European context.

Hermeneutic Aspects

The originality and fidelity of *The Psaltery in Lyrics* compared to the Psalms of David is enriched by the author through marginal notes through which the poet directs his reader to provide clues for the syllabic structure of the lyrics or to clarify obscure fragments. Numerous notes from the version kept in ms. no. 446 from B.A.R., edited by Ion Bianu in 1887 (written after the initial version of the versified *Psaltery* in which the foreword– a dedication addressed to the voivode Gheorghe Duca), and the differences between the manuscris and the printed version from 1673 prove a continuous work on the text (the time-consuming work for each page and the retrieve were the characteristics of the work of Dosoftei as an artist), his exertion of the creator of verses to achieve perfection. Towards the Psalm 94 (then, the indications are given by the poet to guide his readers, offering, through his marginal notes, indications regarding the syllabic structure of the verses (indications which are available for a loud reading). Consequently, Dosoftei „convinces us that he understood poetry as an rhetoric exercise[22], as an external ornament capable of qualitatively modifying a discourse"[23]. Such indications prove the fact that Dosoftei was preoccupied to fix a specific „terminology", for the

[19] Ion Bianu, *Introduction* to the *Quoted Edition*, p. IX.
[20] *Ibidem*, p. XXVII.
[21] Aureliu Gogi, *The Quoted Edition*, 2004, p. 290.
[22] Mircea Scarlat, *The Old Romanian Poetry*, Bucharest, Minerva, 1985, p. 216.
[23] Dan Horia Mazilu, *Towards another Dosoftei*, in „Language and Literature", 1993, no. 3-4, p. 136.

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notion of „ syllable", using the term „slovenitură" in Psalm 1 („In these slovenituri", Bianu, Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, p. 11), Psalm 2 („In eight catguts, meaning slovenituri", Bianu, Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Rhymes*, p. 13), Psalm 6, Psalm 32, the examples could go further.

Based on numerous marginal notes made by Dosoftei, we will understand the genesis of some of the lyrics that he composed or only translated by him and we will see that the sources are almost always scholarly, because most of his lyrics were written based on the selected material from the books that he read. Before translating and creating verses, *The Psaltery* was „thought about and regarded through holy books", it was the object of a long study („a lot you did") of the Biblical exegesis („the Holy Bibles of the Holy Parents, the teachers of the saint church"). Dosoftei takes into account the rich paper works of some parents of the church such as Ioan Zlatoust[24] or Saint Ciprian[25], that he mentions. Moreover, the notes on some of the psalms prove the fact that he was informed regarding historical facts from chronography and from the works of medieval historians. In Dosoftei's work, there are book references which prove the cultural origins of most of his verses. In this respect, it is significant the fact that, talking about *The Psaltery in Lyrics,* he does not use the term „tălmăcire" (meaning „explanation"), which will be later be used. Unlike later researchers who did not show interest for the intentions of the author, the *Psaltery* was considered a translation. His work was especially one of providing explanations („I explained and I wrote"), his work does not suppose only linguistic competence, but especially a cultural one. The thoroughgoing study „of the saint books", which is reminded above, had the role of preparing the explanation activity of the psalms. While he translated and created the verses of the *Psaltery*, he saw more than one translation „in the Romanian language" of the ancient Hebrew poetry, he saw a hermeneutic act. Therefore, „Dosoftei translates the «human substance» of the psalms that he understood and interpreted"[26].

The literality of the text preoccupied him less than deeper meanings, this is obvious in the advice addressed to the reader, to „understand in depth these saint words". Preserving the medieval tradition of invoking the name of an authority, Dosoftei confesses that he found out about his „homonym", the archdeacon Dosithei, the future patriarch of Jerusalem, that there are „four meanings in the Holy Book": the first is the literal one („pre-history"), the second would be the moral one („customs"), the third is the allegorical one („saying something in a masked way"), and the last one would be metaphoric („on mutation")[27]. In Psalm 80, Dosoftei explains first of all the literary meaning of the introductory term at „stepping on the wine": „Maybe this psalm was sung at the celebration of

[24] Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, The Edition of Bianu, p. 3.
[25] *Ibidem*, p. 4.
[26] Ștefan Pascu, *350 Years from Dosoftei's birth in the Romanian Culture* in „The Literary Romania", 1974, no. 39, p. 15.
[27] Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, p. 7.

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harvesting the vineyard", but he does not forget about the anagogic one: „Harvesting is associated by the soul with the end of the world". By this „by the soul", Dosoftei understands a symbolic, spiritual meaning: „Stepping on the grapes and wine presses were connected to the blood of the saints, followed by the one of Christ…blood and repentance with tears... so that the saint altars understand..." (Bianu, Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, p. 273). In Psalm 118, after he explains the song of steps from a historical, liturgical point of view: „maybe they were sung at the altar, just like we sing it at the Liturgy on Sunday...", Dosoftei finds an allegorical menaing for it: „the ascension of through towards God",

„that this song is meant to go up, to the depth of meaning and knowledge towards God" in which we notice the simultaneous perception of contraries: goes up… to the depth (Bianu, Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, 188 p. 428). Dosoftei was especially attracted by/to the allegorical meaning that he thus defined: „it is like the special songs called „cimilituri", one thing you sing and something totally different is understood". But, the attitude of Dosoftei regarding the levels of meaning varies, because in a commentary of Palm 87, he states that there are three meanings:

„Is there any psalm which does not worship Christ, combining prayer with history?" Bianu, Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, p. 300). But, beyond these hermeneutic problems, it is essential the idea that in the versified psalms, we find the traces of the religious culture which was considered by the author necessary and he transmitted it to the reader.

For Dosoftei, every psalm is an allegorical text, containing a prophetic meaning, we are invited to decipher it through commentaries or marginal notes („See the explanation of the Holy Book"). Examples of hermeneutic reading, these commentaries and notes are, in fact, some spiritual exercises which can be seen as a beginning of Biblical allegory in the Romanian Culture. Some passages from larger allegroies have an epic candidness, the sweetness of the story reminds us of the „fairy tales" from *The Lives of the Saints*: „A long time ago, the patriarch Jacob, the father of the Israelits went to Siria, to run away from the evil that his brother Isavŭ did to him; he had to sleep over night there, in Sion, and they slept having a rock as a pillow, because that place was not inhabited at that time. In his sleep, he saw the open sky and God leaning against the stairs that united the sky with the earth, and His angels were coming up and down on the ladder... " (Psalm 86, Bianu, Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, pp. 290-291).

In most cases, there are allegorical interpretations of the psalms, based on analogies with the Old Testament and the New testament which suppose a subtile understanding of the Biblical text, just like in the explanations given by the Psalm 86, „on the ladder, the saint relative and the earthly one united to give birth to Jesus Christ. The same ladder is considered to be The Virgin, for She was the one chosen by God to bring Christ on Earth, during 12 generations, a lion was bron from this Jacob" (Psalm 86, Bianu, Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, p. 291).

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Deciphering the meaning of the psalms involves a historical and religious culture, but also the desire to surpass all limits imposed by the nowadays meaning of the words. The reader nowadays who has passed through the experience of a few centuries of poetry, sees in the last lines of Psalm 64 a beautiful song of galore: „The land becomes full of juice,/ To have a rich crop./ Having good rainy days, plants will grow/ Multiplying one's richness". But, in a marginal note, Dosoftei imposes us a hermeneutic reading, specific to medieval allegory: „good rains are the wisdom thoughts of the saint apostles who are not heretics, because heretics are similar to destroying rains" (Bianu, Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, p. 208). Often quoted and truly beautiful are the lyrics: „And Mary, though she truly is large and spoiled, / There are inside of her big and small animals./ Over the abyss/ Ships managed to go by marvelously./ There, they had the thought/ Of disappearing mysteriously" (Psalm 103). After Dosoftei, the meaning is understood differently: „The abyss, the world with various waves. The ships, souls, can get beyond obstacles" (Bianu, Dosoftei, *The Psaltery in Lyrics*, p. 357). The purpose of these commentaries is that of offering the reader a way towards his writing, orienting one towards a cult, spiritual perception. Handbook for reading, a proof of the theological culture of the metropolitan, was probably written for fear that the reader does not go beyond the religious meaning of the psalms and is impressed by their imagistic surface. The preoccupation is justified by the diversity of the mentioned structures, but also the lack of adequate habits in order to correctly „decipher" the message.

Conclusions

Reaching the final part of the analysis, without having said all about this topic, our intention is to underline a few relevant aspects of the versified *Psaltery* of Dosoftei.

Dosoftei is not a creator, but a translator (without denying the part of creation which exists in the case of the translation) or he was also called a rhymester. As a man of the church, Dosoftei ewas careful, first of all, not to betray the Biblical text, his intention was that of making it accessible to his congregation (this is why there are some marginal glossaries on the psalms), not that of proving his creative abilities. The lyrics of Dosoftei closely resemble those of the psalmist David, without total overlapping. His translation is, in fact, a recreation of the psalms in the Romanian version, in other words „it reconstructs that universe gathered from the walls of Voroneț in the order of the visual"[28].

Far from being a simple translation in lyrics of a Hebrew poetic book, after a foreign model, *The Psaltery in Lyrics* is a work of an original creation. Being the first creation of this type in our history, it „constitutes the birth certificate of the Romanian cult poetry"[29]. Today, almost all the researchers of our old culture place

[28] Zoe Dumitrescu Buşulenga, *A Humanist of the European Culture*, in „The Literary Romania", 1974, no. 39, p. 15.

[29] George Ivaşcu, *The History of The Romanian Literature*, vol. I, Bucharest, 1969, p. 200.

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Dosoftei on the first rank in the „Pantheon" of great Romanian poetry", and in the history of the European culture, the translation in verses of the Psaltery of David by Dosoftei settles down the „act of maturity of the Romanian artistic conscience, the corollary of its conscience of liberty and dignity of our people"[30].

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[30] Zoe Dumitrescu Buşulenga, *art. cit*., p. 15.

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