Ispirazioni classiche ed aspirazioni culturali

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Polish and English Discourses on the History of Medieval Italy: A Polysystem Study

ABSTRACT

The article deals with the problem of polysystem differences between Polish and English historical text dealing with Middle Ages. In the Polish literary tradition, the Renaissance poetics of translation favored free adaptations, totally independent of the originals. The British tradition of translation, codified at the end of the eighteenth century, did not allow paraphrase. On the contrary, translation should give a full transcript of the idea of the original text, while the style and manner of rendering should have the same character as in the original. As for the rhetoric of science, in the Polish language, it was first shaped by literary models of highly declensional Latin and then French models of purple prose. In the English language, scientific diction was based on inherent Germanic and Norman syntax-oriented models and openness to foreign patterns which was valued as a resistance against smooth reading and straightforward interpretations. The article analyses Henryk Samsonowicz's introduction to *Rozkwit średniowiecznej Europy* [The Heyday of Medieval Europe] (2001) as well as the Polish translation of Chris Wickham's *Medieval Rome. Stability and Crisis of the City, 900–1150* (2015). The conclusion is that Polish and English scientific texts – not only those treating about Italy in the Middle Ages – belong to different genres. While Polish authors try to create linguistically transparent, smooth, and stylized essays belonging to *belles-lettres*, their English colleagues seem to be down-to-earth and precise, consciously preserving traces of cultural (Italian/ Roman) foreignness.

KEYWORDS: polysystem theory, Polish tradition of translation, British tradition of translation, historical discourse, Middle Ages

RIASSUNTO

I discorsi polacchi ed inglesi sulla storia dell'Italia medioevale: uno studio di polisistema

L'articolo affronta il problema delle differenze di polisistema tra testi storici polacchi e inglesi che trattano del Medioevo. Nella tradizione letteraria polacca, le poetiche rinascimentali della traduzione prediligevano il libero adattamento, del tutto indipendente dall'originale. La tradizione britannica della traduzione, codificata alla fine del XVIII secolo non permetteva la parafrasi. Al contrario, la

traduzione dovrebbe trasmettere totalmente l'idea del testo originale, mentre lo stile e il modo di renderle dovrebbero avere le stesse caratteristiche dell'originale. Per quanto riguarda la retorica della scienza, nella lingua polacca, essa è stata dapprima formata da modelli letterari latini altamente declinanti e in seguito da modelli francesi di prosa ornata. Nella lingua inglese, la dizione scientifica era basata su modelli orientati alla sintassi germanica e normanna e l'apertura verso modelli stranieri era valutata come una resistenza ad una lettura scorrevole e ad interpretazioni chiare. L'articolo analizza l'introduzione di Henryk Samsonowicz a *Rozkwit średniowiecz-nej Europy* [Lo splendore dell'Europa Medioevale] (2001), così come la traduzione polacca di *Medieval Rome. Stability and Crisis of the City* di Chris Wickham (2015). Si conclude che i testi scientifici polacchi ed inglesi – non solo quelli che trattano dell'Italia nel Medioevo – apparten-gono a generi diversi. Mentre gli autori polacchi cercano di creare saggi lingui-sicamente trasparenti, scorrevoli e stilizzati appartenenti alle *belles-lettres*, i loro colleghi inglesi sembrano essere più concreti e precisi, conservando consapevol-mente le tracce dell'alterità culturale (italiana/romana).

PAROLE CHIAVE: teoria del polisistema, tradizione polacca della traduzione, tradizione Britannica della traduzione, discorso storico, Medioevo

Medieval Italy in Polish and English texts

In order to reach their audiences, academic texts need to be translated: we would not be able to analyze the diverse historical and social aspects of the medieval European culture without using sources in Latin, Italian, and English. The majority of sources in the field were originally written in Latin, but the dominating language in the research on the history on the Apennine Peninsula is nowadays Italian. Yet, a bulk of texts devoted to the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Italy was produced by English--speaking authors, including Christopher Kleinhenz, who compiled *Medie-val Italy: An Encyclopedia* (2004), or Chris Wickham, who wrote *Medieval Rome. Stability and Crisis of a City, 900–1150* (2015), to list just two. On top of that, Italian historiography has developed independently in all major European languages, and Polish scholars have made a significant contribu-tion to the discipline, including Henryk Samsonowicz, who edited *Rozkwit średniowiecznej Europy* [The Heyday of Medieval Europe] (2001).

Scientific discourse, however, is not a set of abstract code signifiers, but a concrete manifestation of meanings conveyed in a language which is always culturally specific. The Polish and English languages have differ-ent literary traditions and translation histories. To use a term coined by Itamar Ever-Zohar (2000), they form diverse *polysystems*, which are nebula

of interrelated texts. Not only does the polysystem consist of original liter-ature, but it also includes translations, and the source texts are selected by target literatures on principles that are never uncorrelatable with the home co-systems. Thus, the corpus of Polish texts on the history of medieval Italy and the corpus of English texts on the same topic construct meanings and find conclusions in their own peculiar ways, using sentence structure, register, and the literary repertoire characteristic of their traditions. This paper aims at elucidating those alternative modes of communication, find-ing their grounds in the development of the Polish and English polysys-tems which both begin with translations from Greek and Latin as a plat-form of disseminating linguistic patterns and literary genres.

The polysystem of the Polish language

In relatively small or local languages, such as Polish, scientific discourse was shaped by translation to a large extent: syntax, specialized vocabulary, and modes of presentation were borrowed from source languages in the process of rendering foreign texts.

Polish is a West Slavonic language, traceable to an ancient language known as Proto-Slavic or Common-Slavic, used from the fifteenth century BC until the fifth century AD (Sussex and Cubberley, 2006, p. 19). The dia-lects that gave rise to modern Polish cannot be accurately described, as no written records exist prior to the twelfth century. The earliest work composed in Polish was the religious hymn known as *Bogurodzica* [The-one-that-gave-birth-to-God], composed in the eleventh century. The opening line of the hymn is itself a translation of the Old Slavonic *Bogorodica*, which in turn is a translation of the Greek *Theotokos*, meaning "Godbearing." As a result, *Bogurodzica* might be considered the first recorded translation into Polish (Ostrowska, 1992, p. 21). However, the first proper translation into Polish was *Psałterz floriański* [St. Florian's Psalter], a fourteenth-century collection of psalms translated from Latin, and a number of extracts from the Bible. In the fifteenth century, the most popular genre was the religious hymn, which was translated most often from Latin, but some free translations were also based on Czech and German originals (Tabakowska, 2009, p. 502).

The development of the Polish Humanist tradition began in the late fifteenth century, but its real source was the court of King Zygmunt I (1467–1548) and his Italian Queen, Bona Sforza (1494–1557). The court attracted artists, whose interest in the ancient world and contemporary Italy foreshadowed the Renaissance. The majority of young Poles from aristocracy studied in Padua and Bologna, bringing back works by Italian writers, which introduced a new intellectual climate.

In the Renaissance, the development of printing techniques fueled the development of literary genres: in 1535, Marcin Bielski (c. 1495–1575) published *Żywoty filozofów* [The Lives of Philosophers]. It was a translation of a Czech version of Walter Burleus's *De vita et moribus philosophorum et poetarum*, an encyclopedia about the ancient world. The earliest example of the chivalric romance was *Żywot Aesopa Fryga* [The Life of Aesop of Frigia], published in 1522 by Biernat of Lublin (c.1465–c.1529) – an adaptation of a Latin translation of a Greek story set in the Polish context (Tabakowska, 2009, p. 504). The idea of copyright was unknown to Renaissance authors, who treated foreign works as common property. This approach was advocated by the first Polish theorist of translation, Łukasz Górnicki (1527–1603), who rendered Baldassarre Castiglione's *Il Cortegiano*. In his version, entitled *Dworzanin polski* [The Polish Courtier, 1566], Górnicki replaced the court of an Italian prince, which is the setting of the original text, with the villa of a Polish bishop Maciejowski in Prądnik near Kraków. In his introduction to the book, Górnicki tried to justify his method:

> Zgoła niechaj to każdy wie, iżem ja, Polakom pisząc, Polakom folgować chciał, przeto opuściłem siła rzeczy, które abo nie należały Polszcze, abo rzecz zatrudnić a poczciwe uszy obrazić mogły (Górnicki, as cited in Gruchała, 1992, p. 111). [It should be familiar to all that I, writing to Polish people, wanted to please Polish people, so I omitted a lot of things that had nothing to do with Poland, or might be too difficult, or offensive to Polish people].

This explanation earned Górnicki the name of the founding father of what later became the method of polonized adaptation. His predilection for the use of free paraphrase was the main principle for Polish translators in the following centuries (Ziomek, 1990, pp. 100–104). Indeed, this method was broadly used in the High Polish Renaissance. Mikołaj Rej (1505–1569) drew heavily on foreign sources, including Paligenius, Thomas Naogeorgus, and Cornelius Crocus. The same principle was adopted in the work of the greatest poet of the Polish Renaissance, Jan Kochanowski (1530–1584). Educated at the University of Padua, and fluent in Latin and Greek, Kochanowski borrowed freely from numerous foreign sources in major European languages, especially in his 1586 collection of poems *Pieśni* [Songs], which abounded with adaptations of Horace. In the strict sense, all Renaissance literature was adaptation, since paraphrase was a natural means of circulating literary works (Ziomek, 1990, p. 133).

The main principles established during the Renaissance underlay the poetics of translation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: free adaptations existed as texts in their own right, totally independent of the originals. The polonization of the original work was seen as an advantage and drastic

changes to the genre of the original (as in translating of poetry into prose) were common. The most talented Polish translator of the time, Franciszek Ksawery Dmochowski (1762–1808), rendered some poems by the Grave-yard poet Edward Young from their French versions. Moreover, even the first Polish staging of *Hamlet* was based on a translation from German. James Macpherson's works of Ossian were first translated from French by the great-est Polish poet of the time, Ignacy Krasicki (1735–1801). The earliest trans-lations from English were published at the end of the eighteenth century by Jan Ursyn Niemcewicz (1757–1841), an important poet who spent several years in the United States and translated English romantic sages, including Thomas Gray and George Gordon Byron (Tabakowska, 2009, p. 506).

One of the best Polish translators of the nineteenth century was Cyprian Kamil Norwid (1821–1883), known primarily as an eminent poet: he trans-lated Horace, Homer, Dante, and Shakespeare. However, Shakespeare reached Polish audiences mainly via French adaptations or German transla-tions. Also, some novels by Walter Scott were retranslated from German.

After the failure of the January Uprising against the Russian Empire in 1863, translators expanded the literary canon available to the Polish reader, and their choices reflected the spirit of the time: Zola, Balzac, Diderot, Gide, Stendhal, Voltaire (in the novel); Byron, Dante, Verlaine, Swin-burne and Rimbaud (in poetry); Maeterlinck and Ibsen (drama); Berg-son and Kierkegaard (in philosophy); Georges Brandes (in criticism). The first translations of American poetry, including Walt Whitman and Edgar Allan Poe, were produced by Zenon Przesmycki (1861–1944) (Taba-kowska, 2009, p. 506).

The most prominent translator of the early twentieth century was Tadeusz "Boy" Żeleński (1874–1941), who was a physician by profes-sion and a great admirer of French culture. He translated Molière, Pascal, Rabelais, Rousseau, Villon, Voltaire, and Proust. However, in the period between World War I and World War II, American literature was the most widely translated of all literatures in Poland. Separate editions of the clas-sics – including Franklin, Irving, Cooper, Hawthorne, Emerson, Long-fellow, Poe, Whitman, Twain, and Sinclair – ran into several hundred volumes. James Fenimore Cooper alone had nearly a hundred titles and editions of his works in Polish. Additionally, Cooper was one of the first of American authors published in Poland after World War II, as several of his titles appeared already in 1946 and 1947. Furthermore, the 1920s and 30s were a period when great contemporary American novelists were translated into Polish, including Theodore Dreiser (*An American Tragedy* was published in 1929) and John Dos Passos (*Manhattan Transfer* appeared in 1931 with a special introduction for the Polish edition) (Tołczyńska-Dietrich, 1975, pp. 117–129).

At the turn of the twentieth century, the English language remained the main source for translations into Polish in all genres: in 2022, 30,691 books were published in Poland, 20 percent of them were translations, including 55 percent of them from English (*Ruch wydawniczy w liczbach*, 2021, p. 2). The importance of translations from English becomes clear if we take into account the total number of translated books published in Poland in the period between 1990 and 2020: translations from English constituted from 40 to 60 percent of all titles, depending on the genre (*Ruch wydawniczy w liczbach*, 2021, p. 57). This is particularly interesting when we compare the Polish book market with the American one: in the last two decades of the twentieth century, in the United States, the ratio of total book output versus translations was 40 to 1, which means that translations did not constitute more than 3 percent of book production (Venuti, 2001, p. 14).

In spite of the present influence of the English-language literary culture, the Polish written language remains rather conservative: due to the influence of translation practice in its earliest history, it is still syntactically close to Latin, and the dominant concept of literature inherent in Polish literary tradition is oriented towards religious and patriotic values. As far as the level of poetics is concerned, in Polish writing, which is still post-romantic in spirit, inventiveness and originality belong exclusively to academically acclaimed high art, especially poetry. Therefore, scientific discourse, no matter how creative and excellent in its own genre, is often judged on the basis of its literary values, which include solemn and archaized diction, the use of tropes, and general formal brilliance (Marcinkiewicz, 2013, pp. 26–37). This is exactly why Polish scholars would like to sound like poets or writers: the formal finesse is seen as a guarantee of scientific credibility.

The polysystem of the English language

Large or global languages, such as English, evolved more independently from their specific translation practice, and their scientific discourse was shaped by inventiveness of native speakers within the local vocabulary and structural resources. In the British translation tradition, in the Middle Ages, the Catholic Church played a central role in the generation and authorization of medieval translation, especially into and from Latin. The clergy often viewed Latin as the norm and the vernacular language as corrupt and barbaric. Admittedly, the vernacular language and Latin were mutually supportive in the areas of scientific writing and medicine (Ellis, Oakley-Brown, 2009, p. 344). Likewise, translation into Latin was a necessary condition of a work's wider popularity. However, from the Middle Ages to the nineteenth century, it was the translation

into the vernacular that helped to create and consolidate a national literary consciousness.

Importantly, for much of the Middle English period (c. 1100–1500), two vernaculars were used in Britain, Anglo-Norman and English, and translations could be undertaken into either. Anglo-Norman was more prestigious until the thirteenth century and was still used at court in the fifteenth century (Ellis, Oakley-Brown, 2009, p. 347). The choice of vernacular for a translation inevitably reflected a complex social and political situation.

Translations were often made by way of an intermediate version in another language, and the original was seen as the first step in a process of textual transmission. Thus, hence John Stuart Mill viewed Goethe and his English translators Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Thomas Carlyle as constituting a single cultural phenomenon (Ellis, Oakley-Brown, 2009, p. 345). The choice of medium for a translation depended on the perceived hierarchy of literary models in the target language rather than on any requirement of fidelity. Prose seems to have been favored in the late Middle Ages, but in the sixteenth century poeticizing translations gained more respect, although scholars still used the learned Latin prose.

The British tradition of translation was codified with at the end of the eighteenth century with Lord Alexander Fraser Tytler's *Essay on the Principles of Translation* (1791). Tytler's theories reacted against concept of paraphrase and the loose translations that resulted from it. According to Tytler, translation should give a full transcript of the idea of the original text, the style and manner of rendering should have the same character as in the original, and translation should have all the ease of the original. The *Essay* still uses eighteenth-century terminology, such as "genius" and "wit," and its standards for assessing success in translation are exclusively aesthetic. Nevertheless, Tytler's claim that the original text provides the ultimate point of reference seems to have been very progressive (Ellis, Oakley-Brown, 2009, p. 352).

This line of thought was developed a century later by Matthew Arnold and John Henry Newman (the brother of the famous Cardinal Newman) – late descendants of Romanticism. Both of them were convinced that the translator's duty was to be faithful to the original (Newman), and that he should develop a union with the original (Arnold). Newman was the first advocate of the foreignizing method of translation which retained all traces of the source-text specificity and culture. In the twentieth century, Newman's ideas were reconsidered by American translation scholar Lawrence Venuti in his seminal study *The Translator's Invisibility* (1995). Venuti insisted that the translator should be visible, or more accurately, that the original should be visible through the translation (Venuti, 2000, p. 121). Today, in the British and American traditions of translation, there is a strong opposition against creating texts that pretend to be originals: the

translator – but also the scholar – is not expected to produce a work, whose principal quality is the aesthetic value.

Practical implications of the differences between the Polish and English polysystems: A contrastive analysis

In the Polish language, the rhetoric of science was first shaped by literary models of highly declensional Latin and then French models of purple prose. After 1989,[1] we have observed more and more influence of English, especially in vocabulary and phraseology. Yet, Polish scientific papers, especially in humanities, very often sound like literary texts: they use figures of speech, and they strongly rely on what Aristotle defines as "pathos," which is an imaginative engagement of the speaker with his audience (Aristotle, 2007, p. 39). The most appealing aspect of the text is often its stylistic merit, and the correctness of argumentation results from flexibility of rhetorical persuasion.

In the English language, scientific diction was based on inherent Germanic and Norman syntax-oriented models and openness to foreign patterns which was valued as a resistance against smooth reading and straightforward interpretations. English scholarly texts seem to have abandoned the aestheticizing literary flourish, and they rely on the Aristotelian "logos," which is the logical argumentation of the text and its arrangement, whose most import goal is semantic clarity (Aristotle, 2007, p. 111). Thus, conference papers in English rarely contain metaphors or stylistic devices, such as archaization, preferring factual presentation rather than thinking via analogies.

The following analysis is based on two monolingual sources, representative for the Polish and English discourses on the history of medieval Italy. I have chosen to examine Henryk Samsonowicz's introduction to *Rozkwit średniowiecznej Europy* [The Heyday of Medieval Europe] (2001), his selection of academic papers on medieval society by eminent Polish historians. Professor Henryk Samsonowicz (1930–2021) was the leading Polish medievalist and an author of twenty books and eight-hundred papers on history of Poland and Europe in the Middle Ages. The second author is Christopher Kleinhenz (1941–), Professor Emeritus of Italian at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and author of fourteen books and nearly a hundred articles in the field of Italian history, including *Medieval Italy: An Encyclopedia* (2004). Finally, Chris Wickham (1950–) is Professor Emeritus of Oxford University, an author of thirteen books and a hundred of papers on

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1   The date of elections on June 4, 1989, is considered to be the symbolic end of communism in Poland.

the Middle Ages, including *Medieval Rome. Stability and Crisis of the City, 900–1150* (2015). This last study is his major achievement, and it was translated into several languages, including Polish – *Rzym średniowieczny. Stabilizacja i kryzys miasta w latach 900–1150*, rendered by Arkadiusz Bugaj and published by Wydawnictwo Marek Derewiecki in 2016.

Already the title of Samsonowicz's collection is problematic: the noun "rozkwit" in contemporary Polish means primarily "flowering," "bloom" or "blossom." Of course, the noun can be used metaphorically, yet it sounds archaized and belongs to the literary register. The opening paragraph of Samsonowicz's text contains more similar examples of soaring style:

> Czasy, o których mówią szkice zamieszczone w tej książce, obejmują trzy stulecia. Rozpoczynają się wejściem krajów Europy do drugiego tysiąclecia po Chrystusie, którego początek stanowił w oczach ludzi ówczesnych wstęp do nowej epoki; dla jednych epoki końca świata i Sądu Ostatecznego, dla drugich – tworzenia lepszego społeczeństwa obejmującego coraz liczniejsze ludy chrześcijańskie. Kończą się początkiem wieku XIV, kiedy to, jak się mogło wydawać, zaczynały ulegać rozkładowi wszystkie formy regulujące życie społeczeństw i jednostek. Czym były te stulecia dla rozwoju kultury europejskiej? Trudno przecenić ich znaczenie w dziejach Europy. Ukształtował się wówczas porządek społeczny, który nazywamy lennym czy niekiedy feudalnym, porządek oparty na władzy wielkich posiadaczy ziemskich, niejednokrotnie wyrosłych z grona dawnych urzędników cesarstwa. Do tej epoki może odnosić się błyskotliwe spostrzeżenie, że „starożytność wymyśliła centaura, średniowiecze uczyniło go panem Europy". Rzeczywiście, panem zachodnich ziem kontynentu stał się rycerz, którego jednym z głównych atrybutów był koń, symbol bogactwa, siły, sposobu prowadzenia walki. Wojownicy bowiem, *bellatores*. jak nazywani byli przez współczesnych sobie obserwatorów stosunków społecznych, tworzyli elity prestiżu i elity władzy. Nie tylko w sensie faktycznym, lecz także teoretycznie, jako grupa lepszych od zwykłych zjadaczy chleba ludzi przeznaczonych do władzy i do walki. Bardzo szybko pojawiły się też próby uzyskania możliwie wysokiej pozycji w hierarchii społecznej, dokonywane przez drugą grupę coraz bardziej wyróżniającą się – duchownych. *Oratores* – modlący się, z częściowym powodzeniem zaczęli ujmować w karby walczących, nie tylko przez wprowadzanie „rozejmu Bożego", wdrażanie idei „bojownika Chrystusowego" walczącego dla słusznej sprawy, lecz także tworzenie reguł rycerskiego życia zakonnego (Samsonowicz, 2001, pp. 1–2)

> [lit.: The times described in the sketches in this book span three centuries. They begin with the entry of European countries into the second millennium after Christ, the beginning of which, in the eyes of the people of that time, was an introduction to a new era; for some, the epochs of the end of the world and the Last Judgment, for others – the creation of a better society

embracing more and more Christian peoples. They end at the beginning of the fourteenth century, when, as it might seem, all forms regulating the lives of societies and individuals began to decay. What were these centuries for the development of European culture? It is difficult to overestimate their importance in the history of Europe. It was then that a social order emerged, which we call fief-based or sometimes feudal, an order based on the power of great landowners, often grown up from among the former officials of the Empire. The brilliant observation that "antiquity invented the centaur, the Middle Ages made him the lord of Europe" may apply to this epoch. Indeed, a knight became the lord of the western lands of the continent, one of whose main attributes was a horse, a symbol of wealth, strength, and a way of fighting. Warriors, thus, *bellatores*, as they were called by contemporary observers of social relations, they formed the elite of prestige and power. Not only were they such an elite in the factual sense, but also theoretically, as a group of people destined to power and fight better than ordinary bread-eaters. Attempts to obtain the highest possible position in the social hierarchy, made by the second increasingly distinguished group – the clergy, also appeared very quickly. *Oratores* – those who prayed, with partial success, began to curb the fighters, not only by introducing "God's truce" and implementing the idea of "Christ's fighter" striving for a just cause, but also by creating rules of chivalrous religious life.]

What seems striking in the above paragraph is its metaphoricalness. First, several noun and verb phrases are used in such a way that they sound rather unusually, catching the reader's attention and blurring the meaning of the utterance. For example, "wejście krajów Europy do drugiego tysiąclecia po Chrystusie" [the entry of European countries into the second millennium after Christ] is a strong personification, which produces a semantic dissonance: the reader tries to imagine a physical entry of a state apparatus into a closed area, while the phrase means just a situation of the country at the turn of the ninth century. Similarly, the noun phrase "posiadacze ziemscy… wyrośli z grona dawnych urzędników" [great landowners… grown up from among the former officials] sounds peculiar, since the past participle "wyrośli" suggests rather a physical development, while the semantic meaning here is simply "were promoted." Another example of this excessive metaphorization can be found the following sentence: "*Oratores* – modlący się, z częściowym powodzeniem zaczęli ujmować w karby walczących" [*Oratores* – those who prayed, with partial success, began to curb fighters]. The noun phrase opening the sentence is rather an ambiguous metonymy, whose semantic meaning – "clergy" – is conveyed by a Latinism and an explanatory phrase – "those who prayed" – which is quite misleading, since not all people who pray belong to clergy. However, the final part of the sentence is even more puzzling: instead of "knighthood," we find its

metonym "fighters" and, instead of "controlling," we find an archaizing idiom "ujmować w karby" ["to place within notches," meaning to curb].

Second, instead of precise denotation of meaning with lexical items, several longer proverbial phrases are used for their stylistic value, although their meaning is confusing, especially when they occur in quotation marks. For example, "starożytność wymyśliła centaura, średniowiecze uczyniło go panem Europy" [antiquity invented the centaur, the Middle Ages made him the lord of Europe] most probably tries to convey the idea that the Middle Ages was an era of stagnation in intellectual life. However, the meaning of the proverbial phrase is not fixed and it allows a broad margin for interpretation, which is not exactly what the reader should expect from an academic paper. A similar ambiguity can be found in the phrases "rozejm Boży" [God's truce] and "bojownik Chrystusowy" [Christ's fighter].

Moreover, the syntax of the fragment is slightly archaized: there is a rhetorical question "Czym były te stulecia dla rozwoju kultury europejskiej?" [What were these centuries for the development of European culture?] and a few examples of the modifier inversion, such as "wojownicy bowiem" [warriors, thus] or "grupa lepszych od zwykłych zjadaczy chleba ludzi" [a group of better-than-ordinary-bread-eaters people]. Professor Samsonowicz's introduction seems to be a paradigm of Polish academic discourse, which reflects the history and values inherent in the polysystem of the Polish language: the borders between genres are unclear and the stylistic values rooted in post-romantic aesthetics of soaring oration still dominates over soberness and matter-of-factness. Those peculiarities of Polish academic discourse become even more conspicuous when compared with English-language texts of comparable academic scope.

Christopher Kleinhenz's *Medieval Italy: An Encyclopedia* collects the most recent research on medieval Italy and offers a comprehensive presentation of economics, literature, urban planning, visual arts, science, philosophy, and religion of the region from the fifth to the end of the fourteenth century. Like Professor Samsonowicz, Kleinhenz is an acclaimed academic and, like his Polish counterpart, he wrote an introduction to the two-volume project that he compiled:

> *Medieval Italy: An Encyclopedia* provides an introduction to the many and diverse facets of Italian civilization from the late Roman empire to the end of the fourteenth century. To speak of "Italy" is, of course, anachronistic – a geographical rather than a political designation – given that Italy did not become a nation until the second half of the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, the idea of "Italy" was present in the mind of Dante and Petrarch and many others who longed for the peace and stability that they presumed and hoped a nation-state would provide. … We have attempted to bring together in one convenient reference work all these aspects of Italian

civilization; however, given the vastness and the complexity of the sub-
ject matter, we make no claim for completeness. We hope to have pro-
vided a well-balanced, informative, and up-to-date reference work that
will serve the interests of students and the general public, as well as those
of scholars in a variety of disciplines (Kleinhenz, 2004, p. 7).

The above passage is concise, informative, and stylistically neutral: no
metaphors, no Latin incrustations, and no proverbial expressions are used.
Phraseology is perfectly contemporary, although it contains some traces of
grandiloquence: the adverb "nevertheless" and the reference to the great-
est Italian artists of the Quattrocento give the fragment an erudite twist.
The final anaphora – "we have attempted/ we hope" – does not simply
express the idea that the publication is a collective effort, but also is an
example of authorial "we," which was common in the nineteenth century
academic discourse. Yet, the style does not dominate over the content of the
passage,[2] which is the case in the introduction by Professor Samsonowicz.

The above rhetorical variations in structuring academic content can be
also found in translations of English-language academic texts into Polish.
As André Lefevere (1992, p. 14) has it, all translation is rewriting, which
involves acculturation: consequently, Anglo-American academic discourse
is rendered so as to fulfill requirements of the Polish elaborate style. A good
example is the Polish translation of Chris Wickham's *Medieval Rome. Sta-
bility & Crisis of a City, 900–1150*. Wickham is Professor Emeritus of his-
tory at Oxford University, Fellow of All Souls College, and one of the
leading medievalists of the English-speaking world. *Medieval Rome* is his
major work and it was published by Oxford University Press in 2015, while
its Polish translation appeared in a prestigious publishing house specializ-
ing in philosophical and historical texts, Wydawnictwo Marek Derewiecki,
in 2018. The translator, Arkadiusz Bugaj, holds a PhD in medieval history
at the University of Gdańsk, and he has translated thirteen books on medi-
eval history of Europe by acclaimed English authors. Bugaj's translation,
to a large extent, recreates the stilted style typical of Polish scholarly texts
on history: his language is often elaborately metaphorical and unclear; it
relies on polonization rather than equivalence, and often loses specificity;
his diction is archaized, which creates ambiguity. Below I analyze two lon-
ger fragments from the first chapter of Wickham's study, "Grand Narra-
tives," comparing the English version with its Polish translation by Bugaj.
Finally, I give an English literal retranslation of the Polish version, in order
to illustrate the differences imposed by the translator.

2   Here I refer to Richard Toye's (2013) distinction between "acceptable" and "exaggerated" styles
    as described in his *Rhetoric. A Very Short Introduction*.

Feature of discourse	English original	Polish translation	English literal retranslation of the Polish version
Metap-hori-cal-ness	Rome was in demographic terms the largest city in Latin Europe, and (for most of the period) second only to Constantinople in Europe as a whole, before it was overtaken by Milan, perhaps around 1100; and in spatial terms it was and r e m a i n e d f a r l a r-g e r t h a n a n y w h e r e e l s e, with a complicated urban geography which writers in both the twel-fth century and the twen-tieth have spent some time unpicking: it was a c o m-p l e x s t a g e f o r t h e s t r u c t u r a l i n t e r p l-l a y I wish to describe, and was entirely absorbing for the Romans, as we shall see. I want to reconstruct the changing parameters of that absorption (Wickham, 2015, p. 2).	W ujęciu demograficznym Rzym, zanim około 1100 r. wyprzedził go Mediolan, był największym miastem w łacińskiej Europie, zaś w skali całego kontynentu (przez większą część omawia-nego okresu) ustępował on pod tym względem jedynie Kon-stantynopolowi. W kategoriach przestrzennych Rzym nie znaj-dował nigdzie rywala, posiada-jąc skomplikowaną miejską geo-grafię, której rozwikłanie zajęło nieco czasu, zarówno dwunasto-, jak również dwudziestowiecz-nym pisarzom. Była to skom-plikowana scena, stanowiąca tło dla strukturalnej gry wzajemnie oddziałujących na siebie czyn-ników, którą zamierzam opisać, a która, o czym się jeszcze prze-konamy, całkowicie pochłaniała umysły rzymian. Chcę z a t e m poddać rekonstrukcji zmieniące się parametry tego zaabsorbowa-nia (Wickham, 2018, p. 29).	In demographic terms, Rome, before Milan over-took it around 1100, was the largest city in Latin Europe, and on the scale of the entire continent (for most of the period under review) it was second only to Constanti-nople in this respect. In spa-tial terms, Rome f o u n d n o r i v a l a n y w h e r e, having an intricate urban geography that took time for both twelfth- and twentieth-century writers to unra-vel. It was a c o m p l e x s t a g e t h a t p r o v i d e d t h e b a c k d r o p t o t h e s t r u c t u r a l p l a y o f i n t e r a c t i n g f a c t o r s that I am about to describe, and which, as we shall see, was completely absorbing the minds of the Romans. Therefore, I want to s u b-m i t t o r e c o n s t r u-c t i o n the changing para-meters of this absorption.
A short analysis of differences	The English text is rather straightforward and avoids metaphors, while the Polish transla-tion adds metaphors to dramatize the content: "[Rome] was and remained far larger than anywhere else" changes into a personification "Rome found no rival anywhere"; while a sim-ple structural metaphor "[Rome] was a complex stage for the structural interplay" gets trans-formed into an elaborate and almost incomprehensible set of metaphors "complex stage that provided the backdrop to the structural play of interacting factors." Finally, the verb "recon-structs" is replaced with a metaphor "submit to reconstruction." On top of that, the Polish translation contains archaizing conjunctions "zaś" (*whereas*) and "zatem" (*therefore*), typical of the Polish scientific discourse.		

| Poloniza-tion | Historians of Rome in our period, 900–1150, are accustomed to lament the poverty of its narratives, so inferior in quantity and quality as they are to the dense papal biographies in the eighth- and ninth-century sections of the *Liber Pontificalis*, or to the detailed chronicles of the eleventh-century South. That is indeed so, even if it is equally the case that other Italian cities are even more devoid of good accounts before the twelfth century, with the single and important exception of Milan. Rome has one chronicle, the sketchy and incoherent work of Benedetto of Monte Soratte, which focuses on the early tenth century; it has a fragmentary and heterogeneous set of annals, the *Annales Romani*, for the years 1044–73, 1100–21, and (after our period) 1182–7; it also has a revived set of papal biographies written by two cardinals, Pandolfo in the 1130s and Bosone in the 1160s–70s, which are extensive for the twelfth century only: n o t   a   l o t, i n d e e d. These texts are | Historycy piszący o Rzymie w omawianym przez nas okresie 900–1150 mają w zwyczaju ubolewać nad ubóstwem źródeł narracyjnych, które pod względem obfitości i jakości tak dalece ustępują obszernym biografiom papieskim zamieszczonym w pochodzących z VIII i IX w. akapitach *Liber Pontificalis* lub też szczegółowym jedenastowiecznym kronikom poświęconym dziejom południa Italii. Tak jest w istocie, nawet jeśli pozostałe miasta włoskie, poza pojedynczym, ważnym wyjątkiem Mediolanu, są w jeszcze większym stopniu pozbawione dobrych relacji źródłowych w odniesieniu do okresu poprzedzającego XII wiek. Rzym dla omawianego okresu posiada jedyną niepełną i niespójną pracę Benedykta z Monte Soratte, która koncentruje się na wczesnym okresie X wieku i zawiera ona także fragmentaryczny i niejednorodny zestaw roczników. S ą t o: *Annales Romani* dotyczące lat 1044–1073, 1100–1121 oraz (znajdujących się poza interesujących nas okresem) lat 1182–1187, a także zestaw papieskich biografii, spisanych przez dwóch kardynałów – Pandulfa (piszącego w latach trzydziestych XII w.) i Bosonego (piszącego w latach sześćdziesiątych i siedemdziesiątych XII w.), które są obszerne jedynie w odniesieniu do XII stulecia. I s t o t n i e   n i e j e s t   t o   z b y t   w i e l e. Prawdą jest, że teksty te wspiera znacząco długa lista źródeł spoza Rzymu, wśród nich, poczynając od piszącego na początku naszego okresu | Historians writing about Rome in the period 900–1150 we have discussed have the habit of lamenting over the poverty of narrative sources, which in terms of abundance and quality are so far inferior to extensive papal biographies contained in the eighth and ninth-century paragraphs of *Liber Pontificalis* or detailed eleventh-century chronicles devoted to the history of the south of Italy. This is true even if the other Italian cities, apart from the single important exception of Milan, are even more deprived of good source accounts for the period prior to the 12th century. Rome has the only incomplete and inconsistent work of Benedict of Monte Soratte for the period in question, which focuses on the early tenth century and also includes a fragmented and inconsistent set of years. T h e s e   a r e: *Annales Romani* concerning the years 1044–1073, 1100–1121 and (outside the period of interest to us) the years 1182–1187, as well as a set of papal biographies written by two cardinals – Pandolfo (writing in the 1130s) and Bosone (writing in the 60s and 70s of the twelfth century), which are extensive only in reference to the twelfth century. I n d e e d,   i t   i s   n o t   t o o   m u c h. It is true that these texts are sup-ported by a considerably |

backed up, it is true, by a remarkably long list of non-Roman sources, some of which appear very immediate, from Liutprando of Cremona at the start of our period to John of Salisbury at the end. Events in Rome seemed important to much of Latin Europe, in particular from Leo IX onwards, but often before as well (Wickham, 2015, pp. 5–6).	Liutpranda z Cremony, po Jana z Salisbury, tworzącego u jego kresu; n i e k t ó r e w y d a j ą s i ę b a r d z o b e z - p o ś r e d n i o d o t y c z y ć d z i e j ó w W i e c z n e g o M i a s t a. Wy d a r z e n i a r o z - g r y w a j ą c e s i ę w R z y - mie, w szczególności w okresie zapoczątko- wanym pontyfikatem L e o n a I X (a l e c z ę s t o także w latach wcześ- niejszych), wydawały się bowiem istotne dla znacznej części łaciń- skiej Europy (Wickham, 2018, pp. 34–35).	long list of sources out- side of Rome, ranging from Liutprando of Cremona, writing at the beginning of our period, to John of Salis- bury, writing at its end; s o m e o f t h o s e t e x t s s e e m v e r y d i r e c t l y r e l a t e d t o t h e history of the Eter- nal City. The events taking place in Rome, in particular in the period initia- ted by the pontifi- cate of Leo IX (but often also in ear- lier years), seemed to be important for a large part of Latin Europe.
A short analysis of differences	Polonization occurs on several levels, including the syntax: the sentence structure is chan- ged, with a few shorter sentences being added, apparently to enhance readability ("These are," "Indeed, it is not too much"). However, sometimes the Polish translation becomes rat- her a loose adaptation, not only abandoning the original sentence structure, but adding new content, nonexistent in the English text. This is what happens in the ending of the above pas- sage: a relatively short sentence "Events in Rome seemed important to much of Latin Europe, in particular from Leo IX onwards, but often before as well" is significantly expanded into a much longer utterance "Some of those texts seem very directly related to the history of the Eternal City. The events taking place in Rome, in particular in the period initiated by the pon- tificate of Leo IX (but often also in earlier years), seemed to be important for a large part of Latin Europe." Trying to explicitize the semantic meaning of the English original, the trans- lator makes it sound more literary, with sophisticated nouns such as "Eternal City" or "pon- tificate," and a digression in brackets, which raises the register. The second level of poloniza- tion is phraseology and vocabulary: instead of simple verbs, more idiomatic phrases are used in order to make the text sound like a Polish original. The noun phase "papal biographies in the eighth- and ninth-century sections of the *Liber Pontificalis*" is rendered as "papal biograp- hies c o n t a i n e d in the eighth and ninth-century paragraphs of *Liber Pontificalis*"; "deta- iled chronicles of the eleventh-century South" becomes "detailed eleventh-century chronicles devoted to the history of the south of Italy"; The final level of polonization is the use of proper names: in contemporary Polish, proper names are used in their original form and only well- -known historical figures have their polonized counterparts. It seems that Pondolfo ("Pon- dulf" in translation) is not such a figure. On top of that, like in the previous example, the Polish translation is archaized by the use of inversion ("Prawdą jest" [The truth it is]) or obso- lete conjunctions ("bowiem" [for])

Conclusions

It seems that Polish and English scientific texts – not only those treating about Italy in the Middle Ages – belong to slightly different genres. While Polish authors try to create linguistically transparent, smooth, and stylized essays belonging to the *belles-lettres*, their English colleagues seem to be down-to-earth and precise, consciously preserving traces of cultural (Italian/ Roman) foreignness. The reason is that the Polish language and the English language belong to different polysystems: in text written in peripheral and – necessarily – more archaic languages and traditions, authors still try to pursue the beauty of language. Alas, the beauty of the English tongue has evaporated from academic texts like the Keatsian nightingale:

> Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
> Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
> Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
> In the next valley-glades:
> Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
> Fled is that music: – Do I wake or sleep?
> (Keats, 2001, p. 325).

Bɪʙʟɪᴏɢʀᴀᴘʜʏ

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