



# Philippians, 3, 8 in Romanian language: a case of primacy of norm

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#### **Abstract**

In the present paper, the study of the variants given by the translators of the bible text into the Romanian language during the old age and contemporary to the verse under *Philippians*, 3, 8, which contains in the Greek version a rare word in the Bible  $(\sigma\varkappaiβ\~aλον)$ , highlights the fact that the act of translation places the text on the path of a language, subjecting it to the state of the language at a given moment and to its evolution. At any moment, there is a formal adjustment, which follows what is considered to be correct or at least linguistically possible: first, it is that of the foreign text to the new language—Romanian; then, it is that of the Romanian text to the renewals of the Romanian language—adjustment that may ignore the original requirements, from a given moment in the history of producing and receiving that text in the Romanian language and culture; thus, the correctness of the text is controlled by the norm of the language and by the appearance of its semantic accuracy.

In the last sequence of *Phil*, 3. 8, the history of rendering the element of comparison in the Romanian language constitutes a very good case of primacy of the norm of the language over the originary content (in relation to the direct source text)—recoverable, but exclusively by metalinguistic means.

# 1. Introduction

### 1.1. A rare word in the Bible

This paper is a study of the variants given by the translators of the bible text into the Romanian language during the old age and contemporary to a verse of the *New Testament*, which contains in the Greek version, a rare word in the *Bible*<sup>1</sup> The term is σκύβάλον, τό, present in *Philippians*, 3, 8: "ἀλλὰ μενοῦνγε καὶ ἡγοῦμαι πάντα ζημίαν εἶναι διὰ τὸ ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου μου, δι' ὂν τὰ πάντα ἐζημιώθην, καὶ ἡγοῦμαι σκύβαλα ἴνα Χριστὸν κερδήσω" (BNT) ["Mai mult însă, eu pe toate le socotesc pagubă față de neprețuitul preț al cunoașterii lui Hristos Iisus, Domnul meu, de dragul Căruia m'am lăsat păgubit de toate și le socotesc drept *gunoaie* pentru ca să-L cîștig pe Hristos", Anania 2001].

The contexts σκύβάλον, τό is ascertained into in antique literature enable framing two sets of definitions to it:

- a) 'what is thrown away, garbage, remains' [Engl. refuse, offal, LIDDELL-SCOTT s.v.; Fr. débris jeté de côté, restes d'un repas, débris rejetés par la mer, BAILLY s.v.],
- b) 'excrements' [Engl. (human) excrement, dung, manure, LIDDELL-SCOTT s.v.; Fr. excrément, BAILLY s.v.].

In the Greek literature in its entirety, the term is rather rare, present somehow more frequently in non-literary documents. Lang (1995, p. 445–447) suggests that σκύβάλον was specific to the colloquial use, to the colloquial speech<sup>2</sup>; the Greek authors "hesitated" to use it (as it also turns out in looking up the word in the

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Besides the occurrence in *Philippians*, 3, 8, discussed here, there also exists the one in *Sirah*, 27, 4: ἐν σείσματι κοσκίνου διαμένει κοπρία οὕτως σκύβαλα ἀνθρώπου ἐν λογισμῷ αὐτοῦ (LXT–LXX) ["Când sita cerne, în ea rămâne tărâța; așa și scăderile omului în ceea ce vorbește", Anania 2001].

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>Cf. BAILLY, s.v., "familier".

TLG<sup>3</sup> database—only 178 occurrences out of 65 million words, at 3165 authors, almost absent at the post-patristic generations!), using synonyms instead, in specific contexts: κόπρος, ή (with 1736 occurrences) and περίσσωμα (περίττωμα), ατος, τό (as medical term, with 2858 occurrences).

As a taboo term in its synonymic series, from a lower register, the word  $\sigma\kappa\delta\beta$  abov seems to be perceived as inadequate to the cult use and consequently strongly connotated when used (see Trudgill, 1981). Nevertheless, the observation is general in nature, and the question: To what extent is this vision justified on the term itself in a given text, such as the Pauline one, taking into account the historical and temporal context of its use? is completely relevant.

# 1.2. Pragmatic motivation

Undoubtedly, in some ancient texts around the time when the apostolic activity is recorded,  $\sigma \kappa \delta \beta \delta \lambda \delta \nu$  is used with its scatological meaning, in a way that follows the recipient's disgust; still, in the same period, the use with a less aggressive meaning<sup>4</sup> is recorded; therefore, on lexicological and lexicographic bases, it is unclear which of the groups of meanings assigned to the term should be activated when reading some text, be it in re-creation of the social, behavioural and linguistic behavioural realities of the 1<sup>st</sup> century.

In this case, the assignment of the accurate reading of a word needs to be substantiated on the reading assigned to the text that includes that word, hermeneutics having to resort to rhetorical and doctrinal arguments.

The verse we are referring to is part of a polemic that has been repeatedly argued by Paul<sup>5</sup>. In *Romans* (2, 25–29), for example, as in *Philippians* (3, 1–9), the superiority of the new covenant (by faith in Jesus Christ) is argued, over the old covenant (by observing all rules), to acquire "peace with God" (*Rom*, 5, 1). But while the persuasion in *Romans* is based on *logos* (resort to rational arguments), in *Philippians* the persuasion through *ethos* (Paul—a fully justified Jew by law—invokes his personal experience as testimony) and persuasion through *pathos* (through emotional appeals) are dominant.

Among the linguistic means used in the discursive construction of emotions, Plantin (2004) also mentions "emotional statements" or, more accurately, as the author's explanations indicate, "statements with emotional value" (emotional sentences, p. 268)—which take the place, in speech, of the emotional lexicon itself and which, from a linguistic point of view, make the connection between an individual and an emotional term. In other words, there are situations where the emotional discourse is defined by a linguistic material whose emotional component is triggered by analogy (Plantin, 2004, p. 269). In the passage from Phil, 3, 1–9, this aspect of the persuasive approach is represented by three discursive sequences: two in v. 2: Βλέπετε τοὺς κύνας (BNT) ["Păziţi-vă de câini!", Anania 2001], βλέπετε τὴν κατατομήν (BNT) ["Păziţi-vă de m p r e j u r u l tăierii!", Anania 2001] and one in v. 8: δι' ὂν τὰ πάντα ἐζημιώθην, καὶ ἡγοῦμαι σκύβαλα (BNT) ["de dragul Căruia m'am lăsat păgubit de toate și le socotesc drept g u n o a i e", Anania 2001].

The (metaphorical) depreciating value of the first two terms mentioned,  $\varkappa \dot{\nu} \omega \nu$ ,  $\varkappa \nu \nu \dot{\delta} \zeta$ ,  $\dot{\delta}$  and  $\varkappa \omega \tau \omega \tau \dot{\nu} \dot{\mu}$ ,  $\ddot{\eta} \zeta$ ,  $\dot{\eta}$ , in the context of *Phil*, 3, 2, is usually highlighted (in Greek dictionaries, in the lexicographic papers dedicated to the *New Testament* language, in the comments to modern translations—for example, regarding us, in the notes of the Anania 2001 version of the *Bible*):

κύων: a particularly bad person, perhaps specifically one who ridicules what is holy – 'bad person, dog' (...) 'pervert' (LOUW-NIDA s.v.); a term of reproach for persons regarded as unholy and impure (FRIBERG s.v.); of male sacred prostitutes (LIDDELL-SCOTT s.v.) etc.;

κατατομή: to mutilate by severe cutting" (LOUW-NIDA s.v.); strictly cutting into, as hacking or chopping up (sacrificial) meat (FRIBERG s.v.); "Between this term (katatomé) and that of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>Cf. the statistics offered by PDL for a more reduced corpus [online].

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup>The use in both ways is documented in depth by lexicologist and lexicographs; see the above quoted dictionaries, s.v.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup>See reference to *Phil*, 3, 1: ""...*Ca să vă scriu aceleași lucruri* (s.n.), mie nu-mi este greu, iar vouă vă este întărire" (Anania 2001), "posibilă aluzie la o epistolă care nu s'a păstrat" (*idem*, note *a*).

the next verse (**peritomé**) there is a sarcastic word game by which Paul associates the Jewish circumcision (more precisely, that of the Judaizers) with the bodily self-mutilation of the pagan orgiastic rituals" (Anania 2001, *Phil*, 3, 2, note *b*) etc.

The joining of the two terms and choosing them for the designation of some persons who, practicing circumcision as part of a millenary sanctification ritual, had, until recently, been in the absolute right and proper canon, had to shock, to arouse a definitive reaction of rejection. After Christ's crucifixion and resurrection, the practice of circumcision had become not only superfluous, but also offensive, proving the inability of the "Judaizers" to understand the absolute sacrifice of Christ for the redemption of the soul.

The content of the third term, σκύβαλον, ου, τό, from v. 8, must be referred to the content of the first two discussed. The image at the end of v. 8 represents the climax of Paul's diatribe against the claim of justification by deeds (performing rituals, observing the complex Old Testament law, etc.), as opposed to justification by faith<sup>6</sup>. In the context of the controversy with the Judaizing adversaries, the persuasive speech addressed to the unstable church in Philippi ensures its efficiency by using a shocking term, all the more expressive as it is taken from the colloquial, harsh and repulsive speech, which renders not only the idea of worthlessness, but especially that of disgust. In the context of Phil, 3, 8, the discussed word thus accepts the scatological meaning and the vulgar hue. This idea is also supported by what is not yet the text that contains it: that is, sacred writing, with an assigned sober and formal nature—which are nothing but cultural engravings, eminently subsequent to the production of the text.

# 2. Philippians, 3, 8, Romanian versions

# 2.1. From Sl. OYMETH to Rom. gunoi

In the face of this textual reality, the translation starts and develops in various ways, depending on the weight of some factors that relate to a) the translator's comprehension abilities and thus his need to express the content understood, b) the possibilities of the target language, c) the cultural accumulations (along with the natural prejudices!) regarding the reception and transmission of the text and last but not least, d) the distance—in terms of interlinguistic linking—between the primordial source and, in fact, the direct source-text of a translation (successive translations produce semantic changes, and the quality of a translation is judged by the reference to its direct source).

At the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the translator of the text that gets to be printed by Coresi in Braşov, in 1567, as *Lucrul apostolesc* is not put in the situation, not even theoretical, to refer to a Romanian formal-textual tradition, its reflection of honour of the sacredness of the text through the preservation of the form not being in this point of the translation other than the one which usually requires in this time, the translation "in letter". Thus, he is based on what he understands and on the liberty to operate with the elements of the Romanian language, insofar as he allowed by the debt felt towards his source text. In the place concerned (*Phil*, 3, 8), the product is this: "Că aceaea toată o țin pagubă cătră pre cinstita cunoscuta lu Hristos Isus Domnului mieu. Derept aceaea acealea toate le-am socotit pagubă și mie o țin ca u<n> gunoi să fie" (CA, s.n., A.C.), in relation to an original whose identity—Slavonic or German—is (no longer) sure.

The topic of the models of the Coresian *Apostle* was reopened by Costinescu (1980), after a period of consensus that admitted exclusively the existence of some Slavonic versions at the base of the Romanian sources of printing. The researcher brought into question a German source-text (i.e. Luther's *Bible*—L45), which would justify the translator's language choices and numerous

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup>From here, the pragmatic nature of the letter: "Paul's intention was obviously to imbue his letters with *power* (s.n., A.C.) to convince and to persuade through the use of rhetorical rules, but without taking on the role of a sophist or a philosopher" (Dormeyer, 2004, p. 70).

passages, "unexplainable by the Slavonic versions reflected by the rest of the text (ms. sl. BARSR 21 and 435)" (Costinescu, 1980, p. 129). The fragment we are studying in this paper (i.e. *Phil*, 3, 8) does not appear among those discussed by Mariana Costinescu and which, subjected to the comparative linguistic analysis, shows greater closeness of the Coresian printed text to the German version especially in the part corresponding to the letters (*idem*, p. [135] and [136]); it is possible that the researcher omitted it by chance (she did not envisage, in fact, an exhaustive approach, and "[e]xamples [...] that illustrate the dependence of the Coresian version of the *Apostle* on Luther's German text can multiply", *idem*, p. [134]), as well as it is possible to have considered that the linguistic peculiarities could function as evidence of the "deviations" from the Slavonic archetype, respectively of the "closeness" to the German one, are not as eloquent as in other cases (see p. 129–[135]). Applying the analytical model of the researcher from Bucharest, observing the three variants in parallel,

Că aceaea toată o țin pagubă cătră pre cinstita cunoscuta lu Hristos Isus Domnului mieu. Derept aceaea acealea toate le-am socotit pagubă și mie o țin ca u<n> gunoi să fie (CA),

нж оубо и въмѣнѣа въса тъщетж быти да прѣспѣжщее рад8маiv хаiv гаiv моегiv егожiv радiv въсего wтъщетихса и мнаiv оуметы быти да хаiv приобращж (ms. sl. barsr 21)iv,

Denn ich achte es alles für Schaden gegen die überschwengliche Erkenntnis Christi Jesu, meines Herrn, um welches willen ich alles habe für Schaden gerechnet und achte es für **Dreck**, auf daß ich Christum gewinne (L45),

it is found that, strictly at the lexical-semantic level, the translator's linguistic options (or of the reviser of the text, before printing) are at equal distance from both possible archetypes, the text requesting no other material than the one that could be customarily Romanian in the middle of the  $16^{\rm th}$  century.

An element that however seems to have some weight in supporting Mariana Costinescu's idea, at least in the sense of collating the Romanian version on the basis of a German version as well. It is a matter of composition of the Romanian text, which makes use of the equivalent of a tine, for Sl. **BЪмЪНТИ** (**ВЪмЪНТИ**), Lat. 'putare' (MIKLOSICH s.v.) and/or Germ. achten, according to the explicit structure of the Lutheran version: thus, the repetition of the verb a tine in "...toată o tin pagubă [...] și o tin ca u < n > gunoi să fie..." corresponds to the repetition present in Germ. "...ich achte es alles für Schaden [...] und achte es für Dreck...", versus to the situation in the Slavonic text<sup>8</sup>, where the verb of the 'assumed knowledge' is noted only once, in the first sequence of the quote: "...**ВЪМЪНЪ** ВЪСА ТЪЩЕТЖ БЫТИ [...] И МНА ОУМЕТЫ БЫТИ..."; on the other hand, the dative regime of this verb "added" in the Romanian text—"...mie (o țin) ca u < n > gunoi..."—clearly indicates the influence of the Slavonic construction: "МНА ОУМЕТЫ"."

The form u < n > gunoi translates the pl. Ac., **δημετη**, from ms. sl. Barsr 21 (Sl. **δημετη**, m. pl. **δημετη** 'σκύβαλα' 'stercora'; MIKLOSICH s.v.), the word being itself an old Slavic loan: ΓΗΟΫ, m. 'σηφις' 'putrefactio' 'ίχώρ' 'pus' 'κόπρος' 'κοπρος' 'κόπρος' 'κοπρος' 'κοπρος

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup>Here, we express our gratitude towards Mr. Gh. Chivu, Univ. Professor, who facilitated our access to the Slavonic text; and towards Mr. Richard Sârbu, Univ. Professor, who supported our grammatical analysis of the fragment.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup>We specify that the text ms. BARSR 435 was not accessible to us; according to the corresponding text in the "Crkven-oslavenski" *Bible* [online].

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup>We admit that should one refer the Romanian text to more than one source-language, i.e. to German besides Slavonic, one shall rely on Mariana Costinescu's observations (see Moldovanu, 2009, p. 106, who considers that the researcher from Bucharest "definitely demonstrated—s.n., A.C.—the dependence of a part of the Coresian Apostle to Luther's Bible"), and not on those presented by us.

scabrous meaning, which would correspond to the second set of definitions (see *above*) of Gr. σκύβἄλον, τό:

Zise cătră viiariul: "Iată, trei ani de cînd vii, caut rod la smochinul acesta și nu aflu. Taie-l, amu; derep ce și pămîntul deșartă?" El răspunse, zise lui: "Doamne, lasă-l și în cest an, pînă o voi săpa împrejur și-i voi băga *gunoi*; și de, amu, va face rod, iară de nu, întru venire tăia-veri ia" (CT),

Așa, amu, toți den voi și de nu se va lepăda de toată avuțiia lui, nu poate fi mie ucenic. Bună sare; de se va sarea împuți, cu ce o veri săra? Nece în pămînt, nece în *gunoi* treabnică iaste, afară să o vărși. Cine are urechi de ascultare să auză! (CT);

Unora le va fi fața ca țărâna pământului, alții ca tina spurcată din uliță, alții ca *gunoiul* (CTod; see also CST),

Şi potrebiră-se în Indor și fură ca *gunoiul* pământului. (CPS-R; see also PH, PS, PV),

Nu osîndireți să nu osîndiți fiți; cu ce judecată judeca-vreți, judeca-să-va voao, și cu ce măsură măsura-vreți, măsura-se-va voao. Ce vezi *gunoiul* în ochiul fratelui tău, vîrghiia în ochiul tău nu simți, sau cum grăești fratelui tău "Lasă-mă să iau gonoiul den ochiul tău și ia tu vîrghie din ochiul tău". Fațarnice, <i>è mainte vîrghie den ochiul tău și atunce veri vedea a lua *gunoiul* din ochiul fratelui tău. (CB),

Domnul mesereaște și bogățeaște, și smereaște și rădică. Înalță de pământ measerul, și den *gunoi* rădică mișelul, să puie el cu tarii oamenilor și scaun slăvit să dea lui (CPS-R; see also PS, PV, EP); cf. *gunoiște* (Sl. **гнонштє** 'fimetum', MIKLOSICH<sub>2</sub> s.v.), *gunosi* (Sl. **гноусити см** 'abominari', MIKLOSICH<sub>2</sub>; 'a se scîrbi', Rosetti, 1978, p. 594):

ce rrădică despre pămîntu mișelul și din *gunoiște* înrălță measerul (PV),

De toată mîncarea *gunosi-*se sufletul lor și apropiară-se pînă la ușa morției (PS).

In the  $16^{th}$  century the Romanian word does not know the plural form; therefore, the use in *Phil*, 3, 8 of a singular where the Slavonic source text presents a plural does not belong to the translator's choice (which may be—possibly in the particular case of CA—guided by the existence of a *singulare tantum* in the German model L45, i.e. *Dreck*), as long as the Romanian language itself does not practice a plural form that takes the noun out of the category of matter names *singularia tantum*. When it does appear, however, it stimulates the semantic nuance of the word, reaching (in addition to what was allowed by the singular *gunoi*), a result that coincides with the content of the first set of definitions for the Gr.  $\sigma \kappa \acute{\nu} \acute{\nu} \acute{\rho} \acute{a} \lambda o \nu$ ,  $\tau \acute{o}$ , used properly and figuratively:

canoanele 85 [...] poruncim și noi să să ție întărite și adevărate, însă fără de poslaniile și răspunsurile lui Climent, că într-acelea multe taini, zizanii și *gunoae* de sminteală au băgat zlocestivii (p. 1652);

Pre unii omora la casa lui și le ascundea trupurile în *gunoaie* (CM);

Iar dorobanții să bucura, și-i călca cu picioarele și-și bătea joc de trupurile lor. Și nici la bisérică nu-i lăsa să-i îngroape, ci afară prin *gunoaie* (IȚR);

într-acest chip sînt porțile Ierusalimului, care le-au zidit Noemiia, în urma mutării de la Vavilon: poarta împăraților, a preoților, a boiarilor celor de cinste, a norodului, a prorocilor și poarta pre care scotea din cetate *gunoaele*, precum să vede într-acest rotocol (AI/O);

or from the following century,

Încă și din afară pricini se întâmplă din lovitură, din răceală, sau din arsura capului sau din niscai prafu, sau spurcăciune, sau gunoiu<sup>10</sup> care întră în urechi. Dar uneori și făr < ă > nicio îngrădire sau mișcare, singure urlă și țiuescu urechile (MD, I).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup>According to "trupu*l* să încălzeaște și să aprinde, gâdilire sa*u* mușcare nu sâmte la pântece, nu iaste atâta lipsit*u* de pohta mâncării bolnavu*l. Gunoiul* lu*i* iaste alb*u*, mai vârtos, turburatu" (MD, II; s.n., A.C.), where the same form contextually presents a more obvious scatological content.

# 2.2. From the Gr. σκύβαλα to Rom. gunoaie

As language provides a complete paradigm, the translator can formally "emend" the Romanian versions of the previous era, all the more morphologically justified that the source text he works upon is Greek <sup>11</sup>, and he makes use of a plural in that particular place:  $\sigma \kappa \dot{\nu} \beta \alpha \lambda \alpha$ , in καὶ ἡγοῦμαι  $\sigma \kappa \dot{\nu} \beta \alpha \lambda \alpha$ , in congruence with  $\pi \dot{\alpha} \nu \tau \alpha$ ..., used twice in the previous fragments of the verse: see

**B 1688**: Ce pentru aceaea și gîndesc toate pagubă a fi, pentru cea ce covîrșaște a științii lui Hristos Isus, Domnului mieu, pentru care de toate m-am păgubit și le gîndesc *gunoaie* a fi, ca pre Hristos să dobîndesc

B 1795: Iară mai vîrtos le socotesc să-și fie toate pagubă, pentru înălțimea cunoștinții lui Hristos Iisus, Domnului mieu, pentru Carele de toate m-am păgubit și le socotesc *gunoaie*, ca să dobîndesc pre Hristos

Regardless of the understanding that the translator, judging the context in *Phil*, 3, has towards that word, the rendering in the Romanian language is more inclined to take the form of pl. *gunoaie* in the targeted place<sup>12</sup>, thus establishing a discursive-formal tradition whose hermeneutic *force* remains dependent on the life of the language (see Darmesteter, 2015), i.e. on the semantic modulations of the word.

# 2.3. The impossible emendation

In the common use, the denotative evolution of the noun *gunoi*, pl. *gunoaie* is sufficiently restrained so that it does not necessary to require a review of the biblical text in terms of form: the general message is preserved, the receiver is satisfied. Nevertheless, the modern translator or reviewer of the writing may feel a loss in terms of symbolizing force, which he may want to minimize by some approach. However, its diversity and efficiency prove to be rigorously controlled from several directions, which mutually reinforce themselves and which are essentially language-related. By the culturally acquired quality, the sacralised text rejects linguistic innovations coming from a powerfully vulgarized register, which means that, despite the fact that the language itself could offer multiple solutions for rendering the concerned notion *ab initio*<sup>13</sup>, the translator—aiming at reaching a canonical text—does not have access to them. On the other hand, the involvement of the singular form, as it is proceeded to, for example, in

Cornilescu 1921: Ba încă, și acum privesc toate aceste lucruri ca o pierdere, față de prețul nespus de mare al cunoașterii lui Hristos Isus, Domnul meu. Pentru el am perdut toate și le socotesc ca *un gunoi*, ca să cîștig pe Hristos,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup>According to the situation regarding NT 1648, which guides the translator towards selecting a Latin-origin term in *Phil*, 3, 8: "Ce iată le socotiiu a fi pagubă. Pentru înălțimea cunoștinției a lui Hristos Iisus Domnului mieu, pentru carele de toate mă păgubiiu și le socotiiu toate a fi *ștercure*, ca să dobîndescu pre Hristos", according to VUL: "verumtamen existimo omnia detrimentum esse propter eminentem scientiam Iesu Christi Domini mei propter quem omnia detrimentum feci et arbitror ut *stercora* ut Christum lucri faciam" (s.n., A.C.).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup>See *loc. cit.* in, e.g., B 1914: "Iar mai vîrtos le şi socotesc toate pagubă a fi pentru covîrşirea cunoştinței lui Hristos Iisus Domnul meu, pentru carele de toate m'am păgubit şi le socotesc *gunoaie* a fi, ca pre Hristos să dobîndesc"; Cornilescu 1931: "Ci într'adevăr şi socotesc că toate sînt pagubă pentru înălțimea cunoștinței lui Hristos Isus, Domnul meu, pentru care m'am păgubit de toate şi le socotesc ca *gunoaie* ca să cîştig pe Hristos"; Anania 2001: "Mai mult însă, eu pe toate le socotesc pagubă față de neprețuitul preț al cunoașterii lui Hristos Iisus, Domnul meu, de dragul Căruia m'am lăsat păgubit de toate şi le socotesc drept *gunoaie* pentru ca să-L cîştig pe Hristos"; B 2008: "Ba mai mult: eu pe toate le socotesc că sunt pagubă față de înălțimea cunoașterii lui Hristos Iisus, Domnul meu, pentru Care m-am lipsit de toate, și le privesc drept *gunoaie*, ca pe Hristos să dobândesc"; everywhere, s.n., A.C.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup>Perhaps stimulated by the example of some versions that accept a term/construction with a more powerful conotation: Engl. dongue, dung (GNV, ETH, KJV, NET, KJ21, DRA etc.), dog dung (MSG), crap (AYB); Germ. Kot (LUO). Cf. Fr. boue (LSG, NEG), ordure (TOB), bon à être mis au rebut (BDS); Engl. rubbish (NKJV, NIV etc.), useless rubbish (PILLIPS), garbage (TEV, NJB etc.), dirt (WE), worthless trash (NCV), refuse (YLT, ASV); all consulted at bibleworks.com.

NT Cat: ba, mai mult, de acum consider că toate sunt o pierdere în comparație cu superioritatea cunoașterii lui Cristos Isus Domnul meu. De dragul lui am pierdut toate și le consider *gunoi* ca să-l câștig pe Cristos

and

FIDELA: Da, în adevăr, și socotesc toate lucrurile pierdere, din cauza măreției cunoașterii lui Cristos Isus, Domnul meu, pentru care am suferit pierderea a toate și le socotesc a fi *gunoi*, ca să câștig pe Cristos

seems to have been considered an alternative solution of textual emendation (probably even to a greater extent in the case of the Catholic one and of the second Protestant version mentioned<sup>14</sup>), but the effort appears to be free: in the case of gunoi, neither of the numerical forms of the noun has developed over time any peculiar semantics from the other one<sup>15</sup>, therefore the singular does not escape the semantics acquired by the *word* by the common use become prototypical; and the possible opening<sup>16</sup> towards the old semantics, which kept its prototypical nature at the regional level<sup>17</sup>, 'manure' does not occur automatically, in the absence of other elements of the same nature (i.e. regional) or of some co-textual, and guiding ones. And relying, eventually, on the euphemistic reading of *gunoi*—this time, in the perspective of a contemporary urbanized perception—would turn things to the point which would have been wanted to be overcome, for such a linguistic approach mitigates the effect.

The fulfilment of the pragmatics of the text—should it be seen as a necessity—remains to be realized at a metalinguistic level, within some type of paratext<sup>18</sup>.

## 3. Conclusions

The act of translation (understanding by this inclusively the mere intention of its translation) places the text on the path of a language, subjecting it to the state of the language at a given moment and to its evolution (obtained in various ways, thanks to its natural plasticity as means of communication of some individuals driven by various needs). At any moment, there is a formal adjustment, which follows what is considered to be correct or at least linguistically possible: first, it is that of the foreign text to the new language—Romanian (itself, possibly open to adjustment, by loan, to the requirements of the content of the text); then, it is that of the Romanian text to the renewals of the Romanian language—adjustment that may ignore the original requirements, from a given moment in the history of producing and receiving that text in the Romanian language and culture; thus, the *correctness* of the text is controlled by the norm of the language and by the appearance of its semantic accuracy.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup>Translation that declares that it follows the principle of formal equivalence and that it has as sources the Masoretic Text and the "Greek family of the *Receptus* Text for NT" (see the *Preface* to FIDELA), but which is quite powerfully influenced by Occidental vernacular traditions.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup>As it is in the situation of the *singularia tantum* matter names nouns in the contemporary language, where the plural implies a change of meaning: *făină* vs. *făinuri* 'types of flour', *carne* vs. *cărnuri* 'types of meat'; versus the situation in the old age, where plurasls such as *foameți* (see Frâncu, 2009, p. 29), *sîngiuri* or *cărni*, *cărnuri* (see Chirilă, 2013, p. 158–161) could mean exactly 'several specimens of the same kind', 'plurality of objects of the same kind'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup>Concerned, perhaphs by the inarticulate form of the noun, in "le socotesc a fi *gunoi*", FIDELA, and "le consider *gunoi*", NT Cat; s.n., A.C.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup>See the observation in Frățilă (2005), p. 172 and 176: "în graiul de pe valea inferioară a Târnavelor există o serie de termeni care formează arii lexicale în sudul și centrul Transilvaniei, deosebind graiul de aici de cel muntean, dar și de alte graiuri din Transilvania", among which "*Gunoi* 'bălegar' cuprinde Transilvania de centru și sud, sud-vestul Crișanei".

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup>For example, in *Indicele* at MLD, XXIV, p. 860, it is mentioned regarding the meaning, *s.v. gunoi*: "[...] 'Mist': 'fumier, fumure'". Also, indirectly: amongs the *editor-translator*'s (Fecioru, 2016, p. 179) at his translation from Clement Alexandrinul, *Pedagogul*. Book II, it appears one which actually points towards the "optimal" reading of the fragment under *Phil*, 3, 8; thus, at "Aş vrea ca bogații să socotească toată viața aurul ca demn numai pentru excremente", Fecioru creates note 178: "*Cf. Filipeni* 3, 8". Etc.

In the last sequence of *Phil*, 3, 8, the history of rendering the element of comparison in the Romanian language constitutes a very good case of primacy of the norm of the language over the original content (in relation to the direct source text) – recoverable, but exclusively by metalinguistic means.

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