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Elemente de discurs religios în traducерile românești ale *Paradisului* dantesc

– *rezumatul tezei de doctorat* –

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Table of contents

Introduction	3
I. Linguistic aspects, aesthetic and cultural translation of poetic text	7
I.1. Dante's conception of language	7
I.2. Generic Considerations on translation	9
I.3. Cultural Translation	15
I.4. Translation of Poetry	17
II. <i>Divine comedy: text, context, reception</i>	25
II.1. Context and Structure of <i>Divine comedy</i>	25
II.2. Sources of inspiration. Dante's originality	28
II.3. Dante in Romanian translations	29
II.4. Current state of research	31
III. The divine Name Dante's <i>Paradise</i>	33
III.1. God: generic names	33
III.2. God the Father	68
III.3. Jesus Christ	75
III.4. Holy Spirit	85
III.5. Holy Trinity	89
IV. Ierarhia cerească în <i>Paradisul lui Dante</i>	95
IV.1. Names of Virgin Mary	95
IV.2. Saints	101
IV.3. Church triumphant Dante's <i>Paradise</i>	106
V. Ideas and elements of religious speech	117
V.1. Biblical references in Dante's <i>Paradise</i>	117
V.1.1. Modalities to designate Scripture	117
V.1.2. Exact Quotes	120
V.1.3. Recontextualization of poetic passages	122
V.1.4. Names, images, fundamental symbols	128
V.2. Theological language: Christian tradition and innovation dantesque	132
V.3. Theological virtues	142
VI. The Church militant in Dante's <i>Paradise</i>	147
VI.1. Structural and functional approaches: rite, organization, hierarchy	147
VI.2. Religious Practices	162

VI.3. Prayer and religious hymns	166
VII. The articulation of the religious discourse in poetic transposition .	
Comparative analysis of translation last canto of the Divine Comedy	169
VII.1. Prayer of Bernard of Clairvaux	169
VII.2. The final vision of God	178
Conclusions	186
Bibliography	193

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1. Argument

Divina Commedia is one of the most widely read works of the humanity literature and the works aiming to analyze it, to decipher its meanings could fill several libraries. The complexity of the poem caused a very wordy critical approach, wanting to emaciate any significance. Paradoxically, such attempts seem to forget that the poetry represents more than the criticism can decipher, that the poetry contains a dose of ineffable and its reception is marked by subjectivity.

This is true, especially when poetry is received through translations. Translation means deconstruction of the message, identification of the meaning and its reconstruction based on the material of the translation language. These operations, however, are marked by the subjectivity of the person who translates; subjectivity that puts its mark on the final product.

Therefore, this thesis is not only about Dante's *Divina Comedie* – it is also about the *Divina Comedie* of translators. In other words we aimed to analyze the way in which the text is reconstructed in Romanian, compared with the original, to see how much of the resulting version is the one of the Florentine poet and how much it is dictated by the subjectivity of those who translate it.

Taking into account the breadth character of such an approach, we limited our analysis, on the one hand, to the last part of *Divina Comedie*, *The Paradise*, and, on the other hand, to the religious concepts and ideas that appear here. We have chosen the religious concepts because we consider that these raise serious problems of interpretation and therefore of transposition from one language to another, especially when it is about the translation of a poetic text. Considering the specific of the theme of *Paradise*, the elements of religious language, apart from the fact that they occur with greater frequency than in the other two parts, they refer to matters less concrete, tangible, more difficult to define and represent: God, Trinity, salvation, providence, theological and cardinal virtues. The theme chosen, the comparison between the original and its translations into Romanian, implies the approach of the translation as an interconfessional act, of

transposition of some concepts specific to the Catholic environment into a culture and hence a language with a rich Orthodox tradition.

The paper envisages the identification and classification of religious concepts from *The Paradise* pursued compared to the Romanian equivalents proposed by the translators and, insofar as this is possible, in relation to their source originating from Dante: Vulgata, patristic writings, scholastic theology.

Our approach took into account the following research steps: localization, grouping by category and explaining the religious concepts of the original; careful monitoring of how these concepts were perceived and interpreted by the commentators of Dante's work, in relation to his sources of inspiration, where this was possible; analysis of how these concepts are presented in the Romanian translations, taking into account the fact that the transfer of concepts occurs, after a time interval of at least six centuries, into another language and another culture. First of all, we referred at the versions made by George Coșbuc (translation completed in 1912 published posthumously in 1925 – *Infernul* 1927 – *Purgatoriul* 1931 – *Paradisul*, under the care of Ramiro Ortiz) and Eta Boeriu (1951-1965), both with notes by Alexandru Balaci, referring, to the extent that it seemed useful, also to the version of Giuseppe Cifarelli (Italian settled in Romania, known for his translations of Italian literature that he published in the press of that time; he died in 1958, but his version of *Divina Comedia* is published only in 1993, under the care of Titus Pîrvulescu).

Therefore, our research focussed on the traductology and comparative analysis, using a methodological device that is part of the literary history, hermeneutics, discourse analysis, lexicology and history of the language.

2. Structure of the paper

Within the structure of this paper, the first chapter – *Aspecte lingvistice, estetice și culturale ale traducerii textului poetic (Linguistic, aesthetic and cultural aspects when translating a poetic text)* – was dedicated to the theories of translation. From this vast area represented by traductology, we were interested mainly on the studies that concern the relationship between the individual translator and text (source text and target text) and the extent to which the personality and cultural foundations of translator influence the deconstruction and reconstruction of the message in the translated text. We also pursued the inherent differences of the translation of a poetic text, making a small experiment, with anticipatory character, which showed that, in the case of this type of text, the subjectivity of the translator plays a more important role.

The second chapter – *Divina Comedie: text, context, receptare (Divina Comedia: text, context, reception)* – aims to shape the context in which *Divina Comedia* was written, as well as the state of the research within the Romanian space on Dante's work.

Chapters III-VI are the main material of our paper. Studying the religious discourse elements from *The Paradise*, we found that these can be distributed as follows: *Nume divine (Divine names)* (Chapter III), including generic references to God, Trinity or individual hypostases of the Trinity (God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit – each of these

being discussed in a separate chapter); a second category, which, under the influence of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, we called it *Ierarhie cerească (Divine Hierarchy)*, including references to the Virgin Mary, saints and other characters that populate the Paradise ('The Triumphant Church'), discussed in Chapter IV; *Idei și elemente de discurs religios (Religious discourse ideas and elements)* borrowed by Dante from the Christian tradition or scholastic philosophy (Chapter V); and finally, the terms related to the believers on earth ('Church Militant') and to the relationship between them and deity (Chapter VI). The order of the inclusion of chapter in the whole paper was dictated by the descendant approach of the analysis (from deity to the community people). Within each subchapter, the concepts belonging to the same sphere were discussed in the following order: direct designation – antonomasia – metaphor / circumlocution.

The components of the religious language in Dante's *Paradise* are of many types. There are numerous references to the deity (generic God, Trinity or one hypostasis of the Trinity: Father, Son, Holy Spirit), designated by direct nomination (God, Christ, etc), by antonomasia (Father, Son), by a paraphrase, usually an attributive clause introduced by a relative pronoun that describes an attribute (*colui che tutto move, Par. I, v. 1; colui ch'ogne torto disgrava, Par. XVIII, v. 6*), by metaphor or metonymy (God is often designated by one of his attribute in constructions consisting of an articulated noun accompanied by the following adjectives: *divino, eterno, sommo, ultimo, primo* etc.: *la divina pace, Par. II, v. 112; la divina bontà, Par. VII, v. 64; ultima salute, Par., XXII, v. 124; sommo bene, Par. VII, v. 80; la giustizia viva, Par. XIX, v. 68*). We observed the frequency they have in designating the God, the aristocratic metaphor (*lo'mperador che sempre regna, Par., XII, v. 40; sommo duce, Par., XXV, v. 72; lo rege per cui questo regno pausa, Par. XXXII, v. 61*) and the solar one *il Sol de li angeli, Par. X, v. 53; luce eterna, Par. XI, v. 20*). Christ, apart from direct nomination, is designated by metaphors with a wide circulation in the Christian tradition: of the groom (*lo sposo, Par. X, v. 141*), the Word (*verbo divino, Par. XXIII, v. 73*), the yearling (*benedetto Agnello, Par. XXIV, v. 2*). In addition to the direct designation, the Trinity is referred to by fire metaphor (*primo foco, Par. III, v. 69; ardente Spirto, Par. XXIV, v. 138*), love metaphor (*eterno amore, Par. VII, v. 33*) or direct nomination. Finally, the Trinity is designated by metaphoric collocations containing a reference to its numeral appearance (*Quell'uno e due e tre che sempre vive/ e regna sempre in tre e'n due e' n uno, Par. XIV, v. 28-29; tre giri di tre colori e d'una contenenza, Par. XXXIII, v. 116-117; Oh trina luce, Par. XXXI, v. 28*).

The second chapter of the analysis of language elements in *Paradise* stops on what we called *Ierarhia cerească (Divine Hierarchy)*: the Virgin Mary, saints, celestial spirits (angels, cherubim, seraphim). The references to the Virgin Mary are made either direct or through metaphors taken from medieval tradition, which are based on references from semantic spheres of aristocracy (*Nostra Donna, Par. XXI, v. 123; la regina del cielo, Par. XXXI, v. 100*) or of animal kingdom (*bel zaffiro, Par. XXIII, 101*), botanic (*la rosa, Par. XXIII, 73*) or astrology (*viva stella, Par. XXIII, 92*). In addition to the Virgin, Dante mentions the figures of some saints, considered models of life lived according to Christian virtues and also makes reference to the

figures that populate the Paradise: the souls of the righteous ones (blessed ones), heavenly spirits, generically designated (angels) or gradually designated, according to the hierarchy which Dante takes from Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite (seraphim, cherubim, thrones). Here, there are also used the same methods mentioned before: direct nomination (*li alti Serafini*, Par. VIII, v. 27; *regno santo*, Par. I, v. 10) or metaphoric nomination (*sempiternae fiamme*, Par. XIV, v. 66; *l convento de le bianche stole*, Par. XXX, v. 129; *i gran patrici*, Par. XXXII, v. 116). The designation of Paradise itself continues the metaphor of God-the gardener (*l'orto de l'ortolano eterno*, Par. XXVI, v. 64) or military metaphor (*sicuro e gaudioso regno*, Par. XXXI, v. 25).

Another category of religious language elements in Dante's text is represented by the references to the Holy Scripture, by direct nomination or by taking quotes, ideas, situations, images, characters, symbols that, through their recontextualisation in *Paradise* helps build the poetic meaning, some of them serving to the criticism of some contemporary realities (*del comperare e vender dentro al templo*, Par. XVIII, v. 122, alluding to simionic practices within the Church during Dante's time; *che fatto ha lupo del pastore*, Par. IX, v. 132, criticism to the hierarchs of the Church), other contributing to the building of other metaphors and symbols (*vigna, vignaio*, Par. XII, v. 86, 87; *orto catolico*, Par. XII, v. 104). Also, Dante takes, in *Paradisul*, a series of concepts from Christian tradition or philosophy (sin, incarnation, grace, etc.). The lexical inventions from *Paradisul* take a special place; Dante is a language creator – he invented verbs (*trasumanar, sempiternare, imparadisare*) trying to synthetically express what is beyond the expressive possibilities of the language (overcoming the human condition to see the image of God or acquisition, as mortal, of the ability to feel the happiness of Paradise).

Finally, into a last category of the discourse elements in Dante's *Paradise* we grouped those regarding the believers on earth and their relationship with deity: forms of organisation of the Church (monastery, papal authority, and Church fathers), religious practices (oath of allegiance, engagement, preaching etc.) hymns and prayers (Hail Mary, Te Deum, Osanna). The nature of these elements makes that the references to be made mainly by direct nomination and rarely by metonymy and metaphor (*le sacre bende*, Par. III, v. 114 for life in monasteries; *la barca di Pietro*, Par. XI, v. 120, metaphor for the Church; *santa greggia*, Par. X, v. 94, for the Dominicans).

Considering the structure inevitably fragmentary of our discourse, the last chapter - *Articularea discursului religios în transpunere poetică. Analiză comparativă a traducerilor ultimului cânt din Divina Comedie (Religious articulation of poetic transposition. Comparative analysis of the Divine Comedy last canto's translation)* – aims to provide a picture of what is, in fact, an analysis of the type of the one undertaken here: verification of an intuition, namely that the Dante's reception through a translation depends very much on the translator who, through his choices dictated by its cultural and religious foundations and, not least, even by his personality traits, orients in one direction or another the meaning of the message that he reconstructs into the target language.

3. Conclusions

The aim of this research was the identification and classification of religious discourse elements presented in the third cantica of *Divina Comedie, Paradisul* and to discussion, in comparison with them, of the solutions proposed by the major translations of *Paradis* in Romanian, those of G. Coşbuc and Eta Boeriu. We pursued to see the components of religious language used by Dante, what functionality they have in Italian poetic text and how the Romanian translators relate to the text.

Positioning the two translations to the religious language elements from *Paradisul* is, of course, also determined by the method of designation chosen by Dante. A first position in terms of relating to original is loyalty, both semantic and formal. It characterizes both situations in which Dante directly designates the reflected reality and, more rarely, when Dante's expression is metaphorical. This type of loyalty on both planes of the text (at the formal level and at the level of meaning) is obtained by direct equivalence in Romanian of the original term (*Padre, Par. XXVII, v. 1: G. Coşbuc – Tatăl, Eta Boeriu – Tatăl*); possibly, the translator adds an attribute not found in Dante, but implicit (*la Vergine, Par. XIII, v. 84: G. Coşbuc – Fecioar-, Eta Boeriu – Fecioara sfântă*). Sometimes, translators accurately reconstruct the metaphor or paraphrase of the original (*l'eterno palazzo, Par. XXI, v. 8: G. Coşbuc – veşnicul palat; la rosa, Par. XXIII, v. 73: G. Coşbuc – roza, Eta Boeriu – roza*). Note that the metaphor is kept especially when it consists of a noun, possibly accompanied by an adjective; when it is constituted by a more elaborate construction; its faithful equating is more difficult to achieve.

Sometimes, the faithfulness to the original letter results in lexical invention, materialized by loans and calques. For example, the collocation *il proveder divino* (*Par. VIII, v. 135*), with the meaning of 'supreme, divine decision' is literally equated by *prevăz divin*, by G. Coşbuc who builds, by expression calque, the noun *prevăz*, unrestrained by DLR. *Trasumanar, Par. I, v. 70*, the verb invented by Dante is taken by G. Coşbuc as a long indefinite with noun form: *transumanare* with this unique occurrence in Romanian. The noun *Decretali* 'papal decree' (*Par. IX, v. 134*) is borrowed from both translators in the Romanian text with the form of *decretale* (to Eta Boeriu, capitalized) in DA, this term appears only with adjectival value, meaning 'which has the character of decree'.

A special case is where the care of the original letter has, as a result, the betrayal of the meaning, even if the equivalence is itself correct. For example, the metaphor of deity as aristocracy is updated, to Dante and with the form of *sommo duce, Par. XXV, v. 72*. G. Coşbuc translates as the original, *veşnicului Duce*, which does not have, however, the same impact on the Romanian reader, which is part of a culture in which this knighthood was not updated and therefore he has only a bookish contact with it.

In most cases, however, the opposite situation occurs: because of the care to meaning, the expression plan is reconfigured in the Romanian translation. A metaphor or circumlocution used in the original can be equated with a different metaphor or circumlocution in the translated text (*'mparadisa, Par. XXVIII, v. 3: G. Coşbuc – care-mi sădeşte raiu-n minte, Eta Boeriu – care raiul mi-l sădeşte-n minte*), or it can be decoded (*pastor de la Chiesa, Par. V, v. 77, G. Coşbuc*

– *păstor*, but Eta Boeriu – *Sfântul Scaun; eccelso giardino*, Par. XXVI, v. 110: G. Coşbuc – *mândrul rai; ortolano eterno*, Par., XXVI, v. 65: G. Coşbuc – *eternul Domn*).

Conversely, when Dante directly or through antonomasia designates, the translator uses a metaphor or a paraphrase. *Santa Chiesa*, Par. V, v. 35 is equated by G. Coşbuc through a metonymy, *altarul*, and Eta Boeriu through *cerul*, which, however, has the disadvantage of being used frequently to refer to deity, so that the message of the translator is confusing. The metaphor *milizia* (Par. V, v. 117: *prima che la milizia s'abbandoni*), metaphor designating the Church militant, the one on the earth, which, according to the Scripture, is in an ongoing war until it reaches to join the Triumphant Church, which is in heaven, is equated by circumlocution by both translators, but if G. Coşbuc kept the image of the host: *cât timp tu-n tabără mai ești soldat*, it is lost in the translation of Eta Boeriu: *cât timp ești încă-n viață pe pământ*.

Our analytical approach allowed us to observe that the two translators approach the translation act in different ways. G. Coşbuc's translation is characterized by an attention to the original form, which the Romanian poet seeks to replicate, where possible, by contextual borrowings (*transumanare*), by choosing terms that, in Romanian, have the same etymon as the Italian ones (for instance, he constantly equates *grazia* with *grație*, even if, in this way, he updates a meaning less used of the Romanian noun). We also note in his text a certain tendency towards lexical invention (terms whose only occurrence in Romanian is usually in the mentioned text: *atopătrunde*, *atoateășezătoarea* and that are not mentioned in Romanian language dictionaries). Unlike Coşbuc, the translation of Eta Boeriu is characterized by a conservative attitude by selecting terms consecrated by the tradition of the religious style of the Romanian language (*har*), by orientation sometimes towards regionalisms or the archaisms. She also has the advantage of having the previous translation of G. Coşbuc, from which she often takes convenient solutions.

Finally, we can say that *Divina Comedie*, in the Romanian translation, belongs to both Dante and translators. Florentine poet assumes in *Paradisul*, an impossible mission, which is to overcome the limitations of human language to express, as faithfully as possible, the ineffable of God: *Trasumanar significar per verba/ non si poria; però l'esempio basti/ a cui esperienza grazia serba*, Par. I, v. 70-72. Translators assume, in turn, another impossible mission: to go beyond the language borders to express, with the greatest possible fidelity, the ineffable of the poetry.