Colloquia Litteraria
UKSW
3/2018

MAGDALENA BOBER-JANKOWSKA

ADAM NARUSZEWICZ'S TRANSLATION OF TACITUS[1]

Adam Naruszewicz, one of the most prominent representatives of the Polish Enlightenment, is remembered as a great poet, historian, journalist, and also as a translator. He is the author of one of the greatest achievements in the field of translation of this period: *Kaja Korneliusza Tacyta dzieła wszystkie Przekładania Adama Stanisława Naruszewicza S.J.* (*Complete Works of Gaius Cornelius Tacitus: Translated by Adam Stanisław Naruszewicz, S.J.*) Volume I (1772) and Volume II (1773), which included *The Annals* (*Annales*), while Volume III (1776) included *The Histories* (*Historiae*). Volume IV (1783) consisted of *The Germania* (*De origine et situ Germanorum*), *Agricola* (*De vita et moribus Iulii Agricolae*), *Dialogues* (*Dialogus de oratoribus*) and the supplements to Volume II.

Naruszewicz based his translation on the four volume edition of the collected works of Tacitus edited by Gabriel Brotier[2], a Jesuit, which was published in Paris in 1771. But it was not the works of Tacitus from the Parisian edition on which the translation was based; it is also the scholarly comments which show the multi-layered dependence on the translation source.

---

[1] This paper is a shortened version of: M. Bober-Jankowska, *Naruszewiczowy przekład Tacyta*, in *Antyk oświeconych. Studia i rozprawy o miejscu starożytności w kulturze polskiej XVIII wieku*, ed. by T. Chachulski, Warszawa 2012, 565-585.

[2] C. Cornelii Taciti, *Opera*, recognovit, emendavit, supplementis explevit, notis, dissertationibus, tabulis geographicic illustravit Gabriel Brotier, vol. I-IV, Parisiis: ex Typographia Ludovici Francisci Delatour, 1771.

Copyright laws in the sense we understand them today were not known in the period of the Enlightenment. Using other people's intellectual property was not anything pejorative for eighteenth-century readers. However, an attempt at a description of this situation seems to be necessary for contemporary readers and researchers. A situation in which a bishop turns out to be the translator, but not the author of an introduction or the majority of footnotes, makes it necessary to present a completely new aspect of his work as a commentator in relation to his translation of Tacitus.[3] What is more, this translation also included, apart from the introduction and minor footnotes, other parts of the commentary, and particularly Naruszewicz's famous "footnotes the size of a lecture,"[4], which have often been treated by contemporary researchers as a testimony to his wide ranging knowledge, erudition and diligence. Allusions to the Polish cause have also been found there. [5] If we consider the fact

[3] Jerzy Starnawski most extensively researched Naruszewicz's comments to his translation of Tacitus; he treated them as a separate text. Cf., *Z badań nad komentarzem Adama Naruszewicza do Tacyta „Dzieł wszystkich", 1772-1783: Przypisy o rozmiarach wykładu*, „Biuletyn Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej" 1999, 49, 171-178; *Z badań nad Naruszewiczowym komentarzem do Tacyta „Dzieł wszystkich"*, „Meander" 1999, no. 4, 369-382; *Odwołania do Horacego w Naruszewiczowym komentarzu Tacyta „Dzieł wszystkich"*, „Pallas Silesia" 1999, no. 1 / 2, . 82-86; *Swetoniusz na warsztacie Naruszewicza – komentatora Tacyta „Dzieł wszystkich"*, „Prace Komisji Filologii Klasycznej PAU" 2001, no. 29, s51-52; *Z badań nad Naruszewiczowym komentarzem do Tacyta „Dzieł wszystkich". Odwołanie do historyków rzymskich*, „Terminus" 2001, no. 1 / 2, 191-201; *Cyceron na warsztacie Adama Naruszewicza – tłumacza i komentatora Tacyta*, „Studia Classica et Neolatina" 2002, vol. 5, 104-111; Pliniusz *Starszy na warsztacie Adama Naruszewicza*, „Rocznik Biblioteki Naukowej PAU i PAN w Krakowie" 2002, vol. 47, 141-165; *Juwenalis na warsztacie ….*, „Symbolae Philologorum Posnaniensium" 2002, vol. 14, 167-173*; Pliniusz Młodszy na warsztacie Naruszewicza – tłumacza i komentatora Tacyta (fragment większej całości)*, „Meander 2003, no. 5-6, 479-484.

[4] The phrase "przypisy o rozmiarach wykładu" ("footnotes the size of a lecture) was used by Jerzy Starnawski.

[5] Cf., J. Platt, *Adam Naruszewicz*, [w:] *Pisarze polskiego oświecenia*, ed. by T. Kostkiewiczowa, Z. Goliński, vol. I, Warszawa 1992, . 321, and also H. Markiewicz, *Nieco o przypisach. Gawęda historycznoliteracka*, [in] *Pogranicza literatury: księga*

that these commentaries are only a translation, such an interpretation requires explanation.

Taking into account such a character of Naruszewicz's works, it is his generally admired footnotes which first require explanation. Some of them—and they are in the majority—were given titles which begin, according to the ancient tradition, with the word "o" ("of"): "O konsulach surogatach" ("Of Surrogate Consuls"), "O chrześcijanach za Nerona umęczonych" ("Of Christian martyrs in the times of Nero"), and so on. Other extensive footnotes, although they have no titles, because of their extent can be absolutely certainly added to the commentaries of "the character of a lecture".

The first volume of *Complete Works of Gaius Cornelius Tacitus*, that is *The Annales,* includes only a few extended footnotes. The first of them, entitled "O aktach rzymskich" [6] ("Of Roman Acts"), does not have an equivalent included in Brotier's edition. It is the same with a commentary entitled "O lichwie Rzymian" [7] ("Of Roman Usury") and with two big untitled commentaries. [8] It might, therefore, be expected that they were written by Naruszewicz if it was not for the content of Brotier's commentaries "Notae et emendationes ad sex priores libros Annalium C. Cornelii Taciti,"[9] which form an integral part of Volume I of this edition. "Notae et emendationes" written for each separate book, supplement the footnotes and offer an opportunity to get acquainted with a wide range of issues tackled by Tacitus. Naruszewicz's edition was published without such a supplement, but he wanted to give a lot of information to readers of his translation, and therefore he translated—often shortening—the supplements written by Brotier and included them in his footnotes. The sources of most of these "Notes and Emendations" can be easily found in the great

ofiarowana Profesorowi Januszowi Maciejewskiemu na Jego siedemdziesięciolecie, ed. by G. Borkowska, J. Wójcicki, Warszawa 2001, 17-18.

[6] *Kaja Korneliusza Tacyta dzieła wszystkie,* vol. I, . 354-355.

[7] Ibidem, 412-413.

[8] Ibidem, 239-240 and 273.

[9] *C. Cornelii Taciti Opera*, vol. I. 340-457.

majority of the commentaries, for example "De Romanorum Actis"[10]— "Of Roman Acts", De fenore et usura apud Romanos"[11]— "Of Roman Usury", "De voluntaria morte"[12]— "Of Roman Suicide". Two untitled endnotes of Naruszewicz also come from Brotier's supplements: "De luxu Romanorum"[13], and "De militaribus Romanorum viribus".[14]

Volume II of *The Annales* in Naruszewicz's translation includes the largest numbers of commentaries taken in their entirety from Brotier's edition. The original text in the Parisian edition is located in "Notae et emendationes ad sex posteriores libros *Annalium* C. Cornelii Taciti"[15]. The list begins with a text entitled "O literach Klaudiusza"[16] ("Of Claudius's Letters"). Naruszewicz followed it with the subsequent footnotes: "O rzymskich indygenatach, osadach, miastach i narodach wolnych"[17], "O popisach Rzymian *census, lustrum*"[18] ("Of Roman POPISy *census, lustrum*"), "O zamurzu, Pomerium, wielkości Rzymu, liczbie obywatelów"[19] ("Of ZAMURze, Pomerium, Greatness of Rome, the Number of Citizens"), "O rodzajach wygnania u Rzymian".[20] ("Of Types of Roman Exile"), "O skarbie ludu rzymskiego"[21] ("Of the Roman People's Treasury"),

[10] Ibidem, 441-442.
[11] Ibidem, 448-449.
[12] Ibidem, 453-454.
[13] Ibidem, 402-405.
[14] Ibidem, 424-425.
[15] Ibidem, vol. II, Parisiis 1771, 335-526.
[16] *Kaja Korneliusza Tacyta dzieła wszystkie…,* vol. II, 25 –. G. Brotier, „De Literis a Claudio repertis", in *C. Cornelii Taciti Opera*, vol. II, 342-343.
[17] Ibidem, 37-38 – G. Brotier, „De jure Latii, Civitate Romana, jure Quiritium, jure Italico, Coloniis, Municipiis, populis liberis, faederatis, immunibus, stipendiariis", [w:] ibidem, s. 345-348.
[18] Ibidem, 44-46 – G. Brotier, „De Censu Lustroque Romanorum", in ibidem, 353-355.
[19] Ibidem, 83-86 – G. Brotier, „De Urbis Romae pomerio et magnitudine incolarumque numero", in ibidem, 375-376.
[20] Ibidem, 160-162 – G. Brotier, „De exsilio, relegatione et deportatione", in ibidem, 415-416.
[21] Ibidem, 168-173 – G. Brotier, „De aerario populi Romani", in ibidem, 419-420.

"Stan skarbu za Rzeczypospolitej"[22] ("The State of the Treasury during the Republic"), "Stan skarbu za cesarzów"[23], ("The State of the Treasury during the Imperial Period"), "O żółwiu wojennym testudo"[24], ("Of Tortoise Formation testudo"), „O podatkach i cłach rzymskich"[25] ("Of Roman Taxes and Tariffs"), „O złotym Nerona domie"[26], ("Of Nero's Golden House") „O chrześcijanach za Nerona umęczonych"[27] ("Of Christian Martyrs in the Times of Nero").

The fact that Naruszewicz's activities as a commentator were limited mostly to translations is supported first of all by Tacitus's *The Histories* (*Historiae*). There are twenty- one extensive footnotes in it. Not fewer than nineteen were translated by bishop Naruszewicz using Brotier's "Notae et emendationes ad quinque libros Historiarum C. Cornelii Taciti"[28] The two remaining ones should be ascribed to Naruszewicz.

Apart from Gabriel Brotier's commentaries, which were translated without changes or with minor changes, and which were included in the Polish edition according to the copyrights, there exists a group of utterances which does not have their equivalents in "Notae et emendationes". They are given titles and usually deal with a given theme in an exhaustive manner. An example of such a commentary, which is also a show of erudition, is "O roku śmierci Chrystusa Pana"[29] ("Of the Year of Jesus Christ's Death"), in which a hypothesis that Jesus died in the nineteenth year of Tiberius's reign is supported by "pagan" authors, Fathers of the Church and historians.

---

[22] Ibidem, 170-171 – G. Brotier, „Aerii opes, stante republica", in ibidem, 420-421.

[23] Ibidem, 83-86 – G. Brotier, „Aerii opes, imperantibus Principibus", in ibidem, 421-422.

[24] Ibidem, 185-186 – G. Brotier, „De Testudine Romana", ibidem, 427-428.

[25] Ibidem, 199-202 – G. Brotier, „De tributis ac vectigalibus imperii Romani", in ibidem, 433-434.

[26] Ibidem, 160-162 – G. Brotier, „De Neronis Aurea domo", in ibidem, 490-492.

[27] Ibidem, 346-349 – G. Brotier, „De Christianis haud perinde in crimine incendii, quam odio humani generis covictis", in ibidem, 494-498.

[28] *C. Cornelii Taciti Opera*, vol. III, Paris 1771, 357-592.

[29] *Kaja Korneliusza Tacyta dzieła wszystkie,* vol. I, 358-359.

Brotier did not write footnotes of such length. If we compare only the graphic layouts of Naruszewicz's and Brotier's footnotes, we might get the impression that they have very little in common. However, closer research forces us to change this superficial opinion. The commentary entitled "Of the Year of Jesus Christ's Death" is included in Book V, the one written by Brotier, who undertook the challenge of reconstructing fragments deemed lost. According to Jerzy Starnawski, the information on Christ's death was, "obviously introduced from a Christian perspective," [30] which, according to Starnawski, is supported by Naruszewicz's opening words of his commentary: "Tacitus, a pagan and an enemy of Christians, as will be written down in K. 15. 44, may have skipped such an important event in the world, but a Christian writer should not skip it." [31] But, in fact, this is not bishop's Naruszewicz opinion, but a remark repeated after Brotier: "Mortem Jesu Christi paucis memoratam Annal. XV, 44 forte in hac Annalium parte omiserat Tacitus. At Christianum scriptorem puderet id filere, quo nihil majus peperere saecula et in quo salus nostra, spes amor et gloria."[32] Naruszewicz arrived at such a long commentary by compiling five footnotes included in the source text.

Naruszewicz's use of Brotier's footnotes was an extremely extensive project. Information on geography, history, politics, military history, culture or customs came mostly from the author of the Parisian edition. The system of reference used by the French Jesuit should also be included here, and *belles letters* quoted in the footnotes. In his translation Naruszewicz used Brotier's information in all these cases. The extent of Naruszewicz's use of Brotier's knowledge could be illustrated with numbers. For example, in Book XI of Volume II Naruszewicz included one hundred and thirty-three endnotes; only

[30] J. Starnawski, *Z badań nad komentarzem Adama Naruszewicza do Tacyta „Dzieł wszystkich", 1772-1783: Przypisy o rozmiarach wykładu*, „Biuletyn Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej" 1999, 49, 184.

[31] *Kaja Korneliusza Tacyta Dzieła wszystkie,* vol. I, 358.

[32] G. Brotier, „Supplementum libri quinti Annalium…", in *C. Cornelii Taciti Opera,* vol. I, 316.

twenty were written by him. The greatest number of them—ninety-five—are endnotes taken from Brotier in complete forms, while the remaining ones were shortened. All the parts of Naruszewicz's translation were created in this manner, and this method was extended to other elements of the edition. Undoubtedly, "Szczególne informacje o Tyberiuszu" ("Special Information on Tiberius") should be included here,[33] as well as "Szczególne informacje o Klaudiuszu i Neronie" [34] ("Special Information on Claudius and Nero"). They are a type of "curiosities" which end Volume I and Volume II of *The Annales.* Both texts are Naruszewicz's translations. The source for "Special Information on Tiberius" can be found at the end of the Parisian edition, and Brotier entitled it "Anectoda de Tiberio".[35] The original text of "Special Information on Claudius and Nero" was placed in Volume II of *Opera.* Naruszewicz, while translating "Anecdota de Caio, Claudio et Nerone principibu"s[36], skipped information on Gaius Caligula and gave information only on Claudius and Nero.

In his translation Naruszewicz used all the elements of Brotier's edition: the introduction, the genealogical trees, endnotes, information gathered in "Notae et emendations" and in "Anecdota", and also the reconstructions of the missing books, although it should be admitted that readers were informed about this particular fact.

Naruszewicz's practice of using Brotier's knowledge was probably not perceived negatively by eighteenth century readers, who had little knowledge of copyright. Bishop Naruszewicz was treated as the author of the commentaries to *Complete Works of Gaius Cornelius Tacitus,* and not as its translator. What is more, he was especially admired for this particular part of his work. [37]

---

[33] *Kaja Korneliusza Tacyta dzieła wszystkie,* vol. 1, XXXV-XXXIX.

[34] Ibidem, s. XXXIII-XLIII.

[35] G. Brotier, „Anecdota de Tibero", in *C. Cornelii Taciti Opera*, vol. I, 457-460.

[36] Ibidem, 527-536.

[37] A. K. Czartoryski, *Myśli o pismach polskich z uwagami nad sposobem pisania w rozmaitych materyjach,* Kraków 1860, s 42.

The great majority of the footnotes and commentaries to *Complete Works of Gaius Cornelius Tacitus* are the ones which Naruszewicz translated from the Parisian edition. However, it would not be to true to claim that his work on the commentaries was exclusively limited to translation. There are some footnotes which were undoubtedly written by Naruszewicz. Most of them are references to Polish scientific and scholarly books and to *belles letters*. They share one feature: they are not independent constructs of "the character of a lecture". Naruszewicz treated them as pretexts to make allusion to Polish issues, adding to them information about Polish science and culture.

Naurszewicz used the knowledge of the French Jesuit, but it definitely should be stated that his attitude to Brotier's works was not uncritical. This can be supported by just one example, albeit an important one, in which bishop Naruszewicz wrote: "This was a different Pomponius than the poet, according to Brotier, but it is better to trust Tacitus." [38] It shows that Naruszewicz verified Brotier's knowledge.

The considerations presented here on the theme of Adam Naruszewicz's translations of the works of Tacitus are just preliminary, and they should not be treated as a holistic approach to the theme, which demands wider and deeper analyses. This paper is only an introduction to further research, not only on Naruszewicz's translations, but also on the issues of translations in the eighteenth century and the mechanisms influencing the final shape of translated works.

---

[38] *Kaja Korneliusza Tacyta dzieła wszystkie,* vol. II, 90.