

Pauline superlatives in the horizon of Romanian biblical translations: polymorphic valencies of the preposition ὑπέρ (*hyper*)

Abstract: Considered the founder of Christianity (N.T. Wright) and the one who crossed the Judaism boundary laying the foundation of Universalism (Alain Badiou) – Paul – was furthermore an innovator in matter of New Testament biblical language. There are in The New Testament 29 combinations based on verbal particle ὑπέρ (J.F. Conley). Out of them, 19 pertain to Paul. What degree of originality did the Apostol have? We will observe the trajectory of the preposition ὑπέρ from meanings to super meanings, obtained through composition with other words that emphasizes biblical superlative. At the same time, we will provide different Romanian translation versions for a certain Pauline text (*Philippians 2:9*), in order to detect which translator was closer to the original lection. So, which is the most correct translating version? Is the age-old formula *traduttore / traditore* applicable to the translators of sacred texts?

Keywords: Bible, Paul, superlative, *hyper-*, *hyperypsoó*, „prea-” / *over-*

Problematization

Superlative drags along the exclamation mark (Jackelén 2014, 63), and it implies question mark. Without them, life would be like a paper flag. Italian philosopher Battista Mondin said that “man is, by definition «a rational being», and to rationalize means wondering about the causes of the things.” (Mondin 2008, 37) Romanian philosopher Constantin Noica confessed during last century: “I live the moment when this extremely deep question can be asked: «What can be done when there is nothing to be done?» [...] And I reason upon the only issue that can be reasoned now, question issue. Starting from it the world can revive. What about mine?” (Noica 1991, 166-67).

He solved the question issue, asking a question. Since question of question is the only exclamation mark that lasts. Whereas we – the social survivors crossing the postmodernism have deliberated and (down) rated wondering, astonishment, as we omitted the question. Hence the lack of

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miracles¹ or their falsification during contemporaneity. As “miracle” we can name an unusual event in which a source out of Nature is involved. C.S. Lewis states: “I use the word Miracle to mean an interference with Nature by supernatural power.” (Lewis 2012, 12; webogr.: [C.S.L.]). We named technological accessories as miracles and facing the development of the functional big Mammoth we started wondering; is there any link between our attitude and the third verse from Revelation 13²? For example: the idea of *over product* generated the occurrence of *supermarkets* that facilitated the emergence of *hypermarkets*. And beyond these, what else do we have? *Hyperfunctionality* “extra muros” and *hyper convenience* (Baudrillard 1994, 75-8).

I propose for analysis this topic that deals with *Pauline superlatives in the horizon of Romanian biblical translations*, insisting upon *polymorphic valencies of preposition ὑπέρ (hyper)*. We will appeal to a three folded details of the theme: (1) terminological, (2) analytical (case study sticking on the text from Paul’s Epistle to the Philippians, second chapter verse 9) and (3) stylistic.

I have to specify that the translation into English of archaisms or of texts belonging to certain Romanian versions of Bible older than a century is indicative, keeping primarily their meaning³

1. Terminological details

1.1. About preposition ὑπέρ [hyper]

According to *Thayer’s Lexicon*, *hyper* particle has more meanings, described below:

- (I.) *with the genitive*: (1) properly: “over, above, beyond, across”; (2) equivalent to Latin *pro* (“for”): “to be for one” (one’s safety, for one’s advantage or benefit); (3) “in the place of, instead of”; (4) “on account of, for the sake of”; (5) Like the Latin *super* (“under”): “concerning, of, as respects, with regard to”; (6) In the N.T. manuscripts the prepositions ὑπέρ [hyper] and περί [peri] are confounded;
- (II.) *with the accusative*: (1) properly, of the place “over” or “beyond”; (2) metaphorically, of the measure or degree exceeded as: “more than, above, beyond, than”;
- (III.) *in Composition*: (1) “over, above, beyond”: ὑπεράνω [hyperano], ὑπερέκεινα [hyperekeina], ὑπερεκτείνω [hyperekteino]; (2) with sense of excess of measure: “more than”: ὑπερεκπερισσοῦ [hyperekperissou], ὑπερνικάω [hypernikao]; with sense of aid: “for; in defense of” (Thayer 1889, 638-9).

1.2. Particle ὑπέρ [hyper] in Ancient Greek literature

Virtual platform from Tufts University – *Perseus Digital Library* (See webogr.: [TUFTS]), offers almost 400 ancient works in which *hyper*

preposition has been used. The term occurs in NT 149 times, while at ancient authors such as Aristide it occurs 661 times (*Orationes*), 572 times in Polybius case (*Histories*) and 379 times in Josephus case (*Antiquities of the Jews*) etc. In this classification, New Testament ranks as the 23rd (see below table no. 1):

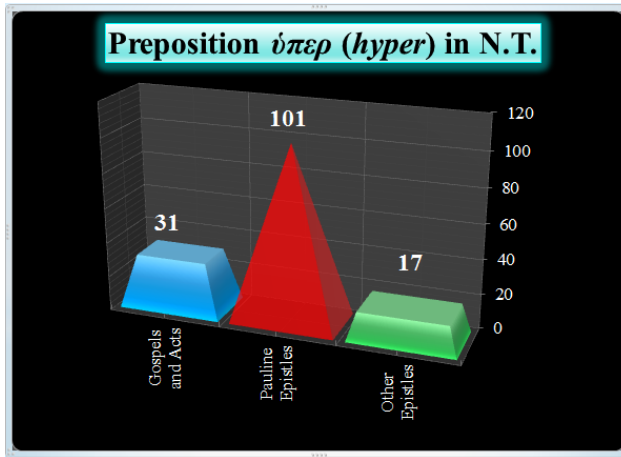
Table no. 1

No.	Words	Max.	Min.	Corpus Name
1	298102	661	655	Aristides, Aelius, <i>Orationes</i>
2	311666	572	572	Polybius, <i>Histories</i>
3	284417	528	528	Dionysius of Halicarnassus, <i>Antiquitates Romanae, Books I-XX</i>
4	83898	439	437	Philostratus the Athenian, <i>Vita Apollonii</i>
5	399409	387	387	Cassius Dio Cocceianus, <i>Historiae Romanae</i>
6	305870	379	370	Flavius Josephus, <i>Antiquitates Judaicae</i>
7	146389	267	267	Basil, Saint, Bishop of Caesarea, <i>Epistulae</i>
8	112327	265	265	Isocrates, <i>Speeches</i>
9	288825	259	256	Strabo, <i>Geography</i>
10	177900	243	241	Dio Chrysostom, <i>Orationes</i>
11	218450	238	238	Pausanias, <i>Description of Greece</i>
12	70422	221	221	Demosthenes, <i>Speeches 11-20</i>
13	72248	202	202	Demosthenes, <i>Speeches 21-30</i>
14	192194	197	197	Diodorus Siculus, <i>Library</i>
15	224591	193	193	Procopius, <i>de Bellis</i>
16	103320	188	188	Aelian, <i>De Natura Animalium</i>
17	46047	182	182	Philostratus the Athenian, <i>Vitae Sophistarum</i>
18	125221	169	167	Flavius Josephus, <i>De bello Judaico libri vii</i>
19	116927	167	167	Appian, <i>The Civil Wars</i>
20	39040	162	162	Harpocration, Valerius, <i>Lexicon in decem oratores Atticos</i>
21	78707	152	152	Arrian, <i>Anabasis</i>
22	59780	151	151	Lysias, <i>Speeches</i>
23	137783	149	149	New Testament

1.3. Preposition ὑπέρ [*hyper*] in the New Testament

According to the above table, frequency of *hyper* term in New Testament is one word each 935 words. From statistical table of Felix Just dated 2005 (See webogr.: [S.J.F.J.]) and from George V. Wigram work, *Englishman Concordance of the New Testament* (1885) we observe that: Gospels and Acts of the Apostles contain 31 *hyper* prepositions out of 83.217 words (1/2.684), the other authors of NT use 17 times the word *hyper* among 22.396 words

(1/1.317), while Paul appeal to this word abundantly: 101 occurrences for 32.407 word (1/321)! We offer this data in this diagram.



1.4. Proposition ὑπέρ [*hyper*] in Composition-terms of Pauline epistles

Considered the founder of Christianity (N.T. Wright) and the one who crossed the Judaism boundary laying the foundation of Universalism (Alain Badiou) – Paul – was furthermore an innovator in matter of New Testament biblical language. There are in The New Testament 29 combinations based on verbal particle ὑπέρ (Conley 2009, 47), out of which 19 belong to Pavel (Sauer 2009, 81). We offer as example the terms, in the table no. 2. Columns indicate: current number (*N.*), *Term / Expression (Term / Expr.)*, *Part of Speech (P.S.)*, *Bible References*, *Text / Signification* in KJV Bible, Occurrences (*Oc.*) (see table no. 2).

2. Analytical details. Case study upon the text from Philippians 2:9

2.1. Textual analysis upon *Philippians 2:9*

The verb ὑπερῦψώ (*hyperupsō*) is used by Paul in his epistle to the Philippians as follows: Θεὸς αὐτὸν ὑπερῦψωσεν [*Theos auton hyperupsōsen*], “God highly exalted him” (2:9). We provide a concise textual critique of the passage (see table no. 3).

The Pronoun αὐτὸν refers to a man, identified in Paul’s text with Christ (v. 5); the verb ὑπερῦψωσεν – “highly exalted” – occurs at aorist tense (term ἀόριστος, in Ancient Greek means “indefinite” [at A. Meillet, the aorist indicate “the process pure and simple without consideration of duration.”] (Meillet in Binnick 1991, 165)), referring to Resurrection and Ascension. The term ὑπερῦψώ (*hyperupsō*) is made up from prepositional prefix ὑπερ (*hyper*), “beyond”, and the verb ὑψώ (*hypsō*), “elevate”. The meaning of the

term would be: “elevate beyond”, “make exceedingly high”, “exalt to the highest place” or “elevate exceedingly” (Souter) (See webogr.: [HELPS™ II]).

Table no. 2

N.	Term / Expr.	P. S.	Bible References	Text / Signification	Oc.
1	ὑπεραίρω	Vb.	2 Cor 12:7; 2 Thes 2:4	ὑπεραίρωμαι / [I] should be exalted above measure	3
2	ὑπέρακμος	Adj.	1 Cor 7:36	ὑπέρακμος / [she] pass the flower of [her] age	1
3	ὑπεράνω	Adv.	Eph 1:21; 4:10; Heb 9:5	ὑπεράνω / [ascended up] far above all	3
4	ὑπεραυξάνω	Vb.	2 Thes 1:3	ὑπεραυξάνει / groweth exceedingly	1
5	ὑπερβαίνω	Vb.	1 Thes 4:6	ὑπερβαίνειν / [man] go beyond	1
6	ὑπερβαλλόντως	Adv.	2 Cor 11:23	ὑπερβαλλόντως / above measure	1
7	ὑπερβάλλω	Vb.	2 Cor 3:10, 9:14; Eph 1:19, 2:7, 3:19	ὑπερβάλλον / [is] the exceeding [greatness]	5
8	ὑπερβολή	Noun	Rom 7:13; 1 Cor 12:31; 2 Cor 1:8; 4:7, 17; 12:7	ὑπερβολή / the excellency [of the power]	8
	ὑπερβολή(ν) εἰς ὑπερβολήν	Expr.	2 Cor 4:17	ὑπερβολήν εἰς ὑπερβολήν / surpassing to excessiveness	1
9	ὑπερέκεινα	Adv.	2 Cor 10:16	ὑπερέκεινα / the [regions] beyond	1
10	ὑπερεκτείνω	Vb.	2 Cor 10:14	εἰς ὑμᾶς ὑπερεκτείνομεν ἑαυτοὺς ἄχρη / ourselves beyond [our measure]	1
11	ὑπερεντυγχάνω	Vb.	Rom 8:26	ὑπερεντυγχάνει / maketh intercession	1
12	ὑπερέχω	Vb.	Rom 13:1; Phil 2:3; 3:8; 4:7	διὰ τὸ ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως / for the excellency of the knowledge	4
13	ὑπερήφανος	Adj.	Rom 1:30; 2 Tim 3:2	ὑπερηφάνους / arrogant	2
14	ὑπερνικάω	Vb.	Rom 8:37	ὑπερνικῶμεν / we are more than conquerors	1
15	ὑπεροχή	Noun	1 Cor 2:1; 1 Tim 2:2	ὑπεροχήν / excellency	2
16	ὑπερπερισσεύω	Vb.	Rom 5:20; 2 Cor 7:4	ὑπερπερισσεύσεν / did much more abound	2
17	ὑπερπλεονάζω	Vb.	1 Tim 1:14	ὑπερπλέονασεν / was exceeding abundant	1
18	ὑπερυψώω	Vb.	Phil 2:9	ὑπερύψωσεν / hath highly exalted	1
19	ὑπερφρονέω	Vb.	Rom 12:3	ὑπερφρονεῖν / highly	1

Table no. 3

Strong's	Greek	Transliteration	English	Morphology
2316	Θεός	<i>Theos</i>	God	Noun. Nom. Masc. Sg.
846	αὐτόν	<i>auton</i>	him	Pers. / Pos. Pron. Acc. Masc. 3 rd Pers. Sg.
5251	ὑπερύψωσεν	<i>hyperupsōsen</i>	highly exalted	Vb. Aor. Ind. Act. 3 rd Pers. Sg.

What meanings might involve *hyperypsoo* term?

- (1) “To elevate beyond” from exterior, physical point of view (Jesus was lifted up on the cross, *Jn* 3:14);
- (2) “To elevate beyond” from interior, mental, spiritual point of view (Zechariah’s Song states that God “exalts” the humble people, *Lk* 1:52);
- (3) “To elevate beyond” superior, supernatural, super-physical point of view (Jesus was taken up into heaven, *Acts* 2:33 / *Mk* 16:19).

What does this expression: “highly exalted” mean in the text from *Philippians* 2:9?

Some biblical commentators, including Romanian theologian Dumitru Stăniloae, support the idea that “crucifixion is the first ascension” (Bucuroiu 1993, 163). Others however, like Charles Ellicott, Alexander Maclaren, Albert Barnes etc. regard Christ’s exaltation as Ascension to the right hand of God. Erich Sauer will continue same idea: “God did not simply «exalt» or «highly exalt» Jesus, but that He «super-exalted» Him (Gk. *hyperhypsosen*). All other exaltation is nothing compared to His exaltation. All mountains are but plains compared with the summit of this high mountain range to which God has «hyperexalted» Jesus.” (Sauer 2009, 27).

2.2. Source criticism on *Philippians* 2:9

The critique of the sources confirms that the term *hyperupsōsen* is correctly transcribed from original. We observe in the below image four examples of old manuscripts, mentioning the studied text. In Codex Sinaiticus (cent. IV), Codex Vaticanus (cent. IV), Codex Alexandrinus (cent. V) and Codex Boernerianus (cent. IX), we read same biblical text: *Theos* (in manuscripts same term is abbreviated: Θ+ε)⁴ *auton hyperupsōsen*. The only this is that the manuscript from Switzerland of IX century also contains a Latin interlinear: we observe the text that contains the words of Vulgata: *Deus illum exaltavit*.

These textual details are confirmed by *Apparatus criticus* from GNT-NA 27th edition (Nestle-Aland 2007, 675).



2.3. *Philippians* 2:9 in Romanian translations

We provide a bilingual variant RO / EN for ten cases of translation in Romanian versions. The passage from Pauline text is presented in this manner (table no. 4):

Table no. 4

No.	Translation	Year	Passage
1	N.T. from Bălgrad (Alba Iulia)	1648	„Dumnezeu pre Elu-L <i>preînălţă</i> ” / “God <i>bath over exalted</i> Hine”
2	[Bible Version] Cantacuzino	1688	„Dumnezeu pre El <i>preînălţă</i> ” / “God <i>bath over exalted</i> Him”
3	[B.V.] from Blaj New Testament from Smirna [B.V.] Holy Synod	1795 1838 1914	„Dumnezeu pre Dânsul L-au <i>preaînălţat</i> ” / “God <i>did over exalt</i> Him”
4	[B.V.] from Pesta	1873	„Dumneşeu P'a <i>pre-înălţat</i> ” / “God <i>bath over exalted</i> Him”
5	[B.V.] Cornilescu [B.V.] New Translation	1921 2006	„Dumnezeu L-a <i>înălţat nespus de mult</i> ” / “God has <i>exalted</i> Him <i>unspeakable high</i> ”
6	[B.V.] Radu & Galaction / [B.V.] Bartolomeu Anania / [B.V.] Interconfessional	1939 2001 2010	„Dumnezeu L-a <i>preaînălţat</i> ” / “God <i>has over exalted</i> Him”
7	New Testament [V.] E. Pascal	1975	„L-a şi <i>înălţat</i> Dumnezeu” / “God also <i>exalted</i> Him”
8	[B.V.] Nitzulescu [B.V.] New Literal	1897 2001	„Dumnezeu L-a <i>înălţat foarte sus</i> ” / “God <i>has highly exalted</i> Him”
9	[B.V.] Roman Catholic	2013	„Dumnezeu L-a <i>înălţat</i> ” / “God <i>exalted</i> Him”
10	[B.V.] Updated	2015	„Dumnezeu I-a <i>acordat cea mai mare onoare</i> ” / “God <i>granted</i> Him <i>the highest honor</i> ”

3. Stylistic details

To justify the title of our topic, we have to clarify which is the aim of the usage of superlative in Scriptures and especially *superlative of expression*, obtained by the means of prefix derivation.

3.1. *Via triplex* and knowledge of God

There are, according to Dionysius the Areopagite (*De divinis Nominibus*, VII, 3), three „ways of investigating the supreme mysteries of knowledge” (Chişescu, Todoran and Petreuşă 2004, 266), surnamed as *via triplex*:

- Affirmation way (*via affirmationis*),
- Eminence way (*via eminentiae*) and
- Negation way (*via negationis*) (Yannaras 2005, 61).

The three ways – at Dionysius the Areopagite – imply three phases: removal (*via negationis*), affirmation (*via affirmationis*) and transcendence (*via eminentiae*) (Mondin 2008, 220). Hegel states that *via affirmationis* determines and

involves *via negationis*. Here we meet *docta ignorantia* – “learned ignorance” (Heft 2008, 212). *Via eminentiae* is also called “superlative way” (Chițescu, Todoran and Petreună 2004, 266). In the biblical texts there is a need of superlative. Why “superlative”?

3.1.1. Philo and *via affirmationis*

Given that “God is transcendent at all levels” – as Philo states; it refers to “ontological, gnoseological and semantic” level (Mondin 2008, 210). God “is better than the good, more venerable than the monad, purer than the unit.”, he states (*Praem*, 40: Frick 1999, 65). God is “neither this one, nor that one, but” He is “*totally Other, the Ineffable and Inconceivable*” (Mondin 2008, 211; Ranocchia 2008, 78).

3.1.2. Plotinus and *via negationis*

Plotinus supported what latter has been called “apophatic theology”. We offer a passage from 6th *Ennead* (6.9.7.): “Our thought cannot grasp the One as long as any other image remains active in the soul...To this end, you must set free your soul from all outward things and turn wholly within yourself, with no more leaning to what lies outside, and lay your mind bare of ideal forms, as before of the objects of sense, and forget even yourself, and so come within sight of that One.” (Lander 2014, 39)

Plotinus stated that “the One does not have an essence in the way that anything else has an essence” (Gerson 2010, 13) and that He is beyond substance, being, knowledge, quantity and quality (Mondin 2008, 211). Dodds emphasized the following aspects: “Read the second part of the *Parmenides* as Plotinus read it, with the single eye of faith; no not look for satire on the Megarians or on anybody else; and you will find in the first hypothesis a lucid exposition of the famous «negative theology.»” (Dodds 1928, 133).

3.1.3. Thomas Aquinas and *via eminentiae*

Thomas Aquinas promoted especially *via eminentiae*, that can be reached through *via negationis* (Mondin 2008, 223): “removing fleshly... intellectual aspects... ignorance darkness remains only...” (*In I Sententiarum*, d. 8, q. 1, a. 1, ad. 4); then through *via affirmationis*: „at the end... We know God as unknown... and, although He remains unbeknown, we still know He exists.” (*In Boethii De Trinitate*, I, q. 1, a. 2, ad. 1). Finally, Thomas mentions: “What is said about God has to be understood always by eminence, removing all that belongs to perfection” (*In I Sententiarum*, d. 35, q. 1, a. 1, ad. 5). In this last phrase, logic-linguistic expressions that describe God have to be discovered:

- adjectives at superlative: “wisest”, “the most powerful”, “the best”,
- adverbs: “the most wise way”, “excellently”,
- prefixoids (*over-, super-*): “overgood”, “over-powerful”, “superintelligent” etc. (Mondin 2008, 224)

3.2. Superlatives' creation

3.2.1. Was Pauline proceeding innovative or not?

3.2.1.1. *Superlative obtained through overlapping*

Eugen Munteanu grasps the fact that Hebrew superlative is obtained through the overlapping structure “name + same name in Genitive case”; hence Hebrew collocation *šīr hašīrīm*, “the song of songs” (Munteanu 1995, 53).

The expression *qō-dēš qā-dā-šīm* follows same pattern that in Greek reads as ἅγιον ἁγίων [*agion agion*] (LXX, *Daniel* 9:24), in Latin *sanctum sanctorum*, in Slavic *světaje svētichū*, while in Romanian it appears as *sfântu a sfinților, sfânta sfinților, sfântă sfințelor* (BB, Micu, Filotei, Șaguna: *v. supra*) having the meaning of “the Holy of Holies” (VDC 1924, *Jubilee Bible* 2000) or “the saint of saints” (Douay-Rheims Bible 1610).

Paul adopts such a proceeding using the expression ὑπερβολή(ν) εἰς ὑπερβολήν in *2 Corinthians* 4:7: “surpassing to excessiveness”.

3.2.1.2. *Superlative obtained through composition*

It seems that Paul invented words using *hyper* prefix. Erich Sauer states the following aspects:

“The apostle has a tendency to build up words using «super» (Gk. *hyper*) and he does it so often that this is one of the characteristics of his literary style. Of a total of 29 combinations using the word «super» which occur in the whole New Testament no less than 19 belong to him alone and 4 are shared with other biblical authors. Thus he speaks of:

- a «super»-growth in faith (2 Thess. 1:3),
- a «super»-victory and conquest (Rom. 8:37),
- a «super»-exceeding grace of God (2 Cor. 9:14),
- a «super»-fullness of riches (Eph. 2:7),
- a «super»-exceeding greatness of His power (Eph.1:19),
- a «super»-exceeding glory (2 Cor. 3:10).

Thus he speaks of a knowledge of:

- a «super»-exceeding love of Christ (Eph. 3:19),
- a peace in Christ which «super»-exceeds all understanding (Phil. 4:7),
- a «super»-excelling joy even in tribulation (2 Cor. 7:4),
- the foundation of this is however the «super»-exaltation of Jesus (Phil. 2:9),
- the exceeding «super»-abundant presence of grace (1 Tim.1:14),
- the «super»-abounding of grace just where sin had formerly «abounded» (Rom. 5:20). Etc.” (Sauer 2009, 81-2)

The proceeding was assumed by subsequent Christian authors:

- *hyperagnos* – “more than pure” (Pseudo-Dionisie, *De caelesti hierarchia*, 10.3);

- *hyperaethes* – “more than true” (Maxim Confesor, *Mistagogia* 5; Pseudo-Dionisie, *De ecclesiastica hierarchia*, 1);
- *hypertheos* – “more than divine” (Pseudo-Dionisie, *De divini nominibus*, 2.3) etc.

3.2.2. Superlatives adopted in Romanian versions of the Bible

3.2.2.1. Creation of superlatives in Romanian language

The formation of absolute compositional superlatives can be accomplished either through suffixes (per example: *-isim*), or using archaic prefixes (*prea-*, *răz-*, *stră-*) or neological prefixes. Explanatory terminological dictionaries abound in compound words using prefixes such as *over-* [*arbi-*], *extra-* [*extra-*], *supra-* [*supra-*], *super-* [*super-*], *hyper-* [*hiper-*], *ultra-* [*ultra-*] (Avram 1997, 125). In Romanian language there are more than 1.110 words made up with the following verbal particles: *over-* [*arbi-*] (>120 occ.), *extra-* [*extra-*] (>110 occ.), *supra-* [*supra-*] (>350 occ.) (Avram 1997, 125), *super-* [*super-*] (>190 occ.), *hyper-* [*hiper-*] (>230 occurrences) and *ultra-* [*ultra-*] (>110 occ.).

Eugen Munteanu discussed the transposition / transfer of some terms in Romanian language – namely “the exact or approximate equivalence of semantic content or radix, like the semantic dimension of the prefix from Greek” (Munteanu 1995, 183). He exemplifies “the idea of superiority” (superlative!) with three compounds deriving from *hyper-*: (1) *hypereido* – “to neglect” (*hyper-* + *eido*, “to see”), BB: “to overlook”; (2) *hyperecho*, “to dominate” (*hyper-* + [*echo*, “to have”]), BB: “to be superior”; (3) *hypermachos*, “advocate, protector” (*hyper-* + [*machomai*, “to fight”]), BB: “super fighter” (ro.: “prearăzboinic”) (Munteanu 1995, 186).

3.2.2.2. The superlative from Philippians 2:9 in Romanian translations

We notice that, in order to express the maximum intensity of the term, some translators – especially the traditional ones have used archaic prefixoids as: *pre-* or *prea-*. Therefore, Greek verb ὑπερῶψωσεν has been translated using *preînălță* (1648, 1688), or *preînălțat* (1795, 1838, 1873, 1914). Same term is used by Scriban (1939): *prie-vuznositi* (*Slavonic* terms), “prearădic”, “suprănălț” (Scriban 1939, 1033). The other proceedings have been adopted as follows (2-4) (see table no. 5).

3.2.2.3. Superlatives obtained with “over-” [“prea-”] particle in old biblical translations

Several ecclesiastic old documents from Romanian area contain *superlatives of expression* attached to the biblical text. *Over-* [*prea-*] appears:

- in *Apostol* [*Apostle*] (approx. 1559-60, Transylvania) and *Psaltirea românească* [*Romanian Psaltery*] (1570, Brașov) for obtaining the word *preapodobit*⁵ or *preapodobnic*⁶, that is “over-faith” or “faithful” to superlative (Mareș 1994, 64, 97);

- in *Tetraevanghel* [*Tetra-Gospel*] (1561, Brașov), for the word *preaiubire* (lit. ”over-love”)⁷, namely “adultery” (Mareș 1994, 79);
- in *Evanghelie cu învățătură* [*Gospel with teaching*] (1581, Brașov), for the term *a preaizbândi*⁸ (lit. ”over-take”) namely “to exceed, to abound” (Mareș 1994, 109);
- in *Viața Sfântului Grigore Decapolitul* [*Life of Saint Grigore Decapolitul*] (1632-1654, Bistrița Monastery, Vâlcea county), for compound superlative *preaogodnic*⁹, namely “beloved, very pleasant” (Mareș 1994, 197-198).

We deduct hence that the proceeding to obtain superlatives was enfranchised in Romanian language from ancient times.

Table no. 5

Proceeding	Result
1. <i>Prefixoid + Verb</i>	(Ro.): „pre” (prea) + „a înălța” = „preînălța” (1648, 1688), „preainălțat” (1795, 1838, 1914, 1939, 2001, 2010), „pré-înălțatu” (1873); (En.): “over” + “to exalt” = ”over-exalted”
2. <i>Adverb derived from participle in negative form+preposition+modal adverb</i>	(Ro.) „înălțat nespus de mult” (1921, 2006) (En.): ”exalted unspeakable high”
3. <i>Verb + modal adverb + adverb of place</i>	(Ro.): „a înălțat foarte sus” (1897, 2001) (En.): ”exalted very high”
4. <i>Verb + demonstrative article + modal adverb + adjective + noun</i>	(Ro.): „a acordat cea mai mare onoare” (2015) (En.): ”granted the highest honor”

Conclusions

(I) Was Paul an innovator in matter of New Testament biblical language? Is Sauer right? Did Apostle Paul invent 19 words through composition using *hyper* particle? Partially yes; we will see below.

(II) A surprise: the term from *Philippians* 2:9 appears in LXX!

The term *hyperupsou* appears later used by Eusebius of Caesarea (*Historia ecclesiastica*) and in the work *Vita Varlaam et Ioasaf*. What do we deduct from this? Did perhaps saint Paul invented this word, along with other words, while Romanian translators took over the compound and tried to transpose it identically in Romanian language? It seams so. However, looking into LXX, we find in *Ps* 96:9 the following text: ὑπερψώθης ὑπὲρ πάντας τοὺς θεοὺς (*hyperypsotes hyper pantas tus Theus*): “*exceedingly above all gods*” (See webogr.: [Murphey]). And we understand: before Paul, there were people that invented this term, and the apostle updated it.

(III) Paul’s contribution to biblical lexical corpus: compound terms using *hyper* particle.

Which was indeed Paul's contribution to the enrichment of New Testament language? Out of the 19 compound words, how many appear for the first time from linguistic point of view in the epistles of the apostol? Not 19: only 6! We provide the meaning of the compounds as they are presented in "HELPS™ Word-studies" (See webogr.: [HELPS™ III]).

- (1) *hyperakemos* (adj.: *hypér*, "beyond" + *akmen*, "even now"): "beyond [his] prime" (1 Cor 7:36);
- (2) *hyperekeina* (adv.: *hypér*, "beyond" + the neuter plural of *ekeinos*, "yonder"): "even to the regions beyond" (2 Cor 10:16);
- (3) *hyperekteino* (vb.: *hypér*, "beyond" + *ek*, "out" + *teinó*, "to stretch"): "to stretch beyond measure", "overextending" (2 Cor 10:14) (Grigorie de Nazianz, *Carminum libri duo*, 1.2.9.57);
- (4) *hyperentugchano* (vb.: *hypér*, "for benefit" + *entygchanó*, "come in line with") – properly, "to light upon (happen)"; literally, "bending over", "confer benefit" (Rom 8:26);
- (5) *hyperperisseuo* (vb.: *hypér*, "beyond" + *perisseúō*, "abundantly, exceeding"): "beyond what already exceeds", "ultra (super) abounds" (Rom 5:20; 2 Cor 7:4);
- (6) *hyperpleonazo* (vb.: *hypér*, "beyond" + *pleonázō*, "many, being great in number"): "to make exceedingly plentiful", literally "very numerous, numerically abundant", "beyond counting" – what can be numbered (1 Tim 1:14).

(IV) Which is the optimal version of translating the text from *Philippians* 2:9?

The fidelity to the text imposes the *prefixoidal version*; the fidelity to contemporaries suggests *updated translating versions*.

(V) About the word *hyper* and the *hyper-Word*

In past times, people were ready to die for a word (*hyper!*); nowadays, they die for digits. Then, the martyrs were lifted up on crosses for the *hyperupsoo* – over exalted in glory; now, people hang the crosses to their necks and raise themselves on their tiptoes toward pyramid peak. There and then, people were dying having the immortal Word on their lips, because they were living the Word; at present, we die inside the words and the words die inside us. What is still saving us? The Death of the *hyper-Word* (*Logos*) for those who die inside the words.

Notes

¹ In line with *miraculum* / *mirabile* / *mirum* / *res mira* wondering is linked with miracle (Wachter 1737, 1933).

² Biblical text states that "The whole earth marveled after the beast" (Bible, Interconfesional Version, 2010), or "and all the world wondered after the beast" (VDC,

1924). *Vulgata* translation says: *et admirata est universa terra post bestiam*. The term used in Greek, ἔθαυμάσθη [*ethaumasthe*] (Verb, Aorist Indicative Passive, 3rd Person, Singular) originates in the verb θαυμάζω [*thaumazo*] “to wonder at, to be amazed (marvel)”, “wondering very greatly” (Souter); the noun θαῦμα [*thauima*] “[a] wonder” evokes emotional wonder. Out of this the term “taumaturgo” derives. See webogr.: [HELPS™ I].

³ This is a legitimate clarification, given the fact that Romanian language promoted by Romanian literate and encyclopaedist, Dimitrie Cantemir, was enriched by hybrid terms such as „struțocâmila” / ”ostrich-camel”, creature identified with „câmila nepăsărită și pasărea necămilită” / “the camel unbirded and the bird uncamel” (Cantemir 1973, 77); meanwhile how can these words be translated other than keeping only the meaning: “ostrich”+“camel”= “ostrich-camel” and “camel”+“un-”+“to [!] bird”= “unbirded camel”?

⁴ In Ancient and Medieval literature, the Greek ”ς” [sigma] became ”c” [*lunate sigma*].

⁵ MS., Page 21, Psalm 6:10: “Că nu lăsași sufletul meu întru iad, nici n-ai dat *preapodobitului tău* a vedea putredirea.” / “For You will not abandon me to Sheol; You will not allow *Your Faithful One* to see decay” (HCSB 2004).

⁶ MS., Page 54^v, Psalm 50:5: “Adunați lui pe *preapodobnicii* lui...” / “Gather to me *my faithful ones*...” (ESV 2001).

⁷ MS., Page 84^r, Mark 7:21: “Den lăuntru amu inimiei omului cugete reale ies, *preaiubire* face, iubiri face, ucideri” / “For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, *adulteries*, fornications, murders” (KJV 1611).

⁸ MS., Page 358, Matthew 25:29: “Avutul amu da-i-se-va și i se va *preaizbândi*...” / “For to every one that has shall be given, and he *shall have abundance*” (AKJV 1999).

⁹ MS. no. 2522, Pages 110, 112, 114, 115, 116. “Petreacerea [viața, n.n.] pre scurt a *preaogodnicului* [*preaiubitului*, n.n.] părintelui nostru, Grigorie Decapolitul.” / “Life in a Nutshell of our Beloved Father, Grigorie Decapolitul” Etc. Document adjudged to Ignatie Diaconul (cen. IX).

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