

JÓZEF FRANCISZEK FERT

NORWID'S FORGOTTEN MANUSCRIPT IN THE COLLECTIONS  
OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF UKRAINE IN KIEV*La religion de Mr le Sénateur Comte Victor Hugo*

Czy to gdzie wulkan grzmi pod Neapolem?  
Czy rozdzierają się bliżej niebios?...  
Słyszę: „... Waterloo, Gutenberg, Tryptolem,  
Habakuk, imbir, pieprz i Barbarossa,  
Ney, Algarotti, Witikind, Cyrano...”  
(Zapewne byłby i Bolesław Chrobry,  
Gdyby coś o nim w Paryżu wiedziano!)  
Głos brzmi... mieszczanie, jak przed burzą bobry,  
Sklepy korzenne wzdłuż pozamykano –  
Drukarskie prasy, czując Wielki-tydzień,  
Tuszą, że Hugo nam powie dzień-dobry...

\* \* \* \* \*

Nie!! Victor Hugo powiedział „dobry dzień!”

Norwid's work lovers and researchers know the above text thanks to its publication in the Warsaw weekly "Bluszcz. Pismo tygodniowe ilustrowane dla kobiet" (1865-1939, with a break in 1919-1920). The poem was published in number 39, by the end of September 1880. Yet it was not an entirely independent publication, as it appeared only as part of an article by Władysław Chodźkiewicz, the Parisian correspondent of "Bluszcz", who was discussing Victor's Hugo newly published poem *Religions et Religion* in his own review article *Nowiny paryskie*, and to illustrate the negative reception of Hugo's work he quoted there Norwid's poem,

La Religion de Mr le Sénateur //  
 do XXIV, 1468 - 1472 (de Victor Hugo)

Czy to gdzie wulkan grzmi pod Neapolem?  
 Czy rodnica się bliżej niebios?...  
 Syzra... Waterloo, Gutenberg, Tryptolem,  
 „Habakuk, imbir, pieprz, i Barbarossa,  
 „Nej, algarotti, Wittikind, Cyrano  
 (: Zapewne, byłby i Kolesław = Chrobry; :  
 Gdyby coś o nim w Paryżu wiedzieli! :)  
 Głos brzmi... mieszkanie jak przed burzą bory  
 Sklepy koronne wzdłuż poramunków  
 Drukarskie praszy cują Wielki = tydzień  
 Tuszą, że Hugo nam powie dzień = dobry.  
 Nie!! Wiktor = Hugo powie dzień = „dobry dzień!  
 Cyrjan Norwid  
 1850 „

C. NORWID, *La Religion de Mr le Sénateur Comte Victor Hugo*, autograf

which commented on the erudite display of the poet, senator and count, Victor Hugo, in a sharp and quite derisive manner.

Norwid's poem was most likely written in June 1880 and soon started to circulate in author's copies in the Polish community in Paris<sup>1</sup>; copies were given e.g. to Józef Bohdan Zaleski, Seweryna and Franciszek Duchnińskis, and the said Władysław Chodźkiewicz, who probably made another copy from Norwid's autograph – the original manuscript – and included it in the above mentioned article. There is cause to suspect that when making the copy, Chodźkiewicz made some "adjustments" to the text, as can likely be seen when comparing the actual manuscript with the first printing in "Bluszczy" and the copy available in Przesmycki's Norwid Archive (the Polish National Library in Warsaw: IV 6234, k. 222 v.), on the basis of which the poem was published<sup>2</sup>. The word "likely" is used here, as Norwid's original manuscript was never compared with the copy. What is even stranger, it was known that the original did exist and that it was and still is kept among Władysław Chodźkiewicz's papers in Kiev. The question remains, how it got there, and why its first publishers (Przesmycki and Gomulicki) did not seek it, satisfied with just the first printing and/or copy made by the later owner of Chodźkiewicz's papers. There is suspicion bordering on certainty that the copy was not authorised or edited/corrected in any manner by Norwid himself<sup>3</sup>.

It is interesting to retrace the public "life" of that satirical poem from the beginning. The manuscript reached Władysław Chodźkiewicz before 13<sup>th</sup> June 1880 (PWsz X, 147)<sup>4</sup>, sent with the intention of "sharing" a copy or reading it to Józef B. Zaleski (as stated in a one-sentence letter by Norwid to Chodźkiewicz, dated by Gomulicki: "before 13<sup>th</sup> June 1880"), and perhaps also of publication, which actually happened (in that same year in the Warsaw "Bluszczy", probably based

<sup>1</sup> See Z. TROJANOWICZOWA, E. LIJEWSKA, with M. PLUTA, *Kalendarz życia i twórczości Cypriana Norwida*, vol. II: 1861-1883, Poznań 2007, pp. 713-714 (further as: Kal, volume, page).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. description of the poem in the issue: C. NORWID, *Dzieła zebrane*, vol. II: *Dodatek krytyczny*, Warszawa 1966, p. 233 (further as: GomDz, volume, page).

<sup>3</sup> As a matter of fact, Ewa Wiśniewska, a member of the Workshop of the Cyprian Norwid Language Dictionary Division (Pracownia Słownika Języka Norwida) Team at the Faculty of Polish Studies at the University of Warsaw, saw the manuscript during her work on *Słownik języka Cypriana Norwida* and introduced the differences she noted to the materials in the files of the book for the purposes of the publication, but it did not change the status of the version binding in norwidology, i.e. the first printing in "Bluszczy". I owe the information to Mr Tomasz Korpysz.

<sup>4</sup> Letter to Władysław Chodźkiewicz from before 13<sup>th</sup> June 1880, see C. NORWID, *Pisma wszystkie*, compiled, edited, introduced and critically annotated by J.W. Gomulicki, vol. X: *Listy 1873-1883*, Warszawa 1971, p. 147.

on Chodźkiewicz's copy). At the same time the poem, titled simply *Fraszka*, was sent in a slightly different version to Seweryna and Franciszek Duchiniński, as proven by a letter from mid-June of that year (PWsz X, 146-147). It is not known how the manuscript sent to Chodźkiewicz made its way to Ukraine and ended up in the collections of the Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine (manuscript section), established as the National Library of the Ukrainian State in Kiev, sign. XXIV, 1468-1472. There, among papers left by Władysław Chodźkiewicz, in the "Uman collection" (the name may be related to the fact that Chodźkiewicz went to school in Uman and his papers were included in the Uman collections on the death of the owner), according to the old description of the archive, one can (or could) find the following: a visiting card with handwritten signature, four letters written by Norwid to Chodźkiewicz, and "Norwid's gravures" (e.g. *Obrona Częstochowy* of 1851<sup>5</sup>), although only two letters survive until today: of 21<sup>st</sup> January 1857 (PWsz VIII, 301, 536) and of 28<sup>th</sup> June 1878 (that particular letter is not listed in Gomulicki's edition)<sup>6</sup>, a biographical note dated as "Passy 1875", and the poem *La religion de Mr le Sénateur Comte Victor Hugo* (on a separate piece of paper).

The poem was written by Norwid on one page of a separate white piece of paper with blue lines and rounded edges, sized 20.7 x 15.3cm. There is a signature under the poem: "Cyrjan Norwid", and below a date: 1880. It is most likely a clean copy, with no corrections, made on the basis of a notebook of which little

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<sup>5</sup> One of the lithographic prints (copies from a woodcut) of that picture was included in *Album Dybowskięgo* (Kal I 457, 469; II 773; III 28); another was given to prince Adam Czartoryski (The Princes Czartoryski Library in Kraków). The information in the Kiev *norwidiana* collection of Chodźkiewicz probably also concerns a copy of the poet's picture (the woodcut used for printing was made by the Parisian engraver Pierre Lacoste) published in Eustachy Iwanowski's (ps. Eustachy Helleniusz) book *Matka Boska na Jasnej Górze, Królowa Korony Polskiej. Pamiątka z pielgrzymki odbytej w R.P. 1848*, Paris 1852. Basic information on Władysław Chodźkiewicz (ca. 1820-1898), who was staying in Paris while the said book was prepared for printing (1851) and probably became better friends with Norwid, from whom he could have received the lithograph (or perhaps even the original), is found in *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*; see I. ŚLIWIŃSKA, *Chodźkiewicz Władysław*, PSB, vol. III, W. Konopczyński (ed.), Kraków 1937, p. 380. It might be an interesting line of research to follow the path of Chodźkiewicz's collection to Kiev.

<sup>6</sup> In *Pisma wszystkie*, Gomulicki published four letters written by Norwid to Chodźkiewicz: of 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1857 (PWsz VIII, 300, 250), of January [no day given] 1857 (PWsz VIII, 301, 250); he published that letter anew after comparing the original version with the version included in the Kiev collections, see PWsz XI, 442-443, 556), of 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1878 – in French (PWsz X, 117, 250), and from before 13<sup>th</sup> June 1880 (PWsz X, 147, 262-263). It seems that the Ukrainian *norwidiana* of Chodźkiewicz should contain one more letter – of 28<sup>th</sup> June 1878.

is known today. The title of the poem gives the count's title with an abbreviated "Cte" (*comte*); also the honorific *monsieur* is written with a conventional abbreviation "Mr". The text was written in black ink, which has turned reddish by today. The page was folded in half (the folding trace remains), and there are many other, irregular creases, also slantwise (right top corner and right bottom corner). The left corner bears an archival annotation: "To XXII, 1468-1472". The data for MS description (of November 2016) and picture of the original were made available by Ms Iryna Danchenko from Kiev.

As to the other version, contained in the letter to Seweryna Duchńska from early 1880, the manuscript was lost. The first printing among Norwid's letters of 1880 was presented by Zenon Przesmycki<sup>7</sup> in his list of versions as compared to the MS for Chodźkiewicz. The copy of that other version was made by Mieczysław Żółkiewski, owner of the Wiktorówka estate in the former Kiev Governorate, likely an amateur collector<sup>8</sup>. That lost version was titled *Fraszka* (PrzesmWP IX, 419 – the letter and list of changes with a reference to the publication in a letter to Chodźkiewicz which held the whole text); (PWsz X, 146-147, 262). It was written in early June 1880 (GomDZ II, 233; PWsz II, 407, Kal II 713-714), with the first printing in "Bluszcz" 1880 No. 39 (29<sup>th</sup> September)<sup>9</sup> through Władysław Chodźkiewicz in the rubric *Nowiny paryskie*. While reflecting on Victor Hugo's book *Religions et Religion*, Chodźkiewicz concluded his article with Norwid's poem, preceded with an interesting introduction: "But who may judge the poet better than his brother in song? A child of Warsaw, the now greying Cyprian Norwid wrote a few subsequent [i.e. following – J.F.] lines, [...] they are the best review of that strange *mixture* by Victor Hugo". Then in: PrzesmWP IX, 418 (I edition), GomOkruchoy 129, GomDZ I, 765, PWsz II, 246; first printing of II version: "Chimera", vol. VIII, 1904, p. 312; then PrzesmWP IX, 419 (only the title and list of changes), GomGromy 58; PWsz X, 147 (in a letter to Seweryna Duchńska of early June 1880).

<sup>7</sup> C. NORWID, *Pisma do dziś w całości lub fragmentach odszukane*, vol. IX: *Listy, część druga*, Z. Przesmycki (ed.), Warszawa 1937, pp. 418-419 (further as: PrzesmWP, volume, page).

<sup>8</sup> Gomulicki mentions some "collections of Mieczysław Żółkiewski"; see PWsz X, 313. Volume XI gives an important detail: "Mieczysław Żółkiewski, owner of the Wiktorówka estate" (p. 556).

<sup>9</sup> Materials of the Cyprian Norwid Language Dictionary Division give – on an unknown basis – the year 1888 as the date of first printing in "Bluszcz".

VARIANTS OF THE TEXT

Sources: image of the MS from the Kiev collections (MS); prints: first printing of version I (ed1), first printing of version II (ed2), PrzesmWP IX 418, PWSz II 246 (version I), PWSz X 147 (version II).

title: *La religion de Mr le Sénateur Comte Victor Hugo* ] *La Réligion de Mr le Sénateur C<sup>te</sup> Victor Hugo*; [...] C<sup>te</sup> [...] ed<sup>1</sup>; PrzesmWP IX; *Fraszka* ed<sup>2</sup>

1 *Neapolem?* ] *Neapolem*, PrzesmWP

2 *niebiosa?...* ] *niebiosa?..* MS; *niebiosa?* ed<sup>2</sup>

3 *Słyszę: „...Waterloo, Gutenberg, Tryptolem,* ] *Słyszę...„ Watterloo, Guttenberg, Tryptolem,* MS; *Słyszę... Waterloo* [...] PrzesmWP; – *Słyszę: „Waterloo – Guttenberg – Tryptolem* – ed<sup>2</sup>

4 *Habakuk, imbir, pieprz i Barbarossa,* ] „*Habakuk* [...] *i Barbarossa* MS; „*Habakuk – imbir – pieprz i Barbarossa* – ed<sup>2</sup>

5 *Ney, Algarotti, Witikind, Cyrano...* ] „*Néy – Algarotti – Wittikind – Cyrano...*” MS; „*Néy – Algarotti – Witikind – Cyrano...*” ed<sup>2</sup>

6 (*Zapewne byłby i* [...] ] (*Zapewne, był by i Bolesław-Chrobry,* MS; *Byłby zapewne i* [...] ed<sup>2</sup>

7 *wiedziano!* ] *wiedziano...* ed<sup>2</sup>

8 *brzmi... mieszczenie,* ] *brzmi... mieszczenie* PrzesmWP; *grzmi* ed<sup>2</sup>

9 *Sklepy korzenne wzdłuż pozamykano* – ] *Tulą się – sklepy wzdłuż pozamykano* – ed<sup>2</sup>

10 *Wielki-tydzień,* ] *Wielki tydzień* PrzesmWP; *wielki tydzień,* ed<sup>2</sup>

11 [...] *nam powie dzień-dobry...* ] [...] *dzień dobry* PrzesmWP; [...] *powie nam „dzień dobry!”* ed<sup>2</sup>; [...] ***dzień dobry...*** PWSz X

12 *Nie!!... Victor Hugo powiedział: „dobry dzień!”.* ] [...] „***dobry dzień!***” PrzesmWP; *Nie!.. Wiktor Hugo powiedział: „dobry dzień!”* ed<sup>2</sup>; *Nie!... Wiktor Hugo powiedział: „Dobry dzień!”* PWSz X

EXPLANATIONS

Władysław Chodźkiewicz (ca. 1820-1898) was born near Tulchyn in Podolia. He went to school in Uman, later in Berdychiv and Kiev. Since 1847 he was abroad, on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. 1851 he spent in Paris, where he met many outstanding representatives of Polish emigration, with Adam Mickiewicz in the forefront. In 1854-1856 he participated in the Crimean War in Napoleon's staff as a translator (he knew Eastern languages, including ancient ones). After

the war he settled in Paris, taking high positions in French railroad (he worked e.g. as the general inspector of western railroad). He left a considerable collection of literary and scientific works, e.g. a treatise in French on newly discovered cuneiform inscriptions in Persepolis (Paris 1876<sup>10</sup>), the same treatise in Polish [in:] “Rozprawy Wydziału Filologicznego Akademii Umiejętności”, 1885; *Obrazy historyczne polskie z XVI i XVII wieku Trzy lilie, opowiadanie ś. p. p. J. Szczygielskiego*, Vilnius 1846. His acquaintance with Norwid dates back to late 1850; their meeting at that time is mentioned in Norwid’s letter to Józef B. Zaleski: “Był u mnie Chodźkiewicz, który już też zapewne pozdrowił Cię” (PWsz VIII, 114) [Chodźkiewicz visited me, who has likely already greeted you]. The acquaintance continued and intensified, as in one of the letters the poet mentions help for his cousin: “Szanowny i Kochany Władysławie – / Bardzo Ci dziękuję, iż znalazłeś trochę czasu [...] Raczyleś się zająć, Bracie, interesem w Twoją nie wchodzącym możebność – i dobroć Twa jedynie uczyniła to” (letter of January 1857: PWsz VIII, 301) [“Dear, Kind Władysław – / Thank you so much for finding some time [...] You were kind enough, Brother, to be bothered with business beyond your possibilities – and only your kindness achieved it”]. It is thus not surprising to find a somewhat sarcastic remark on that acquaintance in a letter from Józef B. Zaleski of 15<sup>th</sup> June 1880: “Widzę, żeś Ty teraz, Panie Władysławie u niego w łaskach” (PWsz X, 263) [“I see that you, Władysław, are now in his good graces”]. For many years, Chodźkiewicz was the Parisian correspondent of the Warsaw “Bluszcz”, and it was through him that Norwid’s poem *La religion de Mr le Sénateur Comte Victor Hugo* (MS of the poem now in the collections of the Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine in Kiev) appeared in print<sup>11</sup>. The text of that commentary-column is given below:

Nie schodząc z religijnej placówki powiedzmy tu słowo o nowym dziełku Wiktora Hugo: *Religions et Religie (Religie i Religia)*. Tutaj nie idzie rzecz wcale o dogmat, o historię, o wiarę i prawdę; tu rzecz cała stoi na wierszach, jakie umie odkuć na swoim kowadle ten nowożytny Tytan Metromanii. Związku, konsekwencji, logiki i zdrowego sądu nie potrzeba tu szukać wcale. Jest to rodzaj wierszowanego pamfletu, w którym rozhukany bard, jakby prawdziwy pogański piewca, miota słowami jak grochem – który też szczęśliwie uderza o ścianę!... Ale któż lepiej może osądzić poetę niż brat jego po lutni? Dziecię Warszawy, dziś przyprószony siwizną Cyprian Norwid, napisał kilka następnych wierszy,

<sup>10</sup> Published in the Parisian “Proceedings of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres” as: Ladislas Chodzkiewicz, *Nouvelle interprétation d’une inscription cunéiforme de Persépolis*, par M[onsieur] Chodzkiewicz. “Comptes rendus des séances de la Academie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres”. V. XX, N. 1, 1875, pp. 89-97. II.

<sup>11</sup> See PSB III, 380.

które posyłam Wam, bo pod żartobliwą i ironiczną formą są one najlepszą recenzją tej dziwnej *mieszaniny* Wiktora Hugo. (PWsz X, 263).

[Leaving not the religious area, let us say a word here of the new worklet by Victor Hugo: *Religions et Religie (Religions and Religion)*. The matter is not about the dogma, history, faith or truth; the whole matter here rests on the poems which that modern Titan of Metromania is able to hammer out on his anvil. You need not look here for relation, consequence, logic or common sense at all. Tis a kind of a pamphlet in verse, in which the unbridled bard, like a true pagan songster, pours words like water – thankfully, pretty much into the sieve!... But who may judge the poet better than his brother in song? A child of Warsaw, the now greying Cyprian Norwid wrote a few subsequent lines, which I am sending to you, for in all their facetious and ironic form they are the best review of that strange *mixture* by Victor Hugo.]

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#### ZAPOMNIANY RĘKOPIS NORWIDA W ZBIORACH NARODOWEJ BIBLIOTEKI UKRAINY W KIJOWIE

#### S t r e s z c z e n i e

Artykuł przedstawia miejsce przechowywania (Narodowa Biblioteka Ukrainy w Kijowie), stan zachowania oraz zestawienie ze znanymi publikacjami jednego z późnych wierszy Norwida, który jest rodzajem ironicznej zaczepki wobec bałwochwalczego stosunku ówczesnej Republiki Francuskiej w stosunku do Victora Hugo. Rękopis ten nie stanowił, jak dotąd, jednego z istotnych materiałów w opracowaniach edytorskich dzieł Norwida; korzystano w nich z pierwodruku wiersza zamieszczonego w ramach felietonu Władysława Choźkiewicza w warszaw-



skim czasopiśmie „Bluszcz” 1880, nr 39 oraz na podstawie jego kopii, którą otrzymał Chodźkiewicz od Norwida. W artykule zestawione zostały różnice tekstowe (głównie interpunkcyjne) między znanymi przekazami wiersza i jego kijowskim autografem.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Cyprian Norwid; autograf; kopia autografu; *La religion de Mr le Sénateur Comte Victor Hugo*; Władysław Chodźkiewicz; „Bluszcz”; Kijów; Humań.

## NORWID'S FORGOTTEN MANUSCRIPT IN THE COLLECTIONS OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF UKRAINE IN KIEV

### S u m m a r y

The article presents the place of keeping (National Library of Ukraine in Kiev), the state of preservation and the juxtaposition with well-known publications of one of Norwid's late poems, which is a kind of ironic mockery of the idolatry attitude of the French Republic of that time towards Victor Hugo. The manuscript has not been previously used as an important material in any editorial compilations of Norwid's works; they used the first print of the poem published as part of Władysław Chodźkiewicz's feature in the Warsaw periodical "Bluszcz" 1880, vol. 39, and its copy, which Chodźkiewicz received from Norwid. The article presents textual differences (relating mainly to punctuation) between the known versions of the poem and its Kyivan autograph.

**Key words:** Cyprian Norwid; autograph; copy of the autograph; *La religion de Mr le Sénateur Comte Victor Hugo*; Władysław Chodźkiewicz; "Bluszcz"; Kiev; Uman.

*Translated by Rafał Augustyn*

JÓZEF FRANCISZEK FERT – Prof., Ph.D., deputy editor of "Studia Norwidiana", member of the editing team among others for: Cyprian Norwid's *Dzieła wszystkie*, Józef Czechowicz's *Pisma zebrane*, Edmund Bojanowski's *Notatki*; e-mail: jozefert@gmail.com