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#### **Abstract**

The paper is focused on Genesis 1:1-3 where the primordial man אָּדָם [adàm] is created and he was given the proper name Adam אָּדָם [adàm].

In Hebrew man and Adam are the same word, spelled the same way – מָּלָבֶּל [adàm]. Different translations of Genesis 1-3 use for the first time the proper name Adam in different places (Septuagint Gen 2:16; Vulgate Gen 2:19; La Sacra Bibblia Nouva Reveduta and La Nuova Diodati Gen 3:17; King's James Version Gen 2:20; The Estonian Bible Gen 2:22; Bulgarian and Russian Synodal (Orthodox) versions Gen 2:25; The German Luther Bible Gen 3:8; Some English Protestant versions Gen 3:17; Bulgarian Protestant and many English Protestant versions Gen 3:20-21). The paper decodes the phenomenon by studying the Hebrew original and several semiotic views on common and proper names (Lotman 2009, Toporov 1993, Losev 1929, Pierce 1992-1998). Through these opinions the important question "Who wrote the Bible?" is discussed. The analysis interfaces the new linguistic relativity theory (after 1990).

Four layers of symbolism are decoded: 1. The man became Adam; 2. The two men in Gen 1:27 ("Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness") and in Gen 2:7 man אָּדָם [adàm] is made by earth, ground אֲדָבָה [adamà]; 3. The two men in the New Testament (1 Corinthians 15:45-49); 4. Edom, Adam and cultural discourses in both Testaments.

## 1. Introduction

This article investigates the reasons for significant differences of the first appearance of the proper name Adam in various translations of Genesis 1-3. To resolve the translation puzzle, data is adduced from Hebrew, whose written norm has no capital letters and the word [adàm] can denote the common name *man*, and the proper name *Adam*. Semiotic perspectives of Lotman (2009), Losev (1929), Toporov (1993), and Pierce (1992-1998) of the proper name are highlighted but they cannot account for the theological world-view encoded in Hebrew. This article is part of *Semiotics of Colours in the Bible* project, where colours are considered under two ideas - the colours in the Bible are treated as a text within the Bible text (Text within the Text, Lotman 1985 [1996]), and the first appearance of the proper name Adam is part of the extended text of the Cultural Unit Red in the Bible (Colour as cultural unit Almalech 2017 on Eco 1985 [1996];).

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## 2. The proper name Adam

No other proper name in the Bible has such drastic differences about its first appearance in the Indo-European and Finno-Ugric translations. The proper noun אָדָם [adàm] (Αδαμ, Adam, Адам) appears for the first time in different places, in the different translations.

The problems and specifics:

- There are no capital letters in the Hebrew Alphabet. It is hard to decide whether it is a proper or a common noun.
- Genesis 1-3 is not just a fairy-tale for children. It is the description of creation of the world in every-day terms. Jewish Kabbalah seeks for centuries the hidden content behind the story of creation in Genesis 1-3.
- Genesis 1-3 can be treated as a mythic-poetical text.
- It seems that the first appearance of the proper name Adam is a matter of doctrine.
- The word אַרַם [adàm] means 1. man; person; 2. mankind; 3. the proper name Adam.
- In Hebrew, the definite article is received only by the common names and never by the proper names.
- If there is a preposition and conjunction written together to a name, the construction holds the category of definiteness in Hebrew.

## 3. Semiotic treatments of the proper name

A question becomes important: What is the difference between common and proper names? To answer that question I turn to semiotics rather than to linguistics because of the symbolic character of the Bible, especially of Genesis 1-3. I must emphasize that semiotic opinions do not inspire or influence the choice of translators for the first use of the proper name Adam, but serve as a scientific tool to explain the logic of translators to choose precisely a place of the first use of the proper name. I call the choice of translators a doctrine. The names of doctrines are given by me.

The first semiotic treatment of proper names is Yuri Lotman's (2009: 33-34):

Perhaps the sharpest manifestation of human nature is in the use of proper names and, linked to this, the isolation of individuality, the uniqueness of the individual personality as foundational values for "other" and "others"; "I" and "other" represent two sides of the unified act of self-consciousness and one is impossible without the other. (p. 31) [...] Here begins the game between proper names and common names, between "this" and "every". And precisely because the concept "this and only it" is a new concept, it first of all attracts the attention of the neophyte. There is no "I" without "others". But only in human consciousness do "I" and "all others, except me" hide within themselves something that is both unified and conflicting at one and the same time. One of the fundamental semiotic mechanisms inherent in humanity begins with the possibility of being "only itself"; to be a thing (proper name) and to simultaneously appear as the "representative" of a group, as one of many (common noun). This possibility of stepping into the role of another, of acting as a substitute for someone or something, indicates that you "are not what you are".

The second opinion is of Vladimir Toporov¹ (1993: 204) and it concerns cosmological texts: "The mythic-poetical nominalism puts/sets/lays the name before the referent for which it is a name". [translation is mine]. The Creation of the world is a cosmological text. Genesis 1-3 is also a construction of a mythic-poetical nominalism.

Another opinion on proper names is expressed by Aleksei Losev:

The name is a tool of communication mainly with the animate objects, and with persons. [...] The name supposes that I want to communicate with the object which I do understand; the name also necessarily sup-

<sup>1</sup> Vladimir Toporov is one of the prominent members of Moscow side of Tartu-Moskow Semiotic School.

poses that the object hears that name, answers my call, sympathize with, correspond to it, and answer to it. Without this mutual understanding between the signifier and signified there is no naming/nominalization. The sense of the nominalization is that the signifier reacts consciously to that nominalization. Otherwise, the name ceases to be a name (Losev 1929: 19-20) [translation is mine].

The last semiotic opinion is by Charles Peirce and it will be presented after statistical data for appearance of word [adàm] in Hebrew.

## 4. The facts on the first use of the proper name Adam in translations

### Genesis 2:16

Old Greek Septuagint LXT, Modern Greek Vamvas VM, Current Ukrainian UKR.

For Genesis 2:16 the first appearance of Adam can be called "The Doctrine of Prohibition/ Taboo" or "The Command", because in this context God commands Adam not to eat from the fruits of the Tree of Knowledge and of the Tree of Life.

## Genesis 2:19/20

The difference in the verses is due to the different tradition of numbering, and the content is the same.

Latin Vulgate VUL, 4-th century; English KJV, RWB, WEB, RSV, NIV, ESV, NAU, NET Bible, NAS, King James 2000 Bible; Romanian Bible (RO), Serbian SRB; French DRB; Dutch SVV; Portuguese ACF; BUL 2; Czech Bible Kralická, BKR. The proper name Adam is missing in Genesis 2:19 in modern Czech version (CEP).

In Genesis 2:19/20 the first appearance of Adam can be called "The Doctrine of the man giving names to the animate objects", because the primordial man gives names to "every living creature": "And out of the ground Jehovah God formed every beast of the field, and every bird of the heavens; and brought them unto the man to see what he would call them: and whatsoever the man called every living creature, that was the name thereof " (ASV Genesis 2:19)

This doctrine can be named also "The man has creative accomplishments as "God's likeness" (Genesis 1:26).

This doctrine corresponds to Losev's understanding for communicative essence of the name, and name as a relation between animated objects, as well as the process of mutual understanding between signifier and signified, also Losev includes feelings like sympathy in the communicative process.

#### Genesis 2:22

Estonian Bible (EST) is the single translation that uses the proper name Adam for the first time here. The doctrine may be called "God creates the primordial woman from the rib of the primordial man".

### Genesis 2:25

Russian (RST) and Bulgarian (BUL 2) Orthodox versions insert the proper name here for the first time.

In Genesis 2:25 the first appearance of Adam can be called "The Paradise unity of man and woman" because the just created primordial woman (she will receive her proper name, Eve, much later) and her husband did not consume the primordial sin.

Another name for this doctrine could be "Paradise unity God-man-his wife before the primordial sin".

This is not a valid solution for all Orthodox translations; for example, the proper name is missing in this verse in Romanian Bible (RO). In other Orthodox Bibles (Ukrainian, Serbian) –

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Gen 2:19 after the proper name is introduced, it appears systematically everywhere the Hebrew word [adàm] appears. This is a usual practice in most of the bibles.

#### Genesis 3:8

The German Luther Bible (LUO, LUT) use for the first time Adam at Genesis 3:8. The first appearance of Adam in Genesis 3:8 may be called "The unity of man and woman in the primordial sin" because the primordial man and woman felt shame after they ate the forbidden fruit. Not all German versions follow this solution. It may also be called "Martin Luther's Doctrine".

Actually, the primordial sin is breaking the God's commandment and not the sexual union *per se*. Genesis 3:17

In many English Protestant translations the proper name Adam appears in Genesis 3:17: ASV, NAU, RSV, NRS; German ELB. It is interesting to note that some of the modern Italian translations LND, NRV prefer the same place but not the place used in traditional Vulgate (Genesis 2:19). The same is in Portuguese ARA; French TOB. ("And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in toil shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;" ASV)

The first appearance of Adam in Genesis 3:17 may be called "The Punishment Doctrine". Genesis 3:20/21

Bulgarian Protestant (BUL 1); Hungarian (HUN); French LSG, BFC; Spanish LBA, RVA.

The doctrine may be called "The logic of woman's proper name appearance" because the proper name of the primordial woman Eve appeared for the first time in verse 20.

Modern Protestant versions accepted Genesis 3:17 or Genesis 3:20/21 as the most appropriate place to use the proper name Adam for the first time.

The first appearance of Adam in Genesis 3:17 or Genesis 3:21 in the modern Protestant and modern Italian versions may be called "The Punishment for the primordial sin makes Adam and Eve as human beings closer to usual persons, to us". This corresponds Lotman's opinion:

Perhaps the sharpest manifestation of human nature is in the use of proper names and, linked to this, the isolation of individuality, the uniqueness of the individual personality as foundational values for "other" and "others"; "I" and "other" represent two sides of the unified act of self-consciousness and one is impossible without the other (Lotman 2009: 31).

The primordial sin (to break the God's commandment and not the sexual union *per se*) is closer to the notion of "I" but not to the notion of "the others". *Ergo*, the first appearance of the proper names Adam and Eve here is a comment for the start of the humankind with the "two sides of the unified act of self-consciousness and one is impossible without the other".

## Genesis 4:25

Any of the previous doctrines for use of the proper name for the first time do not fit in Polish Bible (BTP). A proper name appears in Genesis 4:25. The first three chapters use the words człowiek ['human'] and mężczyznę ['man', 'male', 'masculine'].

The use of mężczyznę ['man', 'masculine'] for the first time in Genesis 2: 19-20 is particularly relevant to the Vulgate. However, before that, in Genesis 1:27, word "mężczyznę" was also used to name the male half of humanity alongside the female.

Finally, here the doctrine is to avoid the theological and the common sense contradictions existing in the Hebrew use of the word אָדָם [adàm]. In the earlier Polish version (BGP) the proper name appears in Genesis 2:19.

## 5. Differences are provoked (governed) by features of the Hebrew text

Barrick and Busenitz (2004: 58) pointed out that the Hebrew spelling rule that "when the inseparable preposition is followed by the definite article, the Д is omitted, allowing the preposition to usurp the position and pointing of the article. The presence of the article is identifiable by the nonprepositional pointing of the preposition." For the two instances of the name thus used (Genesis 3:17; 21), it is clear that the category of definiteness is implanted.

Hence, if there is a use of the word אָדֶב [adàm] without the definite article  $\mu$  [h] and with "nonprepositional pointing of the preposition" – this should be a proper name. Let us note the fact that, if there is a definite article to the word [adàm] in Hebrew, it can be a common noun, it has not escaped the attention of at least two commentators.

In this one place, there is no article, and our version may be right in regarding it as a proper name. (Smith 1900: 22); we should undoubtedly here read "for the man" (lâ-âdâm) in accordance with the general usage in this section. The LXX introduces the proper name at Genesis 2:16, Lat. Vulg. at Genesis 2:19: both ignore the definite article here and in Genesis 2:21-23 (Ryle 1921).

Translators through the centuries were also familiar with this fact, but they had their individual approaches.

There are 22 uses of the word מַבָּם [adàm] in Genesis 1-3:

| Uses of the word אָדֶם adàm in Genesis 1-3                         | Chapter and verse |
|--|-------------------|
| 1. אָרָם adàm  | 1. Genesis 1:26   |
| 2. הָאָדֶם ha-adàm   | 2. Genesis 1:27   |
| 3. הָאָדָםha-adàm  | 3. Genesis 2:7    |
| 4. הָאָדֶם ha-adàm   | 4. Genesis 2:8    |
| 5. הָאָרָם ha-adàm   | 5. Genesis 2:15   |
| 6. הָאָרָם ha-adàm   | 6. Genesis 2:16   |
| 7. הָאָרָם ha-adàm   | 7. Genesis 2:18   |
| 8. הָאָדָם ha-adàm   | 8. Genesis 2:19   |
| 9. הָאָדָם ha-adàm   | 9. Genesis 2:20   |
| 10. דָאָדָם ha-adàm  | 10. Genesis 2:21  |
| 11. דָאָדָם ha-adàm  | 11. Genesis 2:22  |
| 12. אָישָה-ha-adàm + (man-אָיש [ish] + woman-אָיָם [ishà])         | 12. Genesis 2:23  |
| man-אָיש [ish]   | Genesis 2:24      |
| 13. דָאָדָם ha-adàm  | 13. Genesis 2:25  |
| 14. דָאָדָם ha-adàm  | 14. Genesis 3:6   |
| man-אָיש [ish]   | Genesis 3:6       |
| 15. דָאָדָם ha-adàm  | 15. Genesis 3:8   |
| 16. דָאָדָם ha-adàm  | 16. Genesis 3:8   |
| 17. דָאָדָם ha-adàm  | 17. Genesis 3:12  |
| 18. יְלְאָדָם u-le-adàm lit. and to the man                        | 18. Genesis 3:17  |
| 19. הָאָדֶם ha-adàm (Here is the first use of the proper name Eve) | 19. Genesis 3:20  |
| 20. ְלְאָדֶם [u-le-adàm] lit. and to the man                       | 20. Genesis 3:21  |
| 21. הָאָדֶם ha-adàm  | 21. Genesis 3:22  |
| 22. הַאָרָם ha-adàm  | 22. Genesis 3:24  |

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The striking fact is that there is only one use of אָרָם [adàm] without a definite article - in Genesis 1:26. Hebrew spelling gives a possibility to speculate that God inspired the prophet because Adam in Hebrew should be in the moment when the *man* or the *mankind* had been in His intention, as an idea. ("Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." RSV).

Genesis 1:26 represents a single possibility to have the proper name in Hebrew. The word אָדָם [adàm] should be understood as *humankind* but not as *man*. The materialisation of man in the next 21 cases does not involve a proper name.

The Hebrew single option for a proper name (in Genesis 1:26) has an excellent treatment according to the semiotic point view of Charles Peirce (1958, vol. 2: 329):

A proper name, when one meets with it for the first time, is existentially connected with some percept or other equivalent individual knowledge of the individual it names. It is *then*, and then only, a genuine Index. The next time one meets with it, one regards it as an Icon of that Index. The habitual acquaintance with it having been acquired, it becomes a Symbol whose Interpretant represents it as an Icon of an Index of the Individual named.

The first use of the noun אָדֶם [adam] prompts some interesting interpretations – it is in Genesis 1:26 and it is the only use of the word without definite article, i.e. without the category of definiteness. Consequently, we accept that here is the only one Hebrew possibility of the word Adam to be a proper name.

Verse 27 completely reaffirms the idea of Peirce because Adam is "in the image, and in the likeness of God", i.e. Adam is a "genuine Index" of God.

# 6. Primordial man is a part of Cultural Unit Red Text within the Biblical text. Philosophical and theological aspects of cultural unit red.

Some people claim the Jewish God is androgen, because they accept that "in our likness" leads to "male and female". It should be understood as an idea, a plan for mankind, but not to be treates "in our likness" as a man and a woman. Actually, Hebrew words for "male and female" [zahàr ve nekevà] in 1:26-27 are two different words from man ([adàm]: man [ish]) and woman, wife ([ishà] used further next in Genesis 2-3.

Genesis 1:26-27

Then God said, "Let us make mankind [adàm] in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male [zahàr] and female [nekevà] he created them (NIV).

In Platonic terms (Timeus, Parmenides), man [zahar] stands for the idea of *mankind*, not a single *man*. Many translations prefer to use *man* instead of *mankind*.

In Timaeus, the evolution of the world goes from perfect to imperfect, i.e. Adam in verses 26-27 is the perfect being. In the following verses, the idea of perfect Adam deteriorates, as he takes on a more material form and becomes increasingly imperfect. The materialisation began in Genesis 2:7 ("Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.") with materials that are some of Plato's elements – earth/ground and breathing, i.e., air, and also two kinds of soul.

One of the souls is connected to the breathing, i.e. air, the other - to the souls of animals. The whole process correlates to Greek philosophy with terms such as "aer, pneuma, psyche, zoe, theion" being constantly employed, according to Peters 1967: 4.

In his analyses and presenting the Kabbalah, Scholem (1978 [1974]) uses word "Neoplatonic" more than 100 times. Along with the original Hebrew ideas and style, Neoplatonic influence in Kabbalah is undeniable. However, here we have the canonical Hebrew text of Genesis 1-3. The grammar facts for the noun אָדָם [adàm] imply presence of a Platonic type of Creation – from the perfect "Adam" to the imperfect material "man".

In the Jewish tradition, the אָדֶם [adàm] from Genesis 1:26-27 is called "man from heaven" and from Genesis 2:7 – "man of the earth".

Paul's text of 1 Corinthians 15:47-51 reflects a discussion between Alexandrian and Jerusalem schools on the issue who is the first and who is the second – the "man from heaven" or the "man of the earth". Paul, presenting Jerusalem side, thinks that the "man of the earth" (Genesis 2:7) is first and after that comes the "man from heaven" (Genesis 1:26). It is strange that Paul writes to the Corinthians on this issue, because the whole dispute presupposes knowledge of Hebrew, namely that God formed man אָדָ [adam] of dust from the *ground* אַדָּ [adama] (Genesis 2:7), i.e. the man was formed from its feminine derivate in grammar terms.

One more extension of the cultural unit Red, which passes from the Old to the New Testament, is Edom אֲּדֹם [adòm] (meaning "red"): Edom is the second name given by God to Jacob's twin brother. Edom was applied to Esau because of his selling his birthright for the *red* stew. (Genesis 25:25-26; 30 Esau asked Jacob to give him to eat "of this red pottage"). His descendants are called Edomites. Herod the Great was born in the land of Edom around 74 B.C. Red colour became symbol of Rome and the dynasty of Herod at Roman province of Judea.

If we speculate until the end, Lotman's idea on proper names fits the theological opinion expressed in Genesis 1-3: the Bible is written by people, but under the dictation of the Holy Spirit, i.e. God is the author of the text. The Platonic essence of Genesis 1-3 reveals that when the "man from heaven" is at the closest position to God, to the author, it is identified with the "I". ("I" and "other" represent two sides of the unified act of self-consciousness and one is impossible without the other ( Lotman 2009: 31)). Thus, the heavenly man is Adam [adàm] because he is at the closest space to the author of the text. The process of materialisation removes the creation from the idea of Adam as heavenly man and he becomes the "others" – the common name [adàm] with definite article.

The idea of Pierce for a proper name as genuine Index when one meets with it for the first time is just one point of view. As we saw, there are also other possibilities. Another perspective concerns "the *inner form* of the words". The terms world-view and inner form are usually traced back to Humboldt's (date) philosophy of language, considering that the inner form is not equal to the worldview but an important element of the overall world-view of every language. For different implications of the term inner form see Leopold 1929.

## 7. Conclusions

My research has led me to the following conclusions about the drastic differences in the first appearance of the proper name "Adam" the Indo-European and Finno-Ugric translations of the Bible, differences that occur due to complex cultural reasons.

In the Hebrew original of Massoretic text, there is only one candidate for proper name – the first use of the word [adàm] in Genesis 1:26. This verse narrates about the intention of God to create the *mankind* [adàm].

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The Hebrew spelling and grammar do not allow us to treat all subsequent uses of the word [adam] in Genesis 1-3 as a proper name because they have a definite article in the Hebrew language the word אָדָם [adam] includes the definite article and as a result in the translations it is mistaken as a proper name.

All translations ignore the definite article and insert the proper name according some personal logic/doctrine.

None of the translations introduces for the first time the proper noun Adam in a way adequate to the original Hebrew spelling.

The linguistic inner form of the name reveals the tip of an iceberg of misinterpretations. For a proper interpretation, prospective translators should also consider the connection between the *red* colour אָדֹם [adòm], *blood* בָּם [dam], and *ground* אַדָּמָה [adamà] (the feminine non-suppletive form of *man* [adam]), the material the first man was formed by in Genesis 2:7. The inner form is a reflex of a logical feature, which posits as a semantic basis for any word. The inner form is implanted into the word-derivation processes and etymology.

Usually inner forms present the Relativity but not the Universality of inner forms in different languages. Thus, the feminine derivate of אָּדָם [adam] is earth, ground אַדָּם [adama], typical to Hebrew. Another word, deriving from the same root is red אָדֹם [adòm].

The redness of the first man gives different perspectives for interpretation, and presents the Hebrew world-view and corresponds to Plato's Timeus. Actually, the Hebrew world-view always has been a major difficulty for translators. In any case the cultural unit Red in Hebrew (Biblical and Modern) should include the problem with proper and common names אָּדָם [adàm] and their connection with red אַדָּם [adòm], blood דָם [dam], and earth, ground אַדָּם [adamà].

Another rank list and interpretations in Jewish heritage is formed by the different words/terms for *man* in Hebrew – [adàm], [ish], [enòsh], [gèver].

Semiotic interpretations concerning the proper name cast a new and original light on the specifics of research and the theological aspects of the Hebrew original and the interpretations of different translators.

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### **Bible Versions**

## Cyrillic

BUL 1 Bulgarian Protestant Bible 1940, 1995, 2005

BUL 2 Bulgarian Orthodox Version 1925, 1991

RST Russian Synodal Text of the Bible

SRB Serbian Orthodox Bible 1847

UKR Ukrainian Orthodox Version

## Czech

BKR Bible Kralicka 1613

CEP Cesky Ekumenicky preklad 1985

## Dutch

SVV Statenvertaling 1637

## Finno-Ugrian

FIN Raamattu, 1933 käännös

HUN Károli 1993

EST Estonian Bible 2000

## French

BFC French Bible en français courant 1997

DRB French Version Darby 1885

LSG French Louis Segond 1910

TOB French Traduction Oecuménique de la Bible 1988

#### German

LUO -Luther Bibel 1912

Mony Almalech 485 -

LUT - Revidierte Lutherbibel 1984

ELB - Revidierte Elberfelder 1993

#### Greek

LXT – Septuaginta Rahlfs'

VM - Vamvas Modern Greek Bible

## English

ASV American Standard Version 1901

DBY The Darby Bible 1884/1890

ESV The English Standard Version 2001

KJV King James 1611/1769

King James 2000 Bible

NAB The New American Bible 1970/2011

NAS New American Standard Bible 1977

NAU New American Standard Bible 1995

NIB New International Version UK 1983

NIV New International Version 1984 (US)

NKJ New King James Version 1982

NRS New Revised Standard Version 1989

RSV Revised Standard Version 1952/1971

RWB Revised Webster 1833/1995

WEB The Webster Bible 1833

## Hebrew

WTT Version 4.4 2005

#### Italian

IEP San Paolo Edizione 1995

LND La Nuova Diodati 1991

NRV La Sacra Biblia Nuova Riveduta 1994

## Latin

VUL Latin Vulgate

#### Polish

BGP Biblia Gdanska 1632

BTP Polish Biblia Tysiaclecia. Wydanie 4. 1965/84

## Portuguese

ACF Portuguese Corrigida Fiel, 1753/1995

ARA Portuguese Almeida Revista e Atualizada 1993

## Romanian

RO Cornilescu Bible 1921

## Spanish

LBA La Biblia de Las Americas 1986

RVA Reina-Valera Actualizada 1989



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