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## Features of the Biblical Translations Made on the Territory of the Crown of the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century

*Osobliwości tłumaczeń biblijnych z terenów Królestwa Polskiego i Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego w XVI wieku*

*Асаблівасці біблейскіх перакладаў, створаных на тэрыторыі Польскага Каралеўства і Вялікага княства Літоўскага ў XVI ст.*

### Abstract

The article provides an overview of biblical translations created in the 16<sup>th</sup> century on the territory of the Crown of the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. On the example of verses 1.5–7 from the Book of Ecclesiastes a specific translation technique and the reasons for the differences between the original and translated text are considered. The study uses the method of textological analysis. The author comes to the following conclusions. Firstly, it can be a clash of different language systems, since the original language and the language of biblical translation refer not only to different language groups, but also to different language families. Secondly, a strong opposition to the accuracy of the translation is a different understanding of the text, due to differences in religion. By the time of the creation of most Slavic translations, Christian exegetics was fundamentally different both from the ancient understanding of sacred texts and from the interpretation adopted in the rabbinical tradition. Thirdly, intertextual differences may be due to differences in culture that have nothing to do with the religious system. Fourthly, the difference between the original and the translation

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is due to the fact that not all translators were equally gifted linguists; they didn't know the original language and the subject in question equally well. Therefore, in the textual structure of the translation, we can meet with various kinds of deviations from the essence and form of the original, up to language and substantial mistakes.

**Key words:** biblical translations, the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Crown of the Kingdom of Poland, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the Book of Ecclesiastes

### Abstrakt

Niniejszy artykuł ma charakter przeglądowy, jest poświęcony tłumaczeniom biblijnym, które powstały w XVI w. na terenie Królestwa Polskiego i Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego. W tekście na przykładzie wierszy 1.5–7 z Księgi Koheleeta rozpatruje się konkretną technikę translatorską oraz przyczyny różnic między tekstem oryginalnym i przetłumaczonym na inny język. W badaniu zastosowano metodę analizy tekstologicznej. Autor dochodzi do następujących wniosków. Po pierwsze, może to być konflikt różnych systemów językowych, ponieważ język oryginalny i język tłumaczenia biblijnego odnoszą się nie tylko do różnych grup, ale także do różnych rodzin językowych. Po drugie, dokładności tłumaczenia może przeszkadzać odmienne rozumienie tekstu z powodu różnic religijnych. W czasie dokonania większości słowniańskich tłumaczeń biblijnych chrześcijańska egzegetyka zasadniczo różniła się zarówno od starożytnego rozumienia świętych tekstów, jak i od interpretacji przyjętej w tradycji rabinicznej. Po trzecie, różnice intertekstualne mogą wynikać z różnic kulturowych, które nie mają nic wspólnego z systemem religijnym. Po czwarte, różnica między oryginałem a tłumaczeniem wynika z faktu, że nie wszyscy tłumacze byli równie utalentowanymi lingwistami, znali dobrze język oryginalny. Dlatego w strukturze tekstowej tłumaczenia możemy się spotkać z różnego rodzaju odchyleniami od treści i formy oryginału, aż po błędy językowe i merytoryczne.

**Słowa kluczowe:** tłumaczenia biblijne, XVI wiek, Królestwo Polskie, Wielkie Księstwo Litewskie, Księga Koheleeta

### Анатацыя

У артыкуле даецца агульнае ўяўленне пра біблейскія пераклады, створаныя ў XVI ст. на тэрыторыі Рэчы Паспалітай і Вялікага княства Літоўскага, а таксама на прыкладзе вершаў 1.5–7 з Кнігі Еклесіяста разглядаецца канкрэтная тэхніка перакладу і прычыны адрозненняў паміж арыгінальным і перакладным тэкстам. Для даследавання выкарыстоўваецца метада тэксталагічнага аналізу. Аўтар прыходзіць да наступных высноў. Па-першае, гэта можа быць сутыкненне розных моўных сістэм, паколькі мова арыгінала і мова біблейскага перакладу належаць не толькі да розных моўных груп, але і да розных моўных сем'яў. Па-другое, моцным процідзеяннем на шляху да дакладнасці перакладу аказваецца рознае разуменне тэксту, абумоўленае адрозненнем у веравызнанні. У час стварэння большасці славянскіх перакладаў хрысціянская экзэgetыка / тэорыя тлумачэння Бібліі каардынальна адрознівалася як ад старажытнага разумення святых тэкстаў, так і ад тлумачэння, прынятага ў рабінскай традыцыі. Па-трэцяе, міжтэкставыя адрозненні могуць быць абумоўленыя адрозненнямі ў культуры, якія не маюць ніякага

дачынення да сістэмы веравызнання. Па-чацвёртае, адрозненне арыгінала ад перакладу абумоўліваецца тым, што не ўсе перакладчыкі былі таленавітымі лінгвістамі, аднолькава добра ведалі мову арыгінала і прадмет, пра які ідзе гаворка. Таму ў тэкставай структуры перакладу мы можам сустрэцца з рознага роду адхіленнямі ад сутнасці і формы арыгінала, якія прыводзяць да істотных моўных памылак.

**Ключавыя словы:** біблейскія пераклады, XVI стагоддзе, Польскае Каралеўства, Вялікае княства Літоўскае, Кніга Еклезіяста

## 1. Complete Translations of the Bible Created on the Territory of the Crown of the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the 16<sup>th</sup> century

The sixteenth century in the history of the Slavic languages was marked by the almost sudden appearance of a large number of translations of the Holy Scriptures, based on various sources and principles of work. Our region got to the very centre of a huge cauldron, where the culture of modernity was formed, and some very important and interesting works were created in it.

Slavia Orthodoxa in this period was represented by a number of works, the most complete information about them can be found in the fundamental book of Anatoly Alekseev *Тэксталогія славянскай Бібліі* (Textology of the Slavic Bible) (Alekseev, 1999).

Selected Bible books are represented by the famous work of Francysk Skaryna, published in 1517–1519 in Prague. Although the translation was incomplete, it played a significant role in the history of Slavic literature. This work was based on the Venetian edition (1506) of the Czech Bible (Vladimirov, 1888, p. 171) under the strong influence of the Church Slavonic text. Most researchers do not doubt that, despite the Czech, in fact, the original and used Latin commentary by Mikalaj Liransky, the work of Francysk Skaryna has an Orthodox basis.

Of course, we should mention the largest, as it would be called in our time, Cyrillic Bible project – the Ostrog Bible. The complete Church Slavonic Bible was published by the first Russian printer Ivan Fedorov, who was then in the service of Prince Vasily-Konstantin Konstantinovich Ostrozhsy, in 1580 and 1581 in Ostrog. This is the work of a rather diverse team, which included the rector of the Slavic-Greek-Latin Collegium Gerasim Smatrytsky, Vasily Andreevich Surazhsy (Malushytsky), the Protestant publicist Matavila, the Greek scholars Dionysius Palaeologus-Rally, Eustaphius Nathaniel and others. (see Alekseev, 1999, p. 204). The sources used by the ‘author’s team’ were also very diverse, they were described in the Preface: the complete Bible received from Moscow, translated з греческа языка ...> множае пяти соть лѣтъ на славенскіи (from Greek ...> many five hundred years into the Slavic language), the Bibles in other languages (presumably, the Latin Vulgate and the ancient Hebrew Masoretic text, texts in other Slavic languages (for example, in the Song of Songs you

can see the influence of Skaryna), the 'collection' of the Greek Bible, closest to the Slavic and Greek texts (Complutensian Polyglot) were among them (Alekseev, 1999, p. 204).

It is safe to say that most of the works on the translation of the Bible were carried out on the Western borders of Slavia Orthodoxa, and not all of them corresponded to Orthodoxy. The rest includes a manuscript of the early 16<sup>th</sup> century CBS of Lithuania f. 19, № 262 (F 19–262), the so-called Vilnius Codex. Its first part, the Vilnius Old Testament Florilegium (pp. 1–135), contains the Preface to the Psalter from the Prague edition of Francysk Skaryna in 1517, articles on the interpretation and singing of psalms, and a copy of the translation of nine Old Testament books, eight of which were translated directly from ancient Hebrew (Psalter translated from Greek). The second part (pp. 140–408) contains an explanatory Paleo directed against the Jews. The manuscript was created between 1517–1533 by anonymous scribes for Orthodox believers of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The translation (at least its main part) was made in the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century by an unknown translator (translators), well acquainted with the Masoretic tradition, on the one hand, and the East Slavic literature, on the other (Altbauer, 1968; Arhipov, 2005; Temčín, 2006).

Going further west, we come across a number of versions of the Holy Scriptures published in Polish. The most detailed information about them can be found in the works of Maria Kossowska (Kossowska, 1968) and David Frick (Frick, 1989).

In publishing the full text of the translation of the Bible, Polish Catholics prevailed over the Protestants – in 1561 the so-called Bible of Jan Leopolita, a professor at the Krakow Academy, appeared in Krakow. It must be said that Leopolita, with the modesty of a worthy clergyman, ascribes to himself only the function of one who corrected an old translation by an unknown author (Górski, 1980). Some linguistic characteristics of the translation, especially dialectisms, suggest that the translator came from Lesser Poland (Malopolska), from lands close to Mazovia. The Bible of Leopolita remains true to the text of the Vulgate with some corrections to the ancient Hebrew and Greek versions, they were made by a professor of the Krakow Academy, who knew all three languages of Scripture. The influence of the Czech translation is also felt here, even its design shows that its publishers, the Scharfenberger brothers, collaborated with the Prague publishing house Melantrich.

Protestants also understood the need to publish the full text of the Bible. This became possible in 1563 thanks to the money of Mikolaj Radziwill the Black – a Bible was published in Brest, which is traditionally called the Brest or Radziwill Bible.

The translation was made by 17 authors – both Polish Calvinists and invited foreigners, among them a native of Lorraine, Peter Statorius, who later became the author of the first grammar of the Polish language. He brought the first complete translation of the Bible into French, made in opposition to the Catholic Church. This translation greatly influenced the Polish version. For example, the non-canonical books of the Old Testament first appeared in it, they occupy a place between the books of the Prophets and the New Testament and have a separate title and a separate introduction. Only the French Calvinist Bibles of that time have the same introduction, composition,

and order of books (Kwilecka, 1996, p. 49). The Radziwill version of the Bible is fairly loose in relation to the Masoretic text and the Greek original, and the translators were more concerned with meaning than with literalism. It must be said, however, that this interesting publication has not found acceptance even among Calvinists, primarily because the Calvinist movement itself has begun to disintegrate.

The fact that the Protestant camp was not monolithic is shown by the work of another translator of the Holy Scriptures, who stood out with his revolutionary views even among the representatives of Anti-trinitarianism, a trend that at that time caused discord in the Protestant movement. We are talking about Symon Budny, a Mazovian by origin, who worked in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. He prepared a translation of the entire Bible. As noted by one of the most famous researchers of Budny's work, Henryk Merczyng:

Budny's work in translating the Scriptures was difficult. While working, he lost his sight, so that he could not read... From the letter we can learn... that he used to help a young man who read ancient Hebrew texts, so during the illness Budny translated, listening to him (Merczyng, 1913, p. 42).

In his work Budny used the technique of literal translation, which diametrically distinguished him from the translators of the Radziwill Bible. Moreover, his Preface states that the latter in many places deviated so much from the original that their interpretative statements in Hebrew and Greek were only words, although in fact the Vulgate and the French versions were used.

Symon Budny's translation turned out to be so innovative that his Anti-trinitarian allies edited the text during the publication in Nesvizh in 1572 (and, apparently, in Zaslavl, where D. Lenchytsky's printing house was moved) (Labyncey, 1990, p. 173). Budny publicly denied the publication. How far this translation deviated from the traditional Catholic version is shown by the fact that even after amendments were made by less radical anti-Trinitarians, it was used by Muslim authors in a polemical work against Christians and Christianity. This is evidenced, on the one hand, by quotations from a Muslim treatise, and, on the other, by notes in Arabic in the edition of the Budny Bible, which is kept in the library of the University of Warsaw (see, for example, Tarėlka, 2004).

A number of Polish Bible translations of the 16<sup>th</sup> century are closed by a work that has played an important role in the history not only of the Bible, but also of all Polish Christianity. Its author was the Jesuit Jakub Wujek of Wagrowiec a professor of rhetoric in Jesuit colleges and a writer who, in addition to Latin, spoke Hebrew, Greek, German, Italian and Hungarian. In his work, he naturally used the text of the Vulgate, referring to the Septuagint in cases where Latin could be read differently, and the Hebrew text was mentioned in the commentaries (Bieńkowska, 1998, pp. 30–31). Wujek used a different translation technique from the one mentioned above. He was guided not by literality but by adequacy – he conveyed the idea of the original by the means existing in the language into which the translation is made. Wujek's work was also innovative, in a sense it had the same fate as Budny's innovative work –

when published after the author's death in 1599, a Jesuit Commission made significant changes to the translation.

Comparing the original works of Symon Budny and Jakub Wujek, researchers consider them both the most excellent translators of the Bible, still preferring the first one (Sobczykowa, 1996, p. 49), although it was the Catholic Bible of Wujek that became the canonical version, which for centuries determined the development of Polish spirituality and the Polish language, for which this translation became a model of the biblical style.

All the translations described above coexisted at the same time in the same territory – Lithuania and the Crown, but the approach of their authors to the practice of translation, as can be seen from the previous description, was different. We will demonstrate this with the example of a translation of passages from the Book of Ecclesiastes, which presents the spatial representations of the author of this book.

## **2. Space in the Book of Ecclesiastes and in the Biblical Translations Created on the Territory of the Crown of the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century**

### **2.1. General Ideas about Space in the Book of Ecclesiastes**

Representations of space, its structure, ways of overcoming it and understanding occupy one of the central places in the picture of the world which is realized through system of language in the texts created by man.

The space in the Book of Ecclesiastes can be divided into several components. First, it is the lower real space, the earth, which is in the horizontal plane and has all the necessary real parameters: it extends north and south, until sunrise and sunset; dreams, rivers, houses, groves, gardens, etc. have their place in it. The human path lies precisely in this space – here a person walks from birth to death, 'returning to his home'. Secondly, it is the upper sacred space, the celestial one, in which the sun moves, directing human affairs in view of the insurmountable distance between God and man.

It is interesting that the unknown author of the Book constructed the meaning of this space not from the real to the sacred, as is usually done, but in the reverse order. Let's pay attention to the verses 5–7 of the first chapter of this book, which first shows the movement of the celestial sphere, and then the action moves to the earth's plane.

### **2.2. The Movement of the Celestial Sphere in the Verses 1.5–6 of the Book of Ecclesiastes**

Here are the verses that represent the movement of objects in the sacred celestial sphere:



Leop. – *WŃchodzi słońce y zachodzi/ á ná mieŃce Ńwe záŃŃę przychodzi: táŃŃe Ńie odnowiŃŃy/ przez południe Ńie thoczy/ á chyli Ńie ku pułnocy: obaczáiąc wŃŃyŃkie rzeczy wokół wychadza duch/ á Ńwe Ńie okręgi náwráca;*

Radz. – *Słońce wŃchodzi y zachodzi/ wráćáiąc Ńię do mieyŃcá Ńwego kędy wŃchodzi. Bieży wiátr ku południu/ y záŃŃę bieży kołem ku pułnocy/ á obracáiąc Ńię táŃ y Ńám/ wráćá Ńię zkąd wyŃzedł;*

Bud. – *Słońce teŃ wŃchodzi y zachodzi/ a do mieyŃca Ńwego ciágnie gdzie wŃchodzi. Idzie ná południey y kráży ná pułnocy/ kráży (á) kráży/ idzie duch/ á po okręgach Ńwych wraca Ńię duch;*

Wuj. – *Słońce wŃchodzi i zachodzi, i wraca Ńię do mieyŃca Ńwego, i tam znowu wszczedŃszy kráży przez południe i Ńklania Ńię ku północy. Przechodząc wŃŃytko wokół idzie wiátr i nawraca Ńię do okręgów Ńwoich;*

Vil. – *и заŃаает Ńлńце и заидетъ Ńлńце а къ мѣŃти Ńвоеи тагнетŃа и сѣаетъ вно тамо: идетъ къ полуднѹ а вѣходитъ къ полночи вѣхода ходи(т) тѹю сторону и на вѣлоци Ńвоеи вернетŃа к тои сторонѣ;*

Ostrog. – *и вѣсходи(т) Ńлńце и вѣмѣсто Ńвое влечетŃа, сѣ вѣŃаваетъ идетъ къ югѹ, обѣходитъ къ сѣверѹ, и обходитъ окр(с)тѣ его обрацаетŃа ѡтѣ;*

Skar. – *Вѣсходитъ Ńлńце и заходит, и на место Ńвое навращаетŃа и ту сá обнови(т), и точитŃа черезъ полудне, и хилитŃа к полуноци. Освещаетъ вŃи речи вѣолѣ, вѣходитъ духъ и паки во Ńвоá колѣса обрацаетŃа.*

[Eccles. 1.5–6 – NIV – *The sun rise and the sun sets, and hurries back to where it rises. The wind blows to the south and turns to the north; round and round it goes, ever returning on its course.*]

Against the background of neutral verbs denoting the movement of the sun, the predicates in the translation of Simon Budny, in the Vilnius Codex and the Ostrog Bible, associated with the designation of slow motion, draw attention to themselves: *ciágnie*, *тагнетŃа*, *влечетŃа*. This translation once again proves that Budny, if he did not even know Hebrew, at least used the help of a language expert – in the Masoretic text there is *וַיִּחַר*, a form of the verb *חָרַח*, the meaning of which is ‘frequent and difficult to breathe’ (Brown et al., 1951, p. 983). Modern translators consider this to be the result of rapid movement (cf. Synodal translation: *и снѣиш к месту Ńвоему* [hurries back to where it rises]), but a similar characteristic may also apply to slow, heavy movement. This is how the anonymous translator of the Vilnius Codex, a Jew by origin, as well as the translators of the LXX, perceived this fragment. In the Greek text there is the expression *εις τόν τόπον αὐτοῦ ἔλκει*, where the rest of the verbs – a form of *ἐλκέω* ‘валачы, тягнуць’ [‘drag, pull’], and this is reflected in the Ostrog Bible, which focused on the text of the LXX.

Other translations show a fairly common translation error, namely the mixing of roots – since the use of the token *וַיִּחַר* in this context has no parallels (see Djakonov and Kogan, 1998, p. 188), its form *וַיִּחַר* was taken as another word – *וָשׁוּב* ‘return’ (Brown et al., 1951, p. 996), which was already reflected in Vulgate, cf.: *ad locum suum revertitur*

‘returns to its place’. From here it is included into the translations of Leopolita (*ná mieſce ſwe záfie przychodzi*) and Wujek (*wraca się do miejsca ſwego*), as well as into the Czech Venetian Bible:

Ven. – *Wzchodij ſluncze y zapadá: a na mijeſto ſwé nawraczue ſe atu ſe obnowij. toczy ſe przez poledne: a chylj ku puolnoczy ofwieczue wſſeczny wieczy wuokol: wychazie duch a zafe ſe ſwe okryſſky nawraczue.*

It was from there that Francysk Skaryna borrowed it (*и на место свое наворачаемся*). This error is even found in the translation of the Radziwill Bible (*wracając się do mieyscá ſwego*), the creators of which proclaimed the use of the Hebrew Masoretic text.

The verses under consideration are also interesting in that the first line of the verse 6 may equally refer to the sun and to the wind (spirit in some translations). The researchers note that ‘the first variant, less complicated syntactically, as confirmed by the LXX and the Vulgate, is not satisfactory in terms of meaning because the sun naturally moves not from south to north but from east to west’ (Djakonov and Kogan, 1998, p. 198). In the Ostrog Bible the translator solves the ambiguity of the natural picture with the help of punctuation marks – the absence of a sign after the second use of the token *о́бходумь* [to bypass] allows to attribute this predicate not to the spirit but to the sun, which shows its cycle in which such positions as south and north are legitimate.

As can be seen from the above fragments, the authors of the Polish translations are divided: the translators of the Radziwill Bible attribute this problematic movement to the wind, and Budny, Leopolita and Wujek to the sun. The Vulgate could lead others to a similar opinion. In general, it should be noted that in Polish translations, due to the spatio-temporal syncretism of the Slavic tokens *północ* and *południe* [north and south], there was no error that could appear in the Church Slavonic text, where the words *северъ* and *югъ* [‘north’ and ‘south’] were used. Therefore, these translations represented not the geographical but the diurnal motion of the celestial body. Also, Skaryna in his translation, perhaps focusing on the Venetian Bible (cf. *toczy ſe przez poledne: a chylj ku puolnoczy*), did not use Church Slavonic *северъ* and *югъ* [‘north’ and ‘south’], but *полудне* and *полунощъ* [‘noon’ and ‘midnight’], which allowed him to avoid the geographical error.

The most original way to resolve this issue was chosen by the translator of the Vilnius Florilegium, who simply eliminated the controversial element from his translation, although in the original Masoretic text he was to focus on, clearly contains the word חַוַּי, ‘wind, spirit’ (Brown et al., 1951). pp. 924).

### 2.3. The Movement of the Earth’s Sphere in the Verse 1.7 of the Book of Ecclesiastes



Next, in the verse 7, the movement passes into the earth's space through which the rivers flow. Here the Book of Ecclesiastes again asks the translators a riddle, which each of them solves in his own way. In Leopolda and Wujek's translations, the rivers return to the place where they came from to flow again :

Leop. – *WŹŹyŹtkie rzeki do morza plyną/ á morze nie zbiera: NátoŹ mieŹce plyną rzeki záŹie z ktorego wychodzą/ áby záŹ plnęły;*

Wuj. – *Wszystkie rzeki wchodzą do morza, a morze nie wylewa; do miejsca, z którego wyszły rzeki, wracają się, aby znowu ciekły.*

[Eccles. 1.7 – NIV – *All streams flow into the sea, yet the sea is never full. To the place the streams come from, there they return again.*]

This similarity certainly points to the unity of the source of these Catholic versions. The movement of rivers is presented in the same way in Skorina's translation, which strengthened the idea by adding the adverb *восплать* [backwards]:

Skar. – *вси реки плынуть в моръ и моръ неприбываетъ, до того места плынуть реки восплатъ, из чегоже вышли сѹт дабы опят плынули.*

The comparison with the translation of the Venetian Bible convincingly demonstrates which original the Belarusian first printer focused on:

Ven. – *WŹŹeczky rzeki plynú do morze: a morze neprzybýwá. do tehoŹ mijęŹta plynú rzeki záŹe z kteréhoŹ wyŹŹŹly aby opiet plynuly.*

On the contrary, in Symon Budny, as well as in the anonymous translator of the Vilnius Florilegium, who, like a Jew, used the Masoretic ancient Hebrew text, the rivers flow back, but not from where, but where – 'to their place':

Bud. – *WŹŹytkie potoki idą do morza/ á przed się morze nie nápełnia się do mieyŹca Źwego potoki idą/ aby się wracały ciekąc;*

Vil. – *вси потоки идуть в море а море не полно къ мѣстѹ иже потоки хода(т) тамъ же они воротатсѧ ходити.*

In the Orthodox Ostrog Bible, the conjunction *amo* 'where' also directs rivers in the same direction:

Ostrog. – *вси потоцы идуть въ море и море нѣсть насыщасѧ. Но въ мѣсто аможе потоцы идуть, и тамо тѣсѧ възрацають ити.*

But the most complicated spatial relations are represented in the Radziwill Bible – here the rivers run from where they return to flow again:

Radz. – *WŹyŹhki rzeki śćiekáiq Źię ku morzu / á wŹdy morze nie pełne / zŹamthqđ záfię bieŹa rzeki wracáiq Źię áby záf Źię támŹe ŹŹy.*

The translator himself obviously didn't understand this spatial picture, that's why he tried to explain it in the remarks on the margins, demonstrating the knowledge worthy of Ptolemaic cosmology:

Radz. – *Morze które zewŹŹqđ otoczyło Źięmię wypycha wodę Źwoje w Źródłá / ktore poŹthym na wierzch Źięmię wymkáiq / na tych mieyŹcách / kthore my zowiemy Źródla z kthorych rzeki wychodŹá á bieŹá do morza.*

All the inconsistencies we see in the translations are caused by the syncretism of the semantics of the adverbs in the ancient Hebrew language, as well as by the peculiarities of the graphics of the Masoretic text. The adverb *Ź* means 'here, there', and in some contexts, including this one, 'where' (Brown et al., 1951, p. 1027). Its form *ŹŹ* means 'from here, from there'. This is exactly the meaning implied in the Vulgate: *ad locum unde exeunt flumina revertuntur ut iterum fluant*.

And from it this understanding got to the Catholic translations – Leopolda, Wujek, to the Czech Venetian Bible, and from it to Skaryna:

It is believed (see: Djakonov and Kogan, 1998, p. 189) that in this case the translator saw in the Masoretic text, where the words were not separated from each other, haplology – the omission of the letter which is repeated within a word. He decided that the fragment *ŹŹŹŹŹŹŹŹ* should look like *ŹŹŹŹŹŹŹŹŹ* (*Ź* and *ŹŹ* variants of the letter *mēm*) and restored the missing, in his opinion, letter, resulting in a different form of the adverb.

LXX, as seen in the Ostrog Bible, for which it served as the original, preserved the Hebrew version, using the preposition *εις* 'to' and the conjunction *ού* 'where':

*πάντες οἱ χεῖμαρροι πορεύονται εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ ἡ θάλασσα οὐκ ἔσται ἐμπιπλαμένη εἰς τόπον οὗ οἱ χεῖμαρροι πορεύονται ἐκεῖ αὐτοὶ ἐπιστρέφουσιν τοῦ πορευθῆναι,*

compare also in the Synodal translation:

*Все реки текут в море, но море не переполняется: к тому месту, откуда реки текут, они возвращаются, чтобы опять течь.*

### 3. Conclusion

The analysis of Bible translations always raises several questions that are directly related to the translation techniques. For example, how accurately, in accordance with the spirit, meaning, and letter of the sacred text, do the translations that have been discussed here convey the original? The second question seems to follow from the first: how to explain the difference between the texts created by different translators?

There are several answers to these questions. First, the difference occurs when using different sources (ancient Hebrew Masoretic text, LXX, Vulgate or one of the existing Slavic translations). Second, the author(s) of the translation may have sought to make the text more understandable to their readers by denying the accuracy of the translation, or, on the contrary, by translating the text carefully adhering to the source, even with obvious inaccuracies.

No less important, however, is the following question: why, despite all the discrepancies, inaccuracies in the translation, do we perceive the text that emerges as identical to the text of the original source? Either it depends only on the coincidence of lexical meanings, or in this case other mechanisms deeply hidden in the semantic structure are involved. Indeed, despite noticeable differences, it is possible to accept all versions as representatives of the same text. Different interpretations can be caused by differences in religion, but not vice versa – in this case, differences and errors do not change the ideology of the religious consciousness of the user of the text.

*Translated into English by Marharyta Svirydava*

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