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LUDWIK NORWID
AND THE MYSTERY OF HIS BURIAL PLACE

The historical and literary interest in Ludwik Norwid results not so much from the rank of his artistic work as from the fact that he was brother to Cyprian. Yet he undoubtedly belonged to the most colourful figures of Polish emigration. His fate can be viewed as no less tragic than that of the author of *Vade-mecum*. Ludwik's history is relatively well known thanks to the research of Juliusz W. Gomulicki and Zofia Trojanowiczowa. That does not mean, however, that the state of research is fully satisfactory.

Some doubts concern e.g. the circumstances in which he obtained a passport which allowed him to leave Poland and go to France in 1847. Based on the book *Uczestnicy ruchów wolnościowych w latach 1832-1885*¹, Trojanowiczowa gives April as the date, while Gomulicki claims that Ludwik obtained the permission to leave in August (based on currently non-existent Files of the Temporary Military-Investigation Commission). It is also difficult to state with certainty when Ludwik arrived in Paris. In this matter, Trojanowiczowa herself quotes two contradictory data: *Literatura XIX wieku* states that "in May he was already in Paris"², and *Kalendarium*³... dates his arrival with a simple "before 27th September", with the information based on the notes of his travelling companion, Józef F. Zieliński, *Wspomnienia z tulactwa*⁴. And the obituary published in "Kłosy" states – the likely source being "Echo" – that Ludwik was supposedly to "go to Paris around 1845 with the intention of studying medical sciences", yet that information seems to

¹ *Uczestnicy ruchów wolnościowych w latach 1832-1885 (Królestwo Polskie). Przewodnik biograficzny*, W.A. Dżakow et al (eds.), Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1990, p. 321.

² Z. TROJANOWICZOWA, *Ludwik Norwid*, [in:] *Literatura krajowa w okresie romantyzmu, 1831-1863*, M. Janion, B. Zakrzewski, M. Dernałowicz (eds.), Kraków 1988, p. 344.

³ Z. TROJANOWICZOWA, E. LIJEWSKA with M. PLUTA, *Kalendarz życia i twórczości Cypriana Norwida*, vol. II: *1861-1883*, Poznań 2007 (further as *Kalendarz II*).

⁴ J.F. ZIELIŃSKI, *Wspomnienia z tulactwa*, prep. by E. Wróblewska, Warszawa 1989, p. 288.

be quite improbable due to the above-mentioned permission to leave the country which he did not receive until 4 years later⁵.

Those shifts, be they of little significance, concerning the dates of certain events in Ludwik's life are just some selected examples. His romantic biography provides more details which have not yet been settled with certainty.

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The circumstances which conditioned the Warsaw troubles of the oldest son of Jan Norwid included his visit in Spa in 1866. Consumed by gambling, in a gaming house Ludwik lost the remaining finances of his wife Anna, born Jarnowska, and escaped to Homburg for money borrowed from a hotelkeeper. In Homburg, he lost the rest of that money as well. According to the account of the hotelkeeper's wife, written 40 years after that event:

“The late Ludwik N. lost everything on that day in the gaming house in Spa and lay low. Wanted notices were issued for him, and Mrs Anna, whom he left at the mercy of events, faced arrest, and so she had to run at once, traversing the mountains. The people from whom Mr and Mrs Ludwik rented a flat, made significant claims against them for the rental, maintenance, etc., and to settle those liabilities and also other debts of Ludwik N., that trunk was sold. The trunk did hold important documents, like the passport of Ludwik N., but there were no manuscripts of Cyprian at all [...]”⁶

Devastated with the situation of “jedynego brata, jakiego miał jeszcze” (PWsz IX, 278) [the only brother he still had], the author of *Rzecz o wolności słowa* – wishing to help the bankrupt couple and show gratitude for the kindness they'd shown him for five years – came to Spa, probably with the intention of taking care of Anna. He placed her with the family of Józef Dybowski and despite his own difficult financial situation he also supported and comforted his brother, who finally decided to return to Paris.

On 18th April 1867, Cyprian sent a letter to Joanna Kuczyńska, in which he presented the dramatic situation of his relatives and asked her to receive “na parę miesięcy bratową moją w kąciaku jakim u siebie na wsi” (PWsz IX, 279) [my sister-in-law for a few months in some nook in your place in the country] in Poland (in Korczew). In that time he wanted to complete the formalities and find a different place, for “i moralnie, i wszechstronnie to będzie

⁵ A. NIEWIAROWSKI, *Nekrolog Ludwika Norwida*, “Kłosy” 1(1882), No. 870, p. 144; “Echo” 6(1882), No. 12, p. 2.

⁶ Kalendarz II, p. 272.

zbawiennym dla kobiety złamanej cierpieniem...” (PWsz IX, 279) [both morally and all-embracing, this be beneficent for a woman broken by suffering...]. About Ludwik he wrote that his brother suffered from “momentalne obłąkanie” (PWsz IX, 280) [momentary derangement]. He received a positive reply in a few weeks. Marshal Kuczyński’s wife agreed to take Anna to her home, so Cyprian saw about getting a passport for her. His endeavours did not bring the desired result, a Russian visa was not obtained, but (with the hope of getting one in Berlin which in time also turned out to be illusory) she was sent from Paris likely still in May or June⁷. The considerable difficulties in obtaining the necessary document were overcome only in the Kingdom of Poland with the help of Izabela Starzyńska. Anna stayed in Warsaw in 2 Wierzbowa St as a governess⁸.

In that time, Hipolit Błotnicki took over the duties of the busy poet. Hipolit looked after Ludwik and collected funds from the Paris emigration to redeem his debts to the hotel. He then brought Ludwik to a private boarding house. During one of the last nights of August, Cyprian was sitting with his brother who “uderzyła paralizja i odjęła mu władzę nóg” (PWsz IX, 302) [was hit by paralysis which robbed him of the use of his legs]. He must have recovered with time, however, for further information was that he could walk. A letter written a year later informs of rare meetings of the Norwids. Cyprian visited his brother, in his own words, “tylko w chwilach, gdy mogę mieć szczęście być w czymś praktycznie użytecznym, a te chwile są z konieczności rzadkie” (PWsz IX, 358)⁹. He wrote just as infrequently to Anna, as he “musiałby pisać o jej mężu i interesach: o mężu do żadnej żony nigdy nie piszę” (PWsz IX, 318) [would have to write about her husband and business: and I never write to any wife about her own husband].

Permission for the coming of Ludwik Norwid to the Kingdom of Poland was issued on 12th January 1869. On 23rd February he received a passport, and left Paris on 2nd March. Cyprian saw him off to the train, and Hotel Lambert paid for the trip, giving 100 francs for that purpose¹⁰. Ludwik reached his beloved Warsaw before 11th May. He reportedly came straight to Niewiarowski, who welcomed him with joy, but soon found that “the storms of life and weakness of character have crushed the man”. A slave to the alcohol addiction, “that wretched, derailed and fallen man – once so pleasant and sublime – became also there unfit for

⁷ Trojanowiczowa negates Gomulicki’s suggestion that Anna might have left Paris as late as the beginning of August. That conclusion follows from S. Mielżyński’s letter to T. Lenartowicz, as Anna was already in Mirosław in early July. Cf. *Kalendarz II*, p. 297.

⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 303, 308.

⁹ Translation of the letter from French into Polish: *ibid.*, p. 349.

¹⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 384.

coexistence in society”¹¹. His school friends sent him to the village of Łochów, where he lived with the family of Hornowski. Thus he was remembered by Łucja Hornowska, who had been living there:

[...] Mr Norwid – Ludwik, Cyprian’s brother, a relative and a wasted wreck. Once he used to have a villa near Paris and a pretty French wife *à la mode* – now he drank, having barely one shirt, donated by relatives, and when he drank it away, he would come to the table with a towel around his neck, which meant that somebody would have to think about new underwear [for him]. Dressed in a hideous, ash-grey jacket, in which he even slept, whence arose an anecdote that when he happened to take it off once, the jacket walked out of the room by itself; yet he never lost self-assurance, discoursed loud, mostly in French, decided boldly, intertwining *enfins* and hiccups in his speech. Since he was highly sloppy, he was given a separate place at a table, no one wishing to have him close. The said ruin was all the sadder for it used to be not a common, humble construction, but was said to rise “above all levels”, and now the man evoked only revulsion or pity.¹²

That unspeakably sad image did not change anymore until the death of Ludwik Norwid. According to Niewiarowski, a few years later Ludwik was sent again to Warsaw to the Radwan family, where – despite many kind-hearted people – nobody was able to help him rise from the downfall and poverty.

Due to Ludwik’s deepening alcoholism, on 12th September 1876 the Radwans registered him as a candidate for the shelter of the Warsaw Charity Society [Warszawskie Towarzystwo Dobroczyńności], where he was accepted quickly – on 3rd October¹³. Despite that, he still visited the editor’s office of the “Kurier Warszawski” daily, since he was publishing there his few attempts at reviving his literary output. Those were rather poor works, with low opinions from the critics, e.g. an anecdote from Lelewel’s life, a modification of a poem already published, three new poems: *Fragment*, *Cogito ergo sum*, *Pro publico bono*, which – as noted by critics – reflect his dramatic clash with the utterly new, positivist Warsaw. It was then that Wiktor Gomulicki met him. That meeting is reflected in *Ciury*, in the dramatic portrayal of a broken-down, sick penman-pauper¹⁴.

Ludwik Norwid died on 23rd December 1881 in the Institution for Poor Old People and Invalids run by the Warsaw Charity Society. His wife Anna was stay-

¹¹ PÓLKOZIC [A. NIEWIAROWSKI], *Ludwik Norwid (wspomnienie pośmiertne)*, “Echo” 1882, No. 12.

¹² Quoted after: *Kalendarz* II, p. 387.

¹³ Cf. J.W. GOMULICKI, *Zabłąkany pielgrzym. Rzecz o Ludwiku Norwidzie*, “Przegląd Współczesny” 1935, No. 164, p. 398.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

ing outside of Warsaw at that time. The papers of the deceased poet were given to Władysław and Zofia Radwan¹⁵. In his article *Zabłąkany pielgrzym* [*Lost Pilgrim*], Juliusz Wiktor Gomulicki thus wrote about the circumstances of the death of Ludwik Norwid:

On the very morning of Christmas Eve of 1881, there came to the office of St John's church two paupers, Kacper Welke and Antoni Jakubowski, both illiterate, and stated that on the previous day (23 XII), at eleven in the morning, in the home of the Charity Society in 370 Krakowskie Przedmieście St, Ludwik Norwid died¹⁶.

Ludwik's body, in a poor hospital coffin, was not accompanied to the cemetery by any of his once numerous relatives and friends¹⁷. That brief fragment contains abundant substantial data, but lacks one – the key information for this paper: it does not specify where Ludwik Norwid was buried.

The first and almost automatic supposition would be the Powązki Cemetery, which holds the Norwid family tomb. It is most likely the resting place of Ludwik's father, Jan Norwid, and two younger siblings: Ksawery Norwid and Paulina Suska. The problem is the lack of the slightest mention of Ludwik, and the circumstances of his death seem to contradict the hypothesis of his resting place being in the Powązki Cemetery. He died as a homeless man in the Institution for Poor Old People and Invalids run by the Warsaw Charity Society¹⁸. Gomulicki's note provides the information that there was no one to pay and make sure that his body be placed with those of his closest relatives. At that time, the last living Norwid: his younger brother Cyprian – also utterly poor, desolate and sick – was spending his last years in St. Casimir's nursing home in the outskirts of Paris, forgotten by the whole world, quite like Ludwik. He thus had no real chance to provide that last service to his relative. He likely learned about his brother's death after the funeral, anyway.

The very meagre number of obituaries published in the papers of that time, and the time intervals between the publishing and the death (the one in the "Przegląd Tygodniowy" weekly was published three weeks after the funeral) ruthlessly con-

¹⁵ Cf. *ibid.*; *Kalendarz II*, p. 733.

¹⁶ Death records of the parish of St John in Warsaw (year 1881). The Warsaw Charity Society gave the papers left by Norwid to Mr and Mrs Władysław Radwan (i.e. the widow of Mr Komierowski, and her second husband).

¹⁷ J.W. GOMULICKI, *Zabłąkany pielgrzym*, p. 396.

¹⁸ Where he was registered on 12th September 1876 as a candidate, backed by the Radwan couple and Adam Pług, and accepted already on 3rd October of the same year.

firm the supposition that it was highly unlikely that anyone took care of burying that forgotten writer in his family tomb.

THE WARSAW CHARITY SOCIETY
AND THE WARSAW ARCHDIOCESE “CARITAS”

The author felt she should examine the highest possible number of places which could hold the answer to the puzzling question which has become the main aspect of this paper. On reading publications which had any information on the topic¹⁹ the author focused on the Warsaw Charity Society (WTD).

The Warsaw Charity Society, one of the oldest charitable organisations of the Partitions time, was established in 1814 on the initiative of Countess Zofia Zamoyska, nee Czartoryska [...]. Its objective was to build shelters and provide medical care to the poor. In 1818, the city authorities granted the building of the former Kazanowskis’ palace in Krakowskie Przedmieście to the Society as its seat [...]. The Warsaw Charity Society was active without a break for 125 years, until the outbreak of WWII. After the war, the Society suspended its activity to return to it only in the 1970s. The Res Sacra Miser building in Krakowskie Przedmieście is still standing and still related to social aid activities – it now holds the seat of the Warsaw Archdiocese “Caritas” organisation²⁰.

The author decided to start her journey by contacting the continuers of WTD’s activity of today. The above-mentioned Res Sacra Miser chapel belongs to the parish of St John the Baptist, with the parish church being the Archcathedral Basilica dedicated to the same patron saint. It was there that the funeral of Ludwik Norwid took place. On contacting the academic priest of the parish church, Fr. Sergiusz Dębowski, the author was told to mention his name when talking to Fr. Canon Zbigniew Zembruski, the director of the Warsaw Archdiocese “Caritas”. The latter, on listening about the question of interest, recommended a visit to the archives of their organisation, but even there no one was able to provide any information on WTD archives from the 19th century, mentioned by Gomulicki, or on Norwid himself.

¹⁹ A. NIEWIAROWSKI, *Nekrolog Ludwika Norwida*; J.W. GOMULICKI, *Zabląkany pielgrzym*; IDEM, *Ciury*, Kraków 1986; PÓLKOZIC [A. Niewiarowski], *Ludwik Norwid*; Z. SUDOLSKI, *Norwid. Opowieść biograficzna*, Warszawa: Anacher 2003, p. 28; Z. TROJANOWICZOWA, *Ludwik Norwid*.

²⁰ <http://miastospoleczne.pl/web/organization?id=10> (accessed: 5.05.2014).

THE ADAM MICKIEWICZ MUSEUM OF LITERATURE,
WARSAW

The author headed from 26 Krakowskie Przedmieście St to the nearby Adam Mickiewicz Museum of Literature in the Old Town Market Square at number 20. The manuscript department of the Museum of Literature, which holds the archives of Juliusz Wiktor Gomulicki, did not have any information on the burial place of Ludwik Norwid or on the WTD archive, either.

As to Gomulicki's manuscripts, which could have broadened the horizon of knowledge on the biography of the oldest Norwid brother, it was found that some of the researcher's notes have not been prepared for the archives yet. So far, information important for the author have not appeared either in the file with materials on Ludwik Norwid (together with Tuwim, Gomulicki prepared individual portfolios for 19th-century poets, including the Norwid family) or in the description of his family's tomb.

PARISH OFFICE
OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST'S CHURCH,
WARSAW

The next place to visit was again the Archdiocese Basilica of the Martyrdom of St John the Baptist in Warsaw at 6 Kanonia St, since that was where the funeral mass for Norwid took place. Behind the basilica is the parish office, where the author sought information about the funeral itself.

On listening to the issue, the nun in the office kindly found the parish register of 1881, where under 23rd December the name of Ludwik Norwid is listed, with the number of the death certificate (532) next to it. It turned out that in order to obtain it, one must go to the Warsaw Archdiocese Archives at 3 Dewajtis St, since such old registers are stored in that building.

ARCHIVES OF HISTORICAL RECORDS

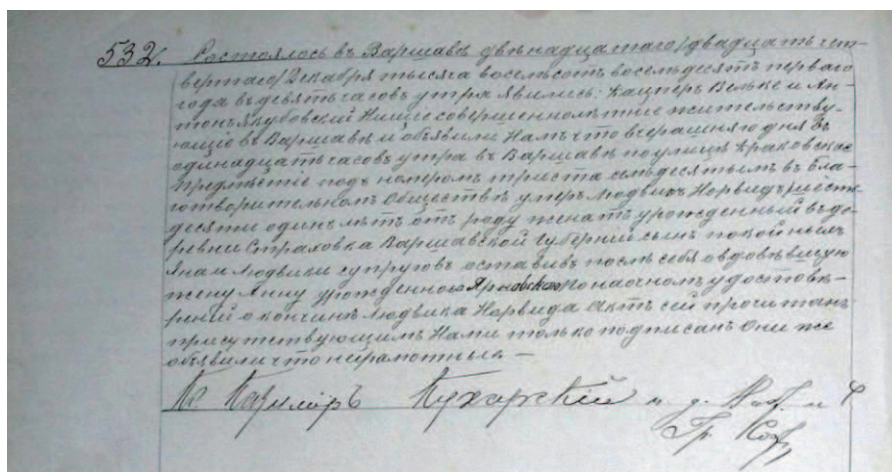
The author hurriedly left the office to seek the archives. Before getting there, however, she decided to acquaint herself with the collections of the Archives of Historical Records at 7 Długa St, which were located on her way.

On explaining the topic of the search, permission was given to visit the reading room, where in a publication titled *Archiwum Akt Dawnych w Warszawie*, in

Informator o zasobie archiwalnym, the author found some documents related to the activity of the Warsaw Charity Society²¹. However, they concerned mainly financial and territorial issues and the history of the uprising, which was not information required for the purposes of this research. The collections had nothing about Ludwik Norwid²².

WARSAW ARCHDIOCESE ARCHIVES

On reaching 3 Dewajtis St the author was able to find an assistant of the nun in charge of the said archive. The assistant found the death certificate No. 532, which turned out to be written in Cyrillic script from before the reform (certificates from early 1881 were written in two languages, Polish and Russian). Below a copy:



On leaving the archive, the author consulted a sworn translator of Russian. Below the English translation:

532. It occurred in Warsaw on 12 (24)²³ December 1881. At 9 in the morning there came Kacper Welke and Antoni Jakubowski, inhabitants of Warsaw, to inform me per-

²¹ M. KOŚKA, *Pomoc społeczna w zaborze rosyjskim w świetle akt Rady Głównej Opiekuńczej Szpitali 1832-1870 r.*

²² The name of Norwid was not entirely absent from the archive – it holds a manuscript by Cyprian Norwid titled *Bez przesady – z źródeł wszelkich/ nota bieżąca/*. Notes on the uprising of 1863, signed: Cyprian N. /Norwid.

²³ Dual dating: the first date given by the Julian calendar used e.g. in Russia, the second date

sonally that yesterday at 11 in the morning, in 370 Krakowskie Przedmieście St, in the Charity Society, died Ludwik Norwid, 61, married, born in the Strachowka village, Warsaw Governorate, son of Jan and Ludwika, survived by wife Anna nee Jarnowska. According to the testimonial of the death of Ludwik Norwid given by eyewitnesses, this act was read out to the persons present and signed only by me, as the witnesses were illiterate.

Information given by Gomulicki confirms that the certificate has no mention of the place of burial of the poet. The author was thus back at the starting point, and the only clues available confirmed where the information was not available. Yet later research indicated that this information in itself was very valuable. Elimination of successive potential information sources and burial places caused a gradual restriction of the research field, which constituted the best – and in practice, the only – method of finding the answer to the research question.

BRÓDNO CEMETERY

In the 1890s, due to the growth of the Powązki Cemetery, proportional to the expansion of the capital, the cemetery gradually gained the status of an elite cemetery, and not the burial place for all Warsaw inhabitants. At that time “the number of Warsaw inhabitants started to sharply increase, and from that followed the overfilling of Warsaw cemeteries”²⁴.

Following thus the direction indicated by Prof. Wiesław Rzońca, the author examined information about the cemetery in Bródno, which was one of the hypothetical burial places of Ludwik Norwid. The hypothesis would have been one of the major theories of the search if not for the following fact, cited after the official webpage of the Bródno Cemetery:

At the end of the 19th century, on the initiative of the Warsaw president, Lt. Gen. Sokrates Starynkiewicz, 65 hectares of land in the village of Bródno were bought from the Holy Spirit hospital in 1883. The Warsaw archbishop Tadeusz Chościak Popiel consecrated the Warsaw Roman Catholic Cemetery of St Vincent de Paul already on 20th November 1884. The first funeral – of a young girl, Maria Skibniewska – took place on the next day.

And further:

(in brackets) given according to the Gregorian calendar [translator’s note].

²⁴ That and the following quotations on the Bródno cemetery given after: <http://www.parafiawincentegoapaulo.pl/cmen.html> (accessed: 05.05.2014).

The cemetery was opened to the citizens of the left-bank Warsaw on 13th January 1885. The burials concerned mostly the poor and shelter inhabitants, at the city's cost. The cemetery was completely opened for everybody as late as 14th June 1887. The fees for burials were rather low, and so the Bródno Cemetery served as a burial place mostly for the poor, while the Old Powązki Cemetery had a reputation of a cemetery for the rich and for the elite.

The above excluded the Bródno Cemetery as a potential place of Ludwik Norwid's burial, since he died three years before the new necropolis was established in that part of Warsaw.

It was also possible to talk to Jerzy Kochanowski, a Professor of Arts and historian with particular interest in Warsaw. Below quoted is his opinion, sent to the author in an e-mail of 8th May 2014:

[...] had LN died 20 years earlier, he could have been buried in the Świętokrzyski Cemetery (currently the corner of E. Plater St and Nowogrodzka St), where the poor were buried. However, it was eradicated in mid-1860s, and the graves moved to Powązki. I believe (as does my father) that he may have been buried in Powązki, which was at that time the only open cemetery of the left-bank Warsaw (excluding the outskirts, added in 1916). The more so that the cemetery also played the role of the municipal cemetery, where poor people who died in hospitals, shelters or simply out in the street were buried (in remote side lots, usually by the walls).

On thorough examination of any sources which bore at least a shadow of suspicion on potential information somehow related to the burial place of Ludwik Norwid, the only thing remaining was to examine the one place which continued to loom somewhere in the background throughout the research.

POWAŻKI CEMETERY

Volume I of *Cmentarz Powązkowski pod Warszawą* provides information about the establishment of Powązki – highly significant to ensure, again by way of elimination, where Ludwik Norwid can certainly not be found.

The first thought of establishing a cemetery outside of the city we owe to the Warsaw Congregation of the Mission, who observed that the capital of the [Polish] Republic grew increasingly, and the Turkish epidemic [the plague] gained in frequency; – and the burial of the dead within city bounds was particularly conducive to the plague; – and, having extensive land outside of the city, in 1745 started to prepare materials for building a cemetery²⁵.

²⁵ That and the following quotations on the Powązki cemetery given after: K.W. WÓJCICKI, *Cmentarz Powązkowski pod Warszawą*, vol. I, Warszawa 1855.

Further described are problems related to the implementation of the plan (e.g. unrest related to the Bar Confederation²⁶ and superstitions of the Warsaw people), to finally learn that: “Four parish churches had cemeteries next to them: the Cathedral, i.e. St John’s church, St George’s (where the Ewans brothers have the factory), Virgin Mary’s, and Holy Cross’s”. The last of them “in Święto-Jerska St, was intended for the burial of bodies of those sentenced to death”.

When the Powązki Cemetery was established, the parish cemeteries ceased to serve their functions, hence they can easily be excluded from the list of probable burial places in the perspective of this search. The matter is similar in the case of the Ujazdowski cemetery, which was closed in 1836, after only 8 years of functioning, as well as the Świętokrzyski cemetery, closed a decade earlier. The Powązki Cemetery thus became the main cemetery for burial of the dead of the Roman Catholic church.

The only thing left to do was to head to that cemetery, although with no expectation to simply happen upon some tiny moss-covered gravestone by the cemetery wall which had gone unnoticed for ages. Yet some intuition directed the author to the cemetery chapel, where she met a passing priest who was only able to say that the cemetery chronicles the author sought completely burned down in 1944 together with millions of other priceless cards, thus irretrievably taking numerous secrets to grave with them, so to say. Including the secret which constituted the main topic of this search.

To confirm the information, the author asked about 19th century archival registers in the office at 14 Powązkowska St, which holds the administration of the cemetery, where she was directed by the said priest. The same information was echoed – the registers which likely documented the burial place of Ludwik Norwid burned down in a fire caused most probably by bombings²⁷.

The burial place was likely the Powązki cemetery, although the hypothesis lacks suitable documentation. One question, however, remains unanswered: where exactly Ludwik Norwid’s grave is to be found. Did anyone take care to assure that the homeless literary critic, forgotten by his contemporaries, be buried in his family tomb with his father and two siblings? If it was so, why is there not the

²⁶ Association of Polish nobles formed at the fortress of Bar in Podolia in 1768 to defend the independence of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth against Russian influence and against reforms, which attempted to limit the power of the nobility. Its creation led to a civil war and contributed to the First Partition of Poland [translator’s note].

²⁷ S. SZENIC, *Cmentarz Powązkowski: zmarli i ich rodziny*, vol. I: 1790-1850, Warszawa 1979, p. 29. The cemetery was a place of important storage and aid activities during the Warsaw Uprising; the graves served e.g. as hiding places for weapons and ammunition, which fact increased the power of explosions during bombings and, at the same time, added to the destruction of the cemetery.

slightest mention of Ludwik on the grave? Perhaps there was some commemorating plaque of too poor a quality to survive long, since the Warsaw Charity Society could only afford that much. Yet it is also possible, like it was suggested by the priest met beside the cemetery church, that Ludwik Norwid lies somewhere else, in a less honourable place, close to the fence, since that was how e.g. the poor were buried at that time. Thus, it is not possible to give an irrefutable answer to the question.

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There was also one more doubt looming somewhere in the background and niggling throughout the research: why no newspaper, no obituary or recollection written somewhere in a literary work had any trace, brief may it be, to give an answer to the research question.

Yet on examining successive issues of Warsaw dailies of the time, the author's conviction was reinforced that obituaries simply did not provide that information. At a later stage of the conducted query, the author realised that the reason was most likely surprisingly mundane: at that time, Warsaw had only one cemetery. The conclusion is confirmed by the following observation, even though it is not directly related to the topic of the search. While reading the successive issues of "Kurier Warszawski" in search of any reference to the matter concerned in this research, in issue 290 of 27th December 1881²⁸ the author came across an article on a tragedy which occurred in the Church of the Holy Cross on 25th December 1881, i.e. mere two days after Ludwik Norwid died.

Yesterday, as the parish mass was held in the Holy Cross Church, an ill-minded person, likely a pocket thief, cried "Fire", which cry caused a sad and lamentable disaster, as some of the population standing close to the door of the church, rushing out in a crowd on the stairs of the gallery, exposed up to twenty-two people to the risk of death or sorry crippledom by trampling and crushing.

The description of that horrible event ends with a mention of "bodies brought to the morgue in Powązki, where the families could identify them". And further: "All unidentified victims will be sent at night to the cemetery chapel in Powązki, where they will be laid out on display. The funerals are planned for tomorrow".

The author came across the said article even before realising that Powązki was at that time the only open cemetery in Warsaw. What riveted the author's attention

²⁸ That and the following quotations given after: "Kurier Warszawski" 1881, No. 290.

was the fact that unidentified victims of the disaster – whose funeral had to be paid for by the city or philanthropies – were brought to the Powązki chapel, and their funerals were planned for the very next day. From the short time interval, standards of 19th-century Warsaw and finally the close proximity of the cemetery followed a straightforward conclusion that the victims would be buried there, as well, although such information was nowhere stated outright. It is difficult not to relate that fact to Norwid's funeral. Both situations obviously differed: a resounding tragedy, known far beyond Warsaw, donations for the victims' families and long, dramatic accounts published in several successive issues of all papers of that time, a publically announced collective funeral – such circumstances were significantly different than those of the passing of a forgotten literary critic. Yet his posthumous fate was also at the mercy of strangers, and WTD would have certainly seen to his proper burial in a Roman Catholic cemetery.

Thus the conclusion follows that Norwid, like other poor people who did not have someone to provide that last service to them, is most probably buried in the Powązki cemetery in a now unidentified mass grave. It is almost an omen of the drama of his brother, Cyprian, which would play out soon after Ludwik's death – after two exhumations and moving to the Montmorency cemetery, Cyprian's body was also lost from sight, and that was only realised as late as 1967.

Translated by Agnieszka Gernand

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LUDWIK NORWID AND THE MYSTERY OF HIS BURIAL PLACE

S u m m a r y

The aim of this article is to reconstruct the circumstances of the funeral of Ludwik Norwid, which are still shrouded in mystery. The author gradually narrows down the area of her search to finally observe that – in a way parallel to the fate of Ludwik's brother Cyprian – it is not possible to precisely locate the grave. Irrespective of the above, the grave is almost certain to be located in the Powązki Cemetery in Warsaw, which could play the role of a symbolic place of remembrance, also in its current function of the family tomb.

Key words: Ludwik Norwid; Warszawskie Towarzystwo Dobroczynności [Warsaw Charity Society]; burial place; Powązki Cemetery.

Słowa kluczowe: Ludwik Norwid; Warszawskie Towarzystwo Dobroczynności; miejsce pochówku; Cmentarz Powązkowski.

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