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ON “TAKING THE BONES AWAY”: THE BODY OF CYPRIAN NORWID AND MONTMORENCY

In memory of Krystyna Malkowska

In a well-known and influential (if one considers it in terms of the receptive power of the message) essay *Death and its forms* – in one of its final fragments, while analysing Chateaubriand’s thanatic obsession – Jean-Pierre Richard considers for a moment the consequences of “taking the bones of their fathers away from cultures”¹. But first he reflects on the general semantics of ‘grave’, especially on its repository of symbolic meanings – as a point of opposition, and – *par excellence* – resistance:

It seems that dispersion must, eventually, have its final frontier: the grave. Here is the seemingly last tank, here the great journey of ashes should stop. It is necessary that the body remain in the tomb, even reduced to a state of dust or ashes – the dust even more delicate, as if pounded – or to bone – the harder, more individualised state of mortal remains².

And thus, the topos of “taking the bones away” in Richard’s writing gains a significant, deep interpretation, it has considerable significance for the culture, which in this – quite new situation for it – must become both the domain and the depositary

¹ J.-P. RICHARD, *Śmierć i jej postacie*, [in:] *Antologia współczesnej krytyki literackiej we Francji*, compiled by W. Karpiński, Warszawa 1974, p. 181. Norwid remained related to this way of thinking: it is best revealed in *Żądany list o mogile i mogiłach*: „M o g i ł a jest w z n i o s ł o ś ć wszelaka, i to jest ten sam wyraz, co aryjsko-irlandzko-szkockie *Mag – Mak – Mac*. Czy ta wzniosłość jest moralna, czy plastycznie wznosząca się jak m g ła, *mg* – jest wzniosłość” (PWsz VI, 582). Quotes from Norwid are given based on the edition C. NORWID, *Pisma wszystkie*, the text was compiled, edited, an introduction and critical notes were provided by J.W. Gomulicki, Warsaw 1971 (quotes acknowledged as PWsz, Roman numerals refer to volumes, Arab numerals refer to pages).

² J.P. RICHARD, *Death and its forms*, p. 180.

of loss. As the body disappears, something that Richard refers to as the so-called positive programme towards death is not and cannot be possible, substitute graves are in fact phantoms, replacements, masks that have to cover the horror of symbolic emptiness, i.e. that “at the very heart of non-existence nothing positive can be established, nothing almost human [or positive, almost human is established, but with a strikingly smaller, incomparably weaker force – K.S.]”³. Nowhere will we find “the security of sealing, the stability of a sign, the soothing durability of rooting space and memory”⁴. Instead we are threatened by this undying anxiety, in the worst cases even – paralysis and terror that can be contrasted with what accompanied Chateaubriand. He himself, in the era of the Revolution, was “electrified and struck by the counter-ceremony of exhumation” that took place in Saint Denis: there “the first gesture [of the nascent irredentism – K.S.] was opening of the tombs of the nobles and scattering, sometimes even burning of their content”⁵.

Norwid tried to report similar concerns, though grave – unlike in the case of Chateaubriandian Krasieński – was for him primarily a tool to demonstrate ideas and not an obsessive motif. It was neither a trope making the work dependent on it, it did not deform its final shape, was not over-exposed. Somehow, instead of that, the author of *Coś Ty Atenom zrobił, Sokratesie...* [What did you do to Athens, Socrates...] many times manifested sensitivity to the funeral scandal. One of the motifs that organised his funerary imagination was exhumation as an expression of “unlearning after death” – there is no better example in this context than the already abovementioned well-known poem of the poet with Socrates in the first line. *Salut per la tombe*, salvation through the tomb or tomb trial – as it was understood by Zygmunt Krasieński in *Przedświt* [Daybreak]⁶ never came into being. “Mściciel naszych kości” [The avenger of our bones] was to be replaced, according to the obligations associated with Norwid’s axiology, by “późny wnuk” [late grandson], whereas “pomstwienie” [vengeance] was to become “odpamięnienie” [re-collection].

Thus, Norwid was not the “Polish Chateaubriand”. He rather sought to overcome this uniquely understood Chateaubriandism (the fear of inability to be bur-

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid., p. 181.

⁶ Recently, his thought of apocatastasis in *Przedświt* was most fully expressed by Grażyna Halkiewicz-Sojak: “the procession of Polish nobility follows Our Lady from her image in Jasna Góra into the abyss, to be resurrected in the future. [...] God answers: the historical vision is followed by the second – we shall call it apocalyptic one”. G. HALKIEWICZ-SOJAK, *Wstęp*, [w:] Z. KRASIEŃSKI, *Przedświt*, introduction, comments and compilation by G. Halkiewicz-Sojak, Toruń 2004, p. 39.

ied that can be reduced to the "fear for the body", a fear that – as it seems – is primarily secular, non-Christian). The posthumous fate of his body, his protracted burial bears, nonetheless, the Chateaubriandian stigma. The fact is that today an accurate (beyond any doubt) determination of the resting place of Cyprian Norwid poses an insurmountable obstacle, it is unfeasible. Countless changes to which the Polish cemetery in Montmorency was subject in the last 150 years had a significant impact on that. The cemetery quickly became the property of Hotel Lambert.

Funeral scandals accompanied Montmorency from its very beginning. Polish writers willingly and eagerly gave them even poetic expression. However, "the black Polish legend" of French cemeteries began with loud accident of Montparnasse, which was literarily described by Juliusz Słowacki himself, the author of the poem *Pogrzeb kapitana Meyznera* [The funeral of captain Meyzner]. In the poem "the poor coffin from the hospital / was to be thrown down into a beggar's pit", "huge", where "coffins on coffins"⁷ lied. The case of Józef Meyzner (1803-1841), participant of the raid on the Belweder Palace in 1830 and insurgent in the years 1830-1831, buried in one of the many *fosse commune*, whose "tomb is not mention in any of the lists"⁸, was by no means separate. As Jerzy Skowronek, author of the only complete monograph on the Polish cemetery in Montmorency, certifies:

Poorer compatriots used to have funerals similar to the last journey of General Woroniecki to one of the Parisian cemeteries, "when it came to the burial, there was no land bought, so the one or the other gave 5, 10 francs and bought the rest for the good general for 5 years"⁹.

Fosse commune was meant for the poorest inhabitants of Paris, unable to purchase at least a five-year license to a grave. Burial in the cemetery pit was synonymous with oblivion, it actually only prevented the desecration of the body:

French regulations established in the years 1803-1834 provided for the possibility of burials at the expense of a commune. A grave in the ground belonging to a commune is referred to in the French cemetery books as *fosse*. In this way, the poorest were buried at the expense of the commune – in separate pits 150 cm long, 200 cm deep and 80 cm wide¹⁰.

⁷ Cited following the edition: J. SŁOWACKI, *Dzieła wszystkie*, vol. VII, ed. J. Kleiner, Wrocław 1956, pp. 121-122.

⁸ J. SKOWRONEK (and A. BOCHENEK, M. CICHOWSKI and K. FILIPOW), *Cmentarz polski w Montmorency*, Warszawa 1986, p. 69.

⁹ Skowronek recalls in this context a letter by Eustachy Januszkiewicz to Leonard Niedźwiecki written in Paris on 6 December 1838 (*ibid.*, p. 68).

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 69-70.

Norwid's body was not put after his death into the cemetery pit – Michał Zaleski saved him from this fate. Józef Dybowski was completely convinced about his merit in this respect. In a letter of 3 June 1883 to his son Aleksander, he pointed out that this would inevitably have happened “if Zaleski had not taken care of the whole funeral, had not gone to strangers [Teodor – K.S.] Jełowicki and [Michał – K.S.] Kleczkowski, and had not taken many other steps”¹¹. The words of old Dybowski confirm that the threat of burial in a *fosse* could have been real: most “veterans in the Polish Department at rue de Chevaleret” ended in this way¹². Meanwhile, the cost of the funeral amounted to 400 francs, of which 300 Zaleski received as donation from already mentioned Jełowicki and Kleczkowski. It is worth mentioning that the donation from Hotel Lambert (ridiculously low, amounting to 20 francs – probably the result of a collection in the Polish Ladies' Charity Society) was sent back to the supporters of the Czartoryski family¹³. Probably for this reason, no representatives of this party were present at the funeral on 25 May 1883. But others were present instead, “more than thirty people, among them Franciszek Duchński, Mieczysław Geniusz and Marshal Teodor Jełowicki”¹⁴.

Not quite understandable remains Zaleski's decision to buy only a five-year concession to the tomb, and later – the lack of effort to change it. It seems that the closest friend of Cyprian Norwid, a veteran of the November Uprising was not fully aware of the French concession law that was binding from 1843 and, above all, that the temporal concession to five years did not allow for any prolongation, “even the separate tomb with such a concession quickly disappeared from the topography of the cemetery and the memory of compatriots, especially if the deceased did not leave any family”¹⁵. It is reasonable to assume that the purchase of a thirty-year concession could protect Norwid's body from disappearance (the document would have expired only in 1913, i.e. almost a decade after the publish-

¹¹ J. Dybowski to A. Dybowskiego. Paryż, 3 June 1883 (excerpt from a letter: MS BN III 6321, book 89) – cit. in: Z. TROJANOWICZOWA, E. LIJEWSKA with contribution by M. PLUTA, *Kalendarz życia i twórczości Cypriana Norwida*, vol. II: 1861-1883, Poznań 2007, p. 783 (henceforth cit. *Kalendarz II*).

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.* It is worth mentioning that the founder of the Society in 1834 was one of the main initiators of the work on the creation and organization of St. Casimir Department, Anna Czartoryska née Sapiecha. J. Skowronek, *Cmentarz polski*, p. 80.

¹⁴ *Kalendarz II*, p. 783.

¹⁵ J. SKOWRONEK, *Cmentarz polski*, p. 69.

ing of the issue of "Chimera"¹⁶ devoted to Norwid by Zenon Przesmycki-Miriam and just at the time of publishing by him the poet's collected writings¹⁷). Norwid's remains would have rested then at the cemetery in Ivry, near Paris, where they were buried in 1883. Even if they had been exhumed there, the likelihood of losing the body, taking wrong note of that was much smaller than at Montmorency, where Norwid's remains were moved in 1888. One could also entertain a reasonable hope that everyone interested would have known about the expiring concession to the burial for Norwid in Ivry, including the Poles in the country, the circle of "Chimera" and Miriam himself:

French law of 1843 allowed for three types of tomb concessions: temporal (above 5 years), thirty-year and perpetual (*perpétuelles*). [...] A thirty-year concession – in contrast to the temporal one – gave the right to apply for its prolongation¹⁸.

One thing should be established beyond any doubt – not only that no perpetual concession was purchased for Norwid, but in fact no other concession was bought allowing for its prolongation, which under the French law could be understood as the so-called non-temporary concession, or in short: at least a thirty-year concession. However, it was believed otherwise – this gave rise to a misunderstanding and became the first reason for the disappearance of Norwid's body. The person responsible for this negligence, as a consequence of a fatal organisational error, was Józef Gałęzowski, President of the Polish Tomb Commission, the same who rescued Norwid's body in 1888 – after all, he informed Władysław Mickiewicz of the burial concession in Ivry. The moment the matter caught the interest of Mickiewicz himself has a somewhat symbolic dimension, because at that time, the issue of Norwid's indeterminate tomb was taken over by Hotel Lambert, thus as if appropriating Norwid's body. The ac-

¹⁶ "An important moment for the reception of Norwid's works was the publishing in 1904 of an issue of »Chimera« entirely devoted to the work of the late poet. The issue encompassed *Promethidion*, *Kleopatra*, *Pompeja*, *Stygmat*, Norwid's translations of the *Odyseey*, a dissertation *La philosophie de la guerre*, lyrical and ironic works (including *Vade-mecum*), Norwid's letters to Maria Trębicka and reproductions of his graphic works, drawings and images, as well as his images" – cit. J. KOSIM, *Miriam – odkrywca Norwida*, [in:] *Biuletyn Informacyjny Biblioteki Narodowej* 2001, vol. 3/158, p. 14.

¹⁷ "Of the eight planned volumes in the years 1912-1914 (dated 1911), volumes A, C and E were published. They are illustrated with reproductions of Norwid's drawings and paintings. They contain numerous images of the poet and his autographs. They are provided with extensive comments by Przesmycki. The long printing process of volume F was interrupted by World War I (the preserved sheets were published in 1946)" (*ibid.*).

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

tions taken by Adam Mickiewicz's son bear many signs of inattention and distraction (this casualness in dealing with the corpse accompanied further acts of this drama to the very end) – Norwid was for Mickiewicz an anonymous person, part of the collective, after all, a “skinny writer”¹⁹; Mickiewicz considered Norwid's exhumation and transfer from Ivry to Montmorency to be rather a duty to the exile community rather than a duty to the injured, cursed literary figure, genius. He was also considerably wrong about the biography of the author of *Promethidion* – he considered him one of the emigrants in 1831, which is evidenced in his letter to Maria Gorecka of 11 July 1888:

I learned that the ashes of Cyprian Norwid are to be thrown away. The emigrants from 1831 get out of this world so quickly that it is increasingly difficult to provide them with an eternal place of rest. Although there is a collective tomb, there are only few free places left, the families of the deceased are storming the Commission²⁰.

And further, the information about the amount needed to move the body is given: “A place in a collective tomb costs 200 francs”²¹. Mickiewicz collected more: from Michalina Zaleska née Dziekońska alone it was 100 roubles – therefore he obtained the value of exactly 300 francs, which he managed in a not entirely comprehensible way (why did Gałęzowski for the money, 100 francs higher than the starting price, buy only a 15-year concession, non-temporal? If the amount of 300 francs proved to be insufficient, why did they not continue the collection, and limited only to the rich donation by Zaleska? Astonishing in this context is the testimony by Skowronek: in his opinion, this amount would have sufficed even to buy the “perpetual” concession²². Hence, who is to blame the most: Mickiewicz? Dybowski? Gałęzowski?). As a result, a free crypt in one of the Polish

¹⁹ The only (sic!) mention of Cyprian Norwid in *Pamiętniki* by Władysław Mickiewicz comes from Chapter 2, vol. I and is quite ambivalent, or even unfriendly – it suggests intellectual limitation or rather narrow-mindedness of Norwid as compared with the open worldview of Adam, Władysław's father: “My father interrupted a game of chess, and Cyprian Norwid writes that these discussions should be written down, but himself he did not undertake this task; his views were too different from my father's beliefs to be able to complete such a task well” – cit. W. MICKIEWICZ, *Pamiętniki*, text re-compiled and provided with introduction, footnotes, and comments by M. Troszyński, Warszawa 2012, p. 71.

²⁰ Handwritten copy by W. Mickiewicz of a letter to his sister: A. Mickiewicz Museum of Literature in Warsaw (Department of Manuscripts) – cit. in: PWSz XI, 190.

²¹ Ibid.

²² J. SKOWRONEK, *Cmentarz polski*, p. 188.

collective tombs in Montmorency (row 9, division 3) was obtained²³. Norwid was to be rested there along with writer Adam Rzażewski and poet Tomasz August Olizarowski, about whom he wrote several times – for the last time in a striking comparison to Victor Hugo (*Dwie aureole* [Two halos])²⁴. The second burial of the poet took place on 28 November 1888. The body was placed on one of the seven floors of the tomb; on each of those there were two coffins. Most probably he was buried on the deepest level, which is indicated by the order of the names engraved on the plate: Olizarowski, Sawicki, Łaszewska, Krantz, Dyżewski, Masłowski, Jesiotrzyński, Siemaszko, Rzażewski, Gosiewski, Dobrzycka, Henszel, Norwid, Kunatt²⁵.

The tomb, which later became known as “Norwid’s” tomb was – which is extremely important – the first Polish common tomb in Montmorency. It was probably founded by priests belonging to the Congregation of the Resurrection²⁶ and was designed as a “smaller Polish heart” of the necropolis – or rather as a place for “the smallest ones” (Hotel Lambert gave this place into the hands of poorer immigrants, that tomb was to start the process of building their space, their field). The tomb was not filled completely until 1902, i.e. at the time of the expiry of another concession for Norwid’s body (1904) no funeral had been organised there for only eighteen months – two years. No matter how we would try not to define it, Montmorency was the “propaganda cemetery” of Hotel Lambert and in the 19th-century Polish imagination it functioned as a place of burial of people connected to and supporting the Czartoryski family, who themselves were largely responsible for this image – Norwid himself must have been witness to the beginnings of the “struggle for influence”, for the “posthumous church” and the “place of memory”. In fact, activists and writers at Hotel Lambert:

²³ PWSz XI, 190.

²⁴ „Będąc ledwo pełnoletnim, Wiktor Hugo jako pisarz otrzymał Legię Honorową – sumy pieniędzy za swe dzieła. Był arystokratą, monarchistą, parem Francji, bonapartystą, republikaninem, nareszcie »komunistą«”; „Tomasz August Olizarowski policzony jest palcem Dziejów do grona tych poetów, którzy nie ocenioną przez krytyków próbę wytrzymali”. (PWSz VI, 534).

²⁵ J. SKOWRONEK, *Cmentarz polski*, p. 188. This location of Norwid’s body is confirmed, among others, in a report from the renovation works conducted by Kazimierz Węglewski in 1954. The Board of the Society for the Polish Monuments and Historical Graves “reminded us that »on the occasion of the construction of a tombstone for Cyprian Norwid« the sculptor went down to the 7th floor of this collective tomb (on each there lie two coffins) and nonchalantly searched for the ashes of the outstanding poet”. (Ibid., p. 112).

²⁶ Ibid., p. 92.

already since the late '50s they had treated the visitation of the cemetery as meetings with "four Polish generations" at the graves of "the late Niemcewicz, Kniaziewicz and so many other exiles, wanderers", which was believed to strengthen patriotism and moderate social attitudes²⁷.

As one may expect, this campaign scared Norwid off, though – usually very critical about Polish activities and, moreover, very expressive in his criticism – he almost did not speak at all about the agitation at Montmorency. The poet was aware of that it was not the only "memory initiative", because he participated in other projects, which, however, were not focused on competing with "the Czartoryski necropolis", but on the task of "commemorating all without exception", not just the selected ones. The guardians of those who could not be under the patronage of Niemcewicz or Kniaziewicz – the first Poles to be buried in Montmorency – were, among others, Alexander Panosiewicz and Józef Bohdan Dziekoński, who had a great intention to "work to commemorate the Polish martyrdom", and almost a fantasy to "gather all the Polish tombs, everywhere they can be found; carve on them, if the opportunity allows, a biography of each emigrant"²⁸. We owe Norwid's involvement in this action to Józef Retzenheim. It was exactly him – through his guidance of the poet to Montmartre – that tied Norwid with a necropolis completely different from Montmorency, which can be claimed without exaggeration – with a model of national identity completely different from the "Polishness of Montmorency"²⁹.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 75. On the grave of Niemcewicz and Kniaziewicz – in accordance with the idea of Krystyn Lach Szyrma – a sculpture of the lying dead with an angel standing between them was placed. Szyrma explained the idea in line with the interpretation of Montmorency as the "pantheon of the Polish emigration": "A belief is hold in the East, that the guardian angel chooses his place according to each grave. [...] Such an angel [...] at the graves Kniaziewicz and Niemcewicz will sit, and the Polish generations will treat them as the finish line to purify their soul." (Ibid., p. 66, on the basis of a note on K. Lach Szyrma's position – BP, "Montmorency" box).

²⁸ All the more surprising is that Montmorency demanded Norwid's body (one can notice here probably Władysław Mickiewicz's influence) and that it was not transferred to Montmartre as Retzenheim's collaborator. This move would be natural. The exhumation on the cemetery in Montmorency – as reported by Skowronek – "concerned probably only Norwid's tomb". Thus, it was a precedence, apart from him only few were given the same opportunity – moved only to the so-called Norwid's tomb (Olizarowski was taken there from the Paris cemetery in Gentilly). Polish tombs were often situated in Montmartre, Père-Lachaise and Montparnasse, where it was easier to obtain perpetual concessions for them, and the deceased were erected family and common tombs. (Ibid., p. 95-96). See also: P. GÓRZYŃSKI, *Groby polskie na Montmartre i ich opiekunowie*, [in:] *Polacy pochowani na Cmentarzu Montmartre oraz Saint-Vincent i Batignolles w Paryżu*, eds. A. Biernat, P. Górzyński, Warszawa 1999, pp. XVIII-XXVII.

²⁹ An account by Paulina Wilkońska: P. WILKOŃSKA, *Moje wspomnienia o życiu towarzyskim w Warszawie*, compiled by Z. Lewinówna, ed. J.W. Gomułicki, Warszawa 1959, p. 328.

Thus, Norwid's contacts with Montmorency were scarce during his life, but his relationship with Montmartre looked completely different. First, he took pride in the fact that "wszystkie groby polskie na cmentarzu przez mój ołówek przeszły" [all the Polish graves at the cemetery passed through my pencil] (PWSZ IX, 417) – he designed the bas-reliefs, prepared tombstone inscriptions and designed tombstones, he collaborated on the projects of all collective tombs founded by Marshal Stempowski and even on the graves "Retzenheim's" tombs³⁰. Secondly, he shaped the symbolic imagination, he could consider himself its architect, as in this quite unexpected way he gained access to, and along with it a rare aristocratic privilege to model the emigration-based culture of remembrance, including – as one should not overlook that – the memory of the November Uprising (stimulated by successive burials of the veterans of this uprising).

Even so stronger one must realise how much "Norwid of Montmartre", or perhaps just "Norwid-non-Czartoryski-supporter" had to be involved in the institutional activities of Hotel Lambert. For a Pole, who in the period 1860-1870 was trying to avoid any relations to the hegemonic emigration front, Paris appeared to be a maze from which one cannot escape. One of the founders of St. Casimir Department was Anna Czartoryska née Sapieha, who originally established there an orphanage for orphans³¹. This was the main role of the building in the first years of its existence, i.e. after 1846. Cyprian Norwid got there among "Scythians" and "saints" (as he himself referred to the residents of the House³²) when it was

³⁰ TROJANOWICZOWA Z., DAMBEK Z., with contribution by J. CZARNOMORSKA, *Kalendarz życia i twórczości Cypriana Norwida*, vol. I: 1821-1860, Poznań 2007, p. 600 (henceforth cit. Kalendarz I). Norwid's work at Montmartre dates from 1855 at the earliest, probably he designed the tomb of Jan Gajewski, as well as the Lelewelian (collective) tomb also known as *Chapelle gotique*. As the poet confessed in a letter to Magdalena Łuszczewska sent after 14 October 1860 – "myślę, iż przyjdzie tu liczyć na grób w grobach-zbiorowych, które na cmentarzu postawiłem" [I think that I will have to count on a tomb in the collective tombs, which I put in the cemetery] (PWSz VIII, 432).

³¹ J. SKOWRONEK, *Cmentarz polski*, p. 80.

³² "Kończę, bo oto widzę Getów i Scytów zabierających się do śniadania. A nie zawsze, leżąc nad Dunajem, mogę myśleć swobodnie o siedmiopagórkowej okolicy i o cieniach oliwek i cyprysów, bo oto Scyty już do jadła siadają –" [I conclude, because here I see the Getae and Scythians sitting down to breakfast. And not always lying upon the Danube can I think freely about this area of seven hills and the shade cast by the olive and cypress trees, because here the Scythians are sitting down to their victuals] (PWSz X, 150). Indeed, as reported by Gomulicki, "among those former soldiers there were also many adventurers: vulgar louts, loudmouths, quarrelers and thugs who were constantly quarreling with one another and, at the same time, they rose over civilians, disdaining any intellectual work and ostentatiously bragging about their alleged heroic deeds on the battlefield". J.W. GOMULICKI, *Między „Scytami” a „świętymi”*. *Na marginesie nieznanego listu*

converted into a veteran house. Czartoryska died suddenly in 1865 leaving Prince Adam a widower. Her burial was distinctive from other ones in that her body was rested in a “church crypt at Montmorency”³³.

After all, in Norwid’s case, it seems that the blame for the fateful misunderstanding should be put on one person – Gałęzowski. Neither Władysław Mickiewicz, nor Aleksander and Anna Dybowski who accompanying the burial, were not informed in time about the rules of acquiring the tomb concession. Furthermore, they were apparently mistakenly convinced that they had purchased a perpetual concession. Of course, they can be blamed for some negligence (above all, their ignorance of the concession law), however – there did not lack goodwill and philanthropy. The money collection conducted by Mickiewicz gave indeed far more satisfactory results (owing to the generous donation by Zaleska) than the dramatic collection attempted by Zaleski. Despite this, the money had not been properly spent.

In 1952, at the Polish cemetery in Montmorency a loud restoration action “aimed at maintaining its old appearance”³⁴ was conducted, initiated with the renewal of the tombs of Kniaziewicz and Niemcewicz. The total cost estimate made by sculptor Kazimierz Węglewski amounted to 51,000 francs³⁵. “Norwid’s tomb” was restored for 3232 francs obtained from the regular, annual 10-franc contributions, and with the help of the French Polonia, which, on the one hand, compared to the costs allocated for a thorough renewal of Delfina Potocka’s tomb was a really symbolic amount (here, just two generous donations proved to suffice³⁶), on the other hand, as emphasised by Skowronek, the standard costs of renovation were in fact much lower: they ranged between 300 and 948 francs³⁷, against such minimal donations, Norwid’s tomb had to remain priority for Węglewski.

Norwida, „Poezja” 1975, vol. 1(50), p. 13. See also: E. LIJEWSKA, *Zakon rycerski czy „kolonia karna”?* *Norwid w Domu św. Kazimierza*, [in:] *Biografie romantycznych poetów*, ed. Z. Trojanowiczowa, J. Borowczyk, Poznań 2007, pp. 277-285.

³³ This was how an anonymous correspondent of “Czas” present at the funeral described the place: “After the sung Mass the body of the Princess was temporarily lowered to the church crypts”. (Ibid., telegrams and correspondence from the funerals of A.J. Czartoryski, Maria Amparo Czartoryska and Anna Czartoryska, „Czas” 17 VII-2 VIII 1861, 23-28 VIII 1864, 11 i 13 I 1865; BP MS 441, p. 54).

³⁴ Ibid., p. 112.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Donations of Alfred Potocki’s wife and a certain D. Ledóchowska (Aleksandrowa). (Ibid., p. 113).

³⁷ Ibid., p. 112.

A kind of Copernican revolution in building a posthumous history of Norwid's body, or maybe: the "Richardian" or "Chateaubriandian" moment *par excellence* occurred in the year 1967. We must admit, however, that the version of events, with which Juliusz Wiktor Gomulicki was acquainted, was not based on hard facts – documents, but only on indirect sources: an interview, certificates and a letter. It is probably the most important reason why the judgement about the disappearance of Norwid's body presented by the editor of *Pisma wszystkie* in the annexes (1976), despite everything, still remains only a pessimistic, though plausible hypothesis. The results of Józef Fert's query seems to imply that no documentation related to Norwid's second exhumation has survived to this day: "I could neither confirm nor deny Gomulicki's suggestion on the final resting place of the poet's ashes; I could however find the documentation related to the transfer of Norwid's body from the cemetery in Ivry to Montmorency"³⁸. We know about it by building our knowledge on the subject on the basis of a letter by Józef Skrochowski to Leopold Wellisz sent from Krakow on 2 August 1908 and Julia Rylska's (Skrochowski's cousin) account. Of course, we owe these testimonies to the query conducted by Gomulicki³⁹.

From the data collected by him there emerges a fairly clear picture of the events. Again – the case of the exhumation and transfer of Norwid's body goes into the hands of the supporters of the Czartoryski family. This time, the notification of the urgent need to extend the concession went to Edward Pożerski, who involved in the case his daughter Emilia Longe née Pożerska. She, in turn, is believed to have asked for help Józef Skrochowski, secretary of Prince Witold Czartoryski. Another burial was not publicised among the emigrants, Norwid's remains were moved – as finally established by Rylska in a private conversation with Gomulicki – to the "collective tomb of the household members of Hotel Lambert"⁴⁰. It is impossible to specify the address. Firstly, it is impossible to satisfactorily determine what distinguished the tombs of the so-called household members of Hotel Lambert from other Polish collective tombs

³⁸ J. FERT, *Nieznane norwidiana w Bibliotece Polskiej w Paryżu*, „Studia Norwidiana” 1993, vol. 11, p. 134.

³⁹ PWSz XI, 191-192, 197. Gomulicki published some of the results of his research already in 1966, in "Kierunki": J.W. GOMULICKI, *Dwa groby C. N.*, „Kierunki” 1966, no. 44. One should not forget about the parallel query conducted at the same time by Krystyna Zbijewska, whom Gomulicki evokes in the annex to *Pisma wszystkie*, acknowledging also that "on that occasion she committed a serious error by situating Norwid's true (current) tomb where his remains were exhumed from in 1904". K. ZBIJEWSKA, *Przecierpiał lat 40 oddalenia od ojczyzny*, „Dziennik Polski” 1967, no. 119.

⁴⁰ PWSz XI, p. 191, 197.

at the cemetery in Montmorency. Secondly, there are many such completely non-isolated tombs in the Polish part of the necropolis, thus the search is not possible for purely practical reasons (it is not possible to select one place of exhumation).

It seems that modern field of Norwid Studies is still not aware of this gap, it ignores its symbolic consequences or considers it trivial. Perhaps it rightly considers the whole thing symbolically harmless. Perhaps no good would be achieved by describing a complex situation of Norwid's posthumous fate in terms of pathos and taking recourse to Richard, reading these facts in a language of some dark posthumous trap set for the author of *Assunta* or even worse – resorting to rhetorical games, organizing “witch hunts”. To some extent, Gomulicki was “Richardian” in this respect. It is good that his way – articulated and conscious in the discipline – remains unexplored in a wise manner, it does not attract the hunters of funeral scandals. It is good that when thinking about it, we do not provoke a discussion on “taking the bones away”, that we are not constantly having in our memory the inscription on one of the boards of a Governor Gymnasium, which was read by Cyprian and Ludwik Norwid in their youth and left a great impression on them: *Exoriare aliquis nostris ex ossibus ultor*⁴¹.

Translated by Rafał Augustyn

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⁴¹ “Rise up from our bones, avenging spirit” (*Aeneid* by Virgil, Book VI, l. 620), “from this song will arise an avenger of our bones” (paraphrase: A. MICKIEWICZ, *Konrad Wallenrod*, l. 237). “In response to a threatening question asked by the rector as to who dared such insolence, Baliński stood up and declared that he did, which was not true, because – as it would later turn out – the son of the guardian was guilty of it” (account by Felicjan Faleński of 26 November 1833, the day of the execution of Artur Zawisza and the conspirators, who were directed by: Giecołda, Palmarta and Szpeka). *Kalendarz I*, pp. 21-22.

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ON "TAKING THE BONES AWAY":
THE BODY OF CYPRIAN NORWID
AND MONTMORENCY

S u m m a r y

Taking into account the funeral scandal related to the poet's burial, it can be rather difficult to study the fates of Norwid's body or to put under scrutiny the whole problem area of the poetic "necrography" of the author of *Promethidion* as well of the broadly understood funeralism of the Great Emigration. In the sense presented above, the author follows the steps taken by Stanisław Rosiek, who focused his research on Adam Mickiewicz's body and devoted him a monograph entitled *Zwłoki Mickiewicza. Próba nekrografii poety* [Mickiewicz's body: an attempt at the poet's necrography]. The necrographic myth related to Cyprian Norwid has never emerged and is very unlikely to develop in the future. Yet, it may be worthwhile to venture an opposite myth in Norwid studies, which can be described with the use of the metaphor proposed by Jean-Pierre Richard of "depriving culture of the bones of (its) fathers." The article also takes a view of Norwid as "an émigré against the émigrés" in the sense of his opposition to the funeral propaganda of the supporters of the Czartoryski Family using the Montmorency cemetery, while Norwid contested their choice, acting as "Norwid of Montmartre."

Key words: Norwid; Montmorency; Montmartre; Hotel Lambert; tomb concession; funeralism.

Słowa kluczowe: Norwid; Montmorency; Montmartre; Hotel Lambert; koncesja grobowa; funeralizm.

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