„To Secure a Favourable Reception“
Translations of the Poetry of Maciej Kazimierz Sarbiewski in 18th Century Collections of Minor English Poets

KRZYSZTOF FORDOŃSKI

Explaining his decision to add to his own volume of Poems four translations of odes written by the Neo-Latin Baroque poet Maciej Kazimierz Sarbiewski (1595–1640), an ode translated from Horace, and two original poems, the works of his friend William Margetson Heald, Joseph Hucks ended his brief „Preface“ with the following words:

My motives, I fear, will be deemed self-interested, in thus endeavouring to secure, by so valuable an addition to it, a favourable reception to the volume which contains them.¹

Even though it cannot be stated with any certainty whether by the „valuable addition“ he was referring more to the work of his friend, Horace, or rather to that of the Polish poet, one may assume that he meant each to an equal degree. After all, since Hucks included in the volume also his own translation from Sarbiewski, there is no doubt that he held the poet in great esteem.

Hucks was by no means the only English poet of the late Augustan Age and pre-Romanticism who published individually or supplemented collections of their own works with translations from well known classical authors such as Homer, Horace, Ovid, or Anacreon, and, much more seldom, neo-Latin authors among whom we find Sarbiewski. Especially in the early Augustan period such translations greatly improved their authors’ standing and they could also be very profitable, as the case of Alexander Pope’s translations of Homer amply proved.² The subject of the present paper is to discuss the roles which translations from the Polish poet played in collections of poetry, original and translated, of minor Augustan poets in the latter part of the period. It aims to show how Sarbiewski’s poetry could be used at the time in an attempt to establish a poet’s credentials as a translator alongside with the works of the greatest Greek and Latin authors, so revered in the neoclassical period.

¹ Joseph Hucks, Poems by J. Hucks, A. M. Fellow of Catherine Hall, Cambridge (Cambridge, 1798), p. IV.
² „Pope himself later boasted that his Homer had been the foundation of his financial and literary independence – ‘thanks to Homer since I live and thrive, / Indebted to no Prince or Peer alive’ (Imitations of Horace, Ep. II.2) – and no other English translation has ever earned so much money for its author.“ Robin Sowerby, Epic, in: Stuart Gillespie and David Hopkins (eds.), The Oxford History of Translation in English. Volume 3 – 1660–1790 (Oxford, 2005), p. 160.
The focal point will be an analysis of three selected collections of poetry published in the late Augustan period, the period when, as Robert Cummings concluded, Sarbiewski „was steadily represented but with increasing embarrassment, evidenced by the focus on a limited number of poems“.

We are interested in the position of the translated poems within the volumes, authorial comments and other paratexts, as well as the characteristics of the selected poems of Sarbiewski, and the quality of the discussed translations or adaptations. We shall also seek an answer to the question whether the translations are actually a testimony of a cross-cultural or transnational contact, whether there is a transfer of meaning, form, and ideology, or whether they predominantly served some other purposes.

Sarbiewski had enjoyed an immense popularity in Great Britain from the early 1640s when he was adopted as an „unofficial voice of the royalist party“.

This wave of popularity ended with the Restoration: apparently, the Royalist poets lost interest in a poet who was connected in their minds with the past period of political failures. The now losing party, the puritans, did indeed exhibit a moderate interest in Sarbiewski’s neo-Stoic verses but it was negligible in comparison to that of the royalists. Sarbiewski was translated again in the final decades of the 17th century, and then again, this time mostly by the religious non-conformists, in the early years of the 18th century.

Once more his poetry was perceived as a source of solace in difficult times. However, the latter generation of translators, of whom the most eminent by far was the hymnographer Isaac Watts, seems to have been the last to find in the works of Sarbiewski a source of genuine intellectual inspiration.

By the mid-18th century the intellectual and philosophical trends represented by Sarbiewski, of which at least neo-Stoicism should be mentioned here as, apparently, the most popular in England, lost their attractiveness and topicality.

Sarbiewski’s position as a political writer was the first to vanish and it happened

---

as early as in 1660. The actual political and religious themes of the Christian Horace, as Sarbiewski was often called, no longer spoke to the British readers either. The former themes, present in Sarbiewski’s exhortations against the Turks threatening Poland and other Central European countries in the early 17th century, were never treated with much interest in Great Britain, unless they were subject to far-reaching adaptation, while the latter themes were always treated with comprehensible caution as very many of the poems which included them spoke a little too openly about their author’s Catholicism and his membership in the Society of Jesus.

Oddly enough, this did not mean that the poet who at that time seemed to offer rather little to the British reading public disappeared from the literary scene and the local canon of neo-Latin literature. The admiration for one of the greatest neo-Latin lyricists was still very much alive and it was as such that Sarbiewski found a place in schools in the very select company of Buchanan and Mantuan. From the moment it first appeared in the British Isles in the late 1630s Sarbiewski’s poetry was treated as a perfect model of Latin verse, or in a broader sense, in accordance with the spirit of Classicism, poetry as such. It was from Sarbiewski that Abraham Cowley learned the art of writing Horatian odes and John Denham learned the art of writing descriptive poems such as his Cooper’s Hill. It was from Sarbiewski then that many young English students now learned to write Latin poetry.

The writing of Latin verse formed an important part of the English education system up to the mid-19th century and Sarbiewski, a Christian poet, which meant both non-pagan and chaste, could appear to be an even better model for students’ literary experimentation in Latin then the Romans themselves. As a result, one might state that many educated Englishmen (Sarbiewski’s known English translators almost to a man had received academic education) completed their studies with the deep seated conviction of Sarbiewski’s literary eminence. This conclusion is amply supported by literary studies from the epoch, discussed by Piotr Urbański and Jerzy Starnawski. The constant

---


presence in schools endowed the poet and his oeuvre with a certain intangible
capital, to use the concept developed by Bourdieu. Even if educated
Englishmen did not actually read much of Sarbiewski in the mid-18th century
(which in itself was hardly surprising, since the only edition of his poetry in
Great Britain had been published in 1684), they were apparently convinced that
he was an important poet.

Even though for a variety of reasons the very poems did no longer speak of
matters of immediate importance, while their form seemed more and more
distant from the contemporary literary fashions, this capital made them seem a
perfect vehicle to exhibit one’s literary talents as a translator. This opportunity
appeared especially attractive to non-professionals. The very phenomenon of
amateur translations or adaptations of Sarbiewski was hardly new in the late
Augustan period. There had been many such works in the late 17th and the
early 18th century which in most cases circulated exclusively in manuscripts, if
at all. Some of them were discovered and published only recently. One can
mention here the thirteen epigrams translated by Sir Philip Wodehouse, an
epigram translated by Lucy Hutchinson (both translations date from the 1660s
and both were first published in 2010), or the two odes translated by John
Chatwin in the early 1680s.10

The new developments in publishing industry such as the appearance of books
published at the authors’ expense or by subscription, as well as magazines
publishing original and translated poetry provided soon ample new oppor-
tunities for amateur but also professional authors to exhibit their works on an
unprecedented scale. The first modern English magazine, The Gentleman’s
Magazine, began to appear in 1731, the first known translation of a poem by
Sarbiewski published in such a magazine appeared in The London Magazine
already in November 1738. However, the first such translation in a literary
journal (inasmuch as this term may be applied in the context), The Poetical
Courant, was published as early as in November 1706.11 The second half of the
18th century saw a proliferation of volumes of poetry by authors of often
debatable talent, usually published either at the authors’ expense or by sub-
scription. Several of them included translations from the Latin of Sarbiewski.

10 Chatwin’s translations were first published in Krzysztof Fordoński and Piotr Urbański (eds.), Casimir Britannicus. English Translations, Paraphrases, and Emulations of the Poetry of Maciej Kazimierz Sarbiewski (London, 2008) and Wodehouse’s and Hutchinson’s trans-
lations only in the second, revised and expanded edition of the book in 2010.
The available material makes it quite clear that the group of poets interested in Sarbiewski in the mid-17th century was very much different from that in the second half of the 18th century. The former included several still generally recognisable authors such as Richard Lovelace, Abraham Cowley, or Henry Vaughan. However, the list of the 18th century poets interested in Sarbiewski who can make a reasonable claim to be recognised as household names ends with Isaac Watts. In the later period, even though translation from the Latin and Greek of the classics was still highly praised and considered a task fit for the best poets (it is enough to mention Pope, Gray, Smart, or Cowper), Sarbiewski did no longer attract the attention of the greatest. A very tentative explanation is the role his poetry played in the educational system, as a model of Horatian lyrical verse fit, however, to be presented to students without the risk of offending their morals or religious convictions. Consequently, its translation might hardly have seemed a challenge to the more seasoned hands.

Sarbiewski’s lyrics might have been perceived by English poets and translators in the same way modern pianists see Carl Czerny’s etudes. The latter all know and played them at some point of their musical education but they would hardly think of performing them to a wider public. Many of the translations of Sarbiewski, when the translators are known, were actually written when their authors were students. They might accordingly be considered as school exercises in translation rather than mature works. The Christian Horace was thus seen by the literary elite more and more as a School Horace, a fact of which many of his translators of the later 18th century, especially those who did not participate in the literary elite, might have been largely unaware. The latter group consists mostly of minor professional or semi-professional authors, some of whom are remembered today only as translators of Sarbiewski if judged by the modern critical response to their works, and outright amateurs who felt an urge to share their attempts at translating neo-Latin poetry with readers.

12 This is clearly reflected in the existing critical sources on the translations of Sarbiewski. Starnawski (Z dziejów poznania..., as in n. 9) ends his study with the translations of Watts. David K. Money (Aspects of the Reception of Sarbiewski in England: From Hils, Vaughan, and Watts to Coleridge, Bowring, Walker, and Coxe, in: Piotr Urbański (ed.), Pietas Humanistica: Neo-Latin Religious Poetry in Poland in European Context [Frankfurt am Main, 2006], pp. 157–187) and Piotr Urbański in: Theologia Fabulosa (as in n. 7) do not mention any of the translators active in the period between the death of Watts to the debut of Colebridge. This lack of interest is easily explicable, however, as most of the texts discussed in the present paper have been added to the corpus of the known English translations of Sarbiewski only in 2008 in Krzysztof Fordoński and Piotr Urbański (eds.), Casimir Britannicus (as in n. 10), and some only in the second edition of the book in 2010.
The number of known translations of Sarbiewski published in the late Augustan period or Pre-Romanticism (understood here quite roughly as the period between 1730 and 1798) exceeds forty. The number of their translators is more difficult to estimate as many published anonymously in journals; however, there were certainly at least twenty translators. The actual size and variety of the corpus is not quite as impressive as these numbers may suggest. Inasmuch as the 17th century translators often chose various, long, and complex poems, with the passage of time the attention of translators was drawn more and more often to a small selection of the shortest of Sarbiewski’s lyrics, especially to those which could be easily adapted to contemporary tastes.

The number of instances when such works appeared in the press is, however, much larger and comes close to one hundred. The discrepancy was caused by the fact that the same texts appeared again and again in different journals, sometimes republished by the authors, sometimes submitted by readers with or without appropriate indication of authorship. In the early 1740s, the otherwise little known Anglican divine Joshua Dinsdale published his three translations concurrently in The London Magazine and The Scots Magazine published in Edinburgh. James Hervey’s translation of Lyr. IV 18 was originally included in his Meditations and Contemplations (1747), then reprinted at least three times in various journals (in 1748 with a score composed by Filippo Palma, an indirect testimony to the poem’s popularity) and then twice more. Once the translation was signed “Aramont”, the other publication was heavily edited by an anonymous “translator” from Edmonton.

The plagiarism of Hervey’s translation is by no means an exception. A translation of Lyr. I 2 by Mary Masters from 1755 was plagiarized by a disciple of Watts, the reverend Thomas Gibbons. He published it for the first time, signed only with his initials, in The Universal Magazine in 1769, and then reprinted the plagiarized poem in his collection The Christian Minister in

---


1772. Apparently, publication of a translation of a poem by Sarbiewski was perceived as a perfect way to establish one’s credentials as a translator, while the desperate need for self-aggrandizing was such that even dishonest means seemed acceptable to quite a few.

Even if we limit the scope of our analysis to collections of verse, embellished by poems translated or adapted from the Latin of Sarbiewski, leaving aside the poems appearing in various magazines, the corpus still remains fairly impressive. It includes e.g. Henry Price and his two translations in Poems on Several Subjects (1741), William Duncombe who chose his own translation of Sarbiewski as a liminary verse in the edition of the poetry of George Jeffreys which he published in 1754, Mary Masters and the two translations included in her Familiar Letters and Poems on Several Occasions (1755), and Thomas Gibbons with five translated poems (including the one plagiarized, mentioned above) in The Christian Minister... (1772). The present article, however, concentrates on the three latest instances of such collections: the anonymous Μέλη Ἐφημέρια (1783), Talbot Keene’s also anonymously published Miscellaneous Pieces (1787), and Joseph Hucks’ Poems (1798).

The earliest of these, Μέλη Ἐφημέρια (Ephemeral Songs) is a small (36 numbered pages) anonymous volume of English, Greek, and Latin poetry “printed for the author“ in Oxford in 1783. The volume, preceded by a motto taken from Cicero, given in the original Latin and in a largely expanded English translation, includes 17 poems (the last one given twice in English and Greek). Ten of them are in English, five in Greek, and three in Latin. A half of them are translations or imitations of Anacreon, John Jortin (1698–1770), Mark Akenside (1721–1770), William Shenstone (1714–1763), and the neo-Latin poets Daniel Heinsius (1580–1655) from the Netherlands and Sarbiewski from Poland. The names may not sound familiar to the contemporary reader today – but they prove that the anonymous author was well versed in the fashionable literature of his times. Sarbiewski is apparently given the place of honour in this somewhat odd company as the volume opens with two translations of his poetry.

---

18 [Henry Price], Poems on Several Subjects. By a Land-Waiter in the Port of Poole (London, 1741).
The volume seems an expensive, elite subscription (or patronage-supported) edition and boasts an impressive list of 105 subscribers of whom the most generous ordered as many as 7 copies. Most of the subscribers are students of Oxford. Judging by their listed colleges, the anonymous author was either a student himself, or a recent graduate of, most probably, Christ Church College as suggested by 36 subscribers from the college, whose fellow-students and their wealthy parents supported his poetic debut. Names of some of the subscribers are still recognisable to historians today, such as that of the Right Honourable William Vane, Viscount Barnard (1766–1842), who became in time 1st Duke of Cleveland.

Another subscriber was William Legge 2nd Earl of Dartmouth (1731–1801), First Lord of Trade and State Secretary for the Colonies in the period immediately preceding the American War of Independence. The Earl and Countess of Dartmouth ordered two copies each. The Legge family is represented by nine people with all six surviving sons of the Earl, including the eldest, Viscount Lewisham, and his wife. Together the Legges ordered 15 copies of the book, consequently, the author must have been very dear to the family. A possible explanation is that the poems were the works of the late Heneage Legge, graduate of Christ Church College (1781) who died in 1782, but this is unlikely as the volume was advertised as „printed for the author“. Another candidate for authorship, Rt. Hon. Edward Legge, the prospective student of Christ Church College and bishop of Oxford, was only sixteen years old at the time of publication and he is listed as one of the subscribers.

The two translations from Sarbiewski are entitled respectively „Taken for the Most Part From Casimire’s Ode In Auram“ (Lyr. IV 26) and „From Casimir’s Ode In Rosam“ (Lyr. IV 18). The former ode is known in two also anonymous translations from the same period (published in 1780 and 1794), the latter ode is one of the more popular of Sarbiewski’s poems among the English translators with nine known translations. As their titles suggest they are adaptations (emulations) of the Latin poems. The anonymous poet does not pay much attention to following closely the form and the contents of the original. The unrhymed originals (in both cases Sapphic minor stanzas) are rendered respectively as rhymed syllabic verse and (sometimes quite imperfect) heroic couplets.

The original size must have limited the poet, consequently, he added four lines to each of the poems. The original contents did not quite satisfy him either, the first of the two poems, an adaptation of Lyr. IV 26, exhibits a number of alterations. The elements of the bucolic scene are treated rather carelessly,

---

20 They were respectively the eldest son and daughter-in-law of the Earl of Dartmouth and they succeeded to the title in 1801.
sometime abandoned, sometimes they change their places within the poem. And yet the achieved effect is both successful as a literary work and quite close to the surprisingly light and joyful spirit of the original poem.

The second poem was altered in a much more striking manner. The first ten lines follow quite closely the introductory stanzas of Sarbiewski’s ode; however, the final ten lines (as it was stated above the anonymous translator felt the need to add a whole quatrains to his translation) are something of a curiosity. The rose which in the original poem is supposed to grace the hair of the Holy Virgin,

Parce plebeios redimire crines.
Te decent aera: tibi colligenda
Virginis late coma per sequaces
Fluctuat auras.\textsuperscript{21}

in the English version is advised to:

... seek some Nymph, whose pure and spotless heart
With conscious virtue glows, unknown to art,
Where charms of Chastity and Honour meet,
And Beauty serves to make the whole complete.
Fly to Lucinda’s breast, and settle there,
For know Lucinda is as chaste as fair.\textsuperscript{22}

which is exactly the opposite of what the original suggests. The chaste and fair Lucinda\textsuperscript{23} replaces the Holy Virgin as the most appropriate receiver of the rose. The anonymous poet from Oxford succeeded in turning a religious ode addressed to Virgin Mary into a rather typical sentimentalist love poem.

Lucinda re-appears further in the volume in „Imitation of Shenstone“\textsuperscript{24} this time as the new love interest of the poet, a girl who replaced in his heart Melissa „as fair as unkind“ and favoured the poet’s song which Melissa failed to do. The connection between the two poems is stressed by an allusion to a phrase from Sarbiewski’s original poem which the anonymous poet, apparently inclined to pedantry as the volume includes surprisingly many footnotes, marked by setting the appropriate phrase of the poem in italics and adding the


\textsuperscript{22} [Anonymous], Μέλη Ἐφημέρως, (Oxford, 1783), p. 4.

\textsuperscript{23} This fashionable name was originally invented by Miguel Cervantes in his Don Quixote, although it is impossible to tell to what extent the anonymous poet was aware of the connection. The original Lucinda was forced to marry against her will but was ultimately reunited with her true lover.

\textsuperscript{24} [Anonymous], Μέλη Ἐφημέρως, (as in n. 22), pp. 18–19.
original Latin phrase in a footnote. Ultimately, Lucinda returns yet again at the end of the collection in the Latin „Song“.

As it may be concluded from a rather limited selection of verse, the author of Μέλη Ἐφημέρια actually seems quite skilful as a poet. He does not seem, however, a very original author, as almost every second of the poems in the volume is adapted, translated, or inspired by the work of others. This lack of originality may support the thesis that he was a student when the volume appeared. The two poems he chose from Sarbiewski’s oeuvre allowed him to experiment quite successfully with form and content, even if he did it disregarding the form and content of the originals. They do not, however, give the readers much of an idea of the Polish poet’s original achievement. The altered ending of the second poem may actually completely mislead the readers as Sarbiewski was anything but an author of light erotic lyrics.

The second volume analysed is entitled Miscellaneous Pieces: Original and Collected also appeared as an anonymous work, signed „By a Clergyman of Northamptonshire, Late of Trinity College Cambridge“. It was published at the author’s expense in London in 1787, there was no subscription. According to the title page, the book was to be „sold by Ginger, College-Street, Westminster; Nicolls, St. Paul’s Church-Yard; Merrill, Cambridge; and Lacy, Northampton“ – it was thus available in the places where former and current friends of the author could purchase it. The identity of the author has since been established: it is the only published work of the reverend Talbot Keene (c. 1737–1824), a graduate of Cambridge University (BA 1761, MA 1770). Keene took holy orders immediately after he received his BA in 1761 but continued with his studies. He became the vicar of Brigstock with Stanion, Northamptonshire, in 1773, a post which he held for the rest of his life.

The volume is a collection of original poems in English and Latin supplemented by a bilingual selection of translations from and into Latin, some by the author himself, some by his anonymous friend or friends, and a single translation from the Greek of Moschus. It is often so that a Latin text is followed by two translations, one by Keene and the other by the unknown Friend. The final part of the volume, called „Appendix“, is a short essay on psalms, their translation,

---

25 [Anonymous], Μέλη Ἐφημέρια, (as in n. 22), pp. 29–30.
26 [Talbot Keene], Miscellaneous pieces: original and collected; by a clergyman of Northamptonshire, late of Trinity College, Cambridge (London, 1787) unnumbered title page.
27 J. A. Vent, Litt.D., FSA, (comp.), Alumni Cantabrigienses. A biographical list of all known students, graduates and holders of office at the university of Cambridge, from the earliest times to 1900, Part II From 1752 to 1900, Volume IV Kahlenberg – Oyler (Cambridge, 1951), p. 7.
and their role in the church to which Keene added his own translations of two Psalms XV and CXXXIX (incomplete).

Keene published the collection after over a decade spent in a small village 80 miles north of London, as he modestly states in the Advertisement: „entirely owing to the encouragement of a most worthy friend, who by chance having seen some of them, thought they might not be unworthy of the public eye“.²⁸

It is quite clear from the Advertisement that the volume, published in the fiftieth year of the life of the poet, comprises poems written over a period much longer than the decade spent in Northamptonshire, some of them date back to his Cambridge years of which the single translation from Sarbiewski is probably a souvenir.

The Foregoing Ode of Casimire, To the Grass-Hopper. Translated (Lyr. IV 23)

Insect of envied song, that sit’st
Upon the top-most poplar bough,
Drench’d in the heaven-distilled dew;
With thy enchanting self-taught note
Thyself thou cheerest and the grove that’s mute.

Winter now past, while short-liv’d spring
Is posting on its destin’d way;
Catch, quick, O! catch the tepid fun
And hail him on the rapid wind,
With thy own blithly-warbling throat
And nature’s artless lay.

As each day in its gilded car
Shoots from the radiant seat of Jove,
So each with hasty step full soon
Thither returns again.
Our joy is ever short: Our grief,
Alas! Alas! too long

²⁸ [Talbot Keene], Miscellaneous pieces (as in n. 26), p. 3.
²⁹ [Talbot Keene], Miscellaneous pieces, (as in n. 26), pp. 74–75. The word „foregoing“ in the title means that in the collection this translation follows the Latin original.
Keene seems much interested in achieving this particular effect, preferring rather to come up with imagery of his own. The expanded content of the first stanza of the original takes up almost two stanzas of the translation. The final stanza of Keene’s poem consists mostly of the contents of the second stanza of Sarbiewski, again with ample addition of Keene’s own imagery absent in the original – e.g. the description of „day in ... a gilded car“ (ll. 12–15) is supposed to render the following line and a half *Ut se quaeque dies attulit optima / Sic se quaeque rapit.*\(^{30}\) The ending of this stanza of the original poem *nulla fuit satis / Umquam longa voluptas / Longus saepius et dolor*\(^{31}\) are squeezed in the two final lines, the second of which ends abruptly as if in despair.

Keene also fails to maintain the original form, although he notices at least that the Latin original is not rhymed, a rarity among 18th century translators. The language of the poem apparently attempts to imitate the structure of Latin sentences, naturally, in a general sense rather than the specific structure of the sentences of the original poem. The effect is hardly successful, the resulting sentences are convoluted, unnatural, and at times quite incomprehensible. Keene seems to have been sufficiently proud of the effect of his translation efforts to include it in his collection with the text of the original poem, thus allowing his readers to verify the quality of his achievement without the necessity of obtaining a Latin edition of Sarbiewski’s poems. Even though this particular translation is hardly successful, it should be stated here that its author was at worst an indifferent poet, inasmuch as it is possible to evaluate his skills on the basis of his modest known poetic output.

The third collection of poems discussed here is entitled Poems by J. Hucks, A. M. Fellow of Catherine Hall, Cambridge, including a somewhat larger selection of five translations from Sarbiewski and published in 1798 at Cambridge. Joseph Hucks (1772–1800) was a graduate of Eton, a student and from 1794 a fellow of Catherine Hall, Cambridge. Hucks’ claim to lasting fame, if he has any, is his friendship with a fellow student called Samuel Taylor Coleridge. In the summer of 1794 Hucks and Coleridge made a walking tour of North Wales during which Hucks wrote a number of letters, published in 1795 as *A Pedestrian Tour through North Wales in a Series of Letters.*\(^{32}\) The book is still of

---


\(^{31}\) Maciej Kazimierz Sarbiewski, *Ode XXIII Ad Cicadam* (as in n. 30), p. 221.

some interest both to literary scholars as a personal account of Coleridge’s early life as well as to historians interested in Wales at the end of the 18th century.

The collection of Hucks’ own thirty-three poems includes a single translation of Sarbiewski’s Epigram 21. It was, however, supplemented by seven poems of another fellow student, the reverend William Margetson Heald (1767–1837). The supplement, which completes the volume, consists of two original elegies and five translations, four from Sarbiewski and one from Horace. Heald originally trained to become a doctor when, rather suddenly, at the age of 23 he decided to become a clergyman and went on to study at Cambridge (admitted 1790, BA in 1794 and MA in 1798). In 1798, he became curate at Birstal near Leeds and from 1801 to 1836 he was vicar of the parish. Heald wrote poetry only as a student; during his studies at Edinburgh he was the author of the mock-heroic poem The Brunoniad (1789) about his professors.  

The selection prepared by Heald – „To Publius Memmius“ (Lyr. II 2), „Casimir, Book 2. Ode 3“ (Lyr. II 3), „To the Grasshopper“ (Lyr. IV 23), and „To the Rose“ (Lyr. IV 18) – is extremely conventional. Lyr. II 2 was translated into English seven times, five of which in the discussed period, Lyr. II 3 – 13 translations, eleven in the period, Lyr. IV 23 – 8 translations of which 5 in the period, and Lyr. IV 18 – 9 translations of which 4 appeared in the discussed period. It is thus quite clear that Heald did not read any major collection of Sarbiewski at the time when the translations took place but proposed his own translations (if indeed they were translations and not pseudo-translations from earlier works) of some of the few texts which circulated, most probably in manuscripts and mainly in schools in the final decades of the 18th century.

Heald’s translations do not seem to have much of the merit that Hucks saw in them; their very existence was hardly noticed by the reviewers.  

Casimir, Book 2. Ode 3, is quite striking due to the inept handling of rhymes. Heald rhymes present participles three times (swinging/ringing, displaying/betraying, scowling/rolling) and in the final stanza he fails rather miserably, simply rhyming ‘away’ with ‘away’:

35 Their very presence was noticed only in one of them. Anonymous, Domestic Literature of the Year 1798, The New Annual Register or General Repository of History, Politics, and Literature For the Year 1798 (London, 1799), p. 308.
O my harp, my companion, my treasure,
Let us rise, let us hasten away:
‘Tis thus flies the phantom of pleasure,
With quick step ever hasting away.\textsuperscript{36}

Not only is Heald’s poetic technique lacking, the translation entitled To Publius Memmius, (Lyr. II 2) raises questions about his knowledge of Latin as well. The final lines of the original: \textit{Sibi quisque Famam / Scribat heredem: rapiunt avarae / Cetera Lunae}\textsuperscript{37} is rendered as “Fame’s open path to none impervious lies / All else must vanish like the changeful moon.”\textsuperscript{38} Heald apparently missed the fact that the word \textit{Lunae} means in this context “months“ and, as a result, came up with a seriously flawed metaphor. While all else (except the fame that lives on even after we die) must indeed vanish with the passing months, the moon returns each time after it temporarily disappears from the sky.

Hucks’ own translation of Epig. 21 \textit{Super rivulos aquarum} seems to belong to the phenomenon I once called „the Barbou revival“ which took place in England in the early 1790s when following a new edition of Sarbiewski’s complete works by the well-known Parisian publishing house of the Barbou family,\textsuperscript{39} a sizeable number of copies apparently reached England, quite probably in the luggage of French émigrés. As a result, between 1794 and 1796 as many as 17 translations from Sarbiewski by 6 different authors appeared in Great Britain, mostly in various magazines. Hucks was certainly one of those who benefited from such an access. The poem he chose had never been translated before while he could have borrowed a copy of the new Barbou edition from his friend Coleridge who apparently carried it with him in the summer of 1794 which they spent together, only to lose it on his way back to Cambridge in August that year.\textsuperscript{40}

Even though Hucks translated a poem which had never been translated into English before, the way he approached the original text is not very much different from those of his contemporaries, although he achieved somewhat better results. Like others before him, Hucks adds rhymes, expands the original length, turning eight lines into fourteen, and supplements the concise images of

\textsuperscript{36}Joseph Hucks, Poems (as in n. 1), p. 182.
\textsuperscript{38}Joseph Hucks, Poems (as in n. 1), p. 187.
\textsuperscript{39}The first edition took place in 1759 in the original „Collection Barbou“, the book was reissued in 1791. More on the Barbou revival see: Krzysztof Fordoński, „Starched like Horace’s Odes“? Coleridge (Mis)Translates Sarbiewski, in: Neulateinisches Jahrbuch 13 (2011), p. 60.
\textsuperscript{40}Lawrence Hanson, The Life of S. T. Coleridge. The Early Years (London, 1938), p. 50.
Sarbiewski with additional elements of his own invention. The result is actually quite impressive. Hucks’ additions strengthen rather than dilute or alter the romantic mood of the poem, a vision of communication between a forlorn lover and nature.

The choice of the translated poem, an extremely rare example of love poetry in Sarbiewski’s oeuvre, and the manner of its handling clearly shows the influence of the oncoming Romanticism on Hucks as well as it proves his close connection to Coleridge at the time.\(^{41}\) Coleridge soon moved beyond Sarbiewski, quickly abandoning his own extensive plans of preparing a volume of translations of neo-Latin poetry, which he was, somewhat ironically, supposed to submit for publication in June 1794, right before the trip to Wales. Hucks did not stand the chance of fully embracing the new trends as he succumbed to tuberculosis not quite two years after the publication of his only collection of verse. He was apparently quite right writing, as he did in his „Preface“, about his works: „the following poems ... are the first essays of the author in the field of poetry: they will in all probability also be his last“\(^{42}\). The premature death at the age of twenty-seven did not allow Hucks fully to develop his literary talents, but even the limited available selection proves that he was quite an accomplished poet, a fact already noticed by contemporary reviewers.\(^{43}\)

Let us return to the questions with which we began. The discussed translations hardly seem a testimony of an actual cross-cultural or transnational contact. If anything they are a distant echo of such a lively, vital, and fruitful contact which took place in the mid-17th century but was long gone and largely forgotten more than a century later. Most of the presented translators did not seem to seek new meanings in Sarbiewski’s oeuvre (as stated above, the task would not be easy with no British editions of the poet’s works after 1684 and consequent difficult access to his poems), most often they preferred to return over and over again to a small and hardly representative selection familiar from their own school days.

This selection in turn offers a falsified image of the Polish poet. Only one of the translations mentioned above belongs to the neo-Stoic poems so influential and popular in the mid-17th century and so numerous in Sarbiewski’s oeuvre. The purely religious poetry is avoided and in the only example translated, the


\(^{42}\) Joseph Hucks, Poems (as in n. 1), p. III.

religious elements are excised. It has been stated before that the Sarbiewski that emerges from the known English translations is not exactly the Sarbiewski we encounter in his original poems. The reception is distorted on the one hand by a very specific, even peculiar selection of the translated texts. On the other hand, however, it is caused by translators’ infidelity and tendency towards adaptation, paraphrase, emulation, anything rather than translation. The second half of the 18th century was apparently the period when this distortion was at its height. A change happened only in the Victorian age when Sarbiewski’s lyrics started to be treated as historical texts with no pretence of their relevance to current philosophical, religious, or political trends while at the same time they became much more easily accessible in the original.

In the eyes of the discussed translators, however, the poems of Sarbiewski still maintained a certain value, a cultural capital. It was, quite apparently, fully independent of their artistic merit or philosophical content, of which the translators became more and more ignorant. They were the works of a famous and internationally renowned author writing in a language which, at least to some degree, they understood and the knowledge of which was respected, even if it was losing its practical value. Consequently, translations from Sarbiewski seemed worthy of publication even if their literary quality was inferior to other works of a given author and translator.

Unfortunately, if they hoped to gain fame by including Sarbiewski’s poems in their collections, they were gravely mistaken as none of the poets discussed or mentioned above managed to achieve contemporary fame or a lasting position in the history of English literature. Translating or at least quoting Sarbiewski during the War of Three Kingdoms was an important statement, placing the author of such a translation or adaptation clearly among the Royalists. Translating Sarbiewski in the early 18th century could reveal a religious dissenter. By the end of the century, however, it revealed little more than ignorance of current literary fashions. The late 18th century English translations of Sarbiewski are not great works of literature, they often fall short as translations as well. Their peculiar interest reveals itself when we consider them for what they actually are – a testimony of a literary fad, a distant echo of the original and genuine interest

in the works of Sarbiewski which lasted for over a century, and which was ultimately extinguished by the arrival of Romanticism.\textsuperscript{46}

Krzysztof Fordoński

University of Warsaw

\textsuperscript{46} Even then not completely, see e.g.: Krzysztof Fordoński, Caroline de Crespigny Translates Maciej Kazimierz Sarbiewski: Forgotten Romantic Poetess as Translator of Neo-Latin Verse, in: Grażyna Bystydzieńska and Emma Harris (eds.), From Queen Anne to Queen Victoria: Readings in 18\textsuperscript{th} and 19\textsuperscript{th} Century British Literature and Culture, Vol. 4 (Warszawa, 2014), pp. 121–130.