

# NOTAE NUMISMATICAE

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# ZAPISKI NUMIZMATYCZNE



Tom XVIII

MUZEUM NARODOWE W KRAKOWIE  
SEKCJA NUMIZMATYCZNA  
KOMISJI ARCHEOLOGICZNEJ PAN  
ODDZIAŁ W KRAKOWIE

Kraków 2023



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Elżbieta Hutten-Czapska née Meyendorff (1833–1916), autor I. Makarov, 1880

Elżbieta Hutten-Czapska z domu Meyendorff (1833–1916), autor I. Makarow, 1880

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W roku 2023 przypada 120. rocznica Daru Rodziny Czapskich. Jego autorką była Elżbieta Hutten-Czapska z domu Meyendorff (1833–1916) i jej synowie Jerzy (1861–1930) i Karol (1860–1904) Hutten-Czapscy. Dar hrabiego Emeryka Hutten Czapskiego (1828–1896), obejmujący znakomitą kolekcję numizmatów polskich i z Polską związanych oraz zaprojektowany według jego życzeń i dokończony przez wdowę pawilon muzealny, złożony na rzecz Gminy Miasta Kraków, czyli de facto Narodu Polskiego, miał olbrzymie znaczenie nie tylko dla jakości kolekcji numizmatycznej Muzeum Narodowego w Krakowie, ale także dla rozwoju całościowo pojmowanej numizmatyki polskiej. Ponad 11 tysięcy polskich monet, medali i pieniędzy papierowych, wśród nich wiele unikatów lub rzadkości, stanowiło, stanowi i będzie stanowić podstawę dla organizowanych przez Muzeum wystaw, dla edukacji numizmatycznej i ekonomicznej szerokich rzesz publiczności i wreszcie dla badań naukowych nad różnymi zagadnieniami z zakresu numizmatyki polskiej i nie tylko. Nie należy również zapominać o społecznym znaczeniu Daru Rodziny Czapskich. Poczynając od 1903 roku, do dziś całe pokolenia zainspirowanych nim darczyńców wzbogacały i wzbogacają kolekcję numizmatyczną Muzeum Narodowego w Krakowie w pragnieniu nawiązania do czynu Czapskich czy też chęci uzupełnienia muzealnych zbiorów o obiekty, których hrabia nie posiadał. Zapatrzeni w jakość zbioru zbudowanego przez Emeryka Hutten-Czapskiego nie możemy jednak zapomnieć o rzeczywistej ofiarodawczyni, wdowie po kolekcjonerze – Elżbiecie. Bez niej i jej decyzji fantastyczna, unikatowa kolekcja zapewne uległaby rozproszeniu, jak wiele innych zbiorów, a w każdym razie nie byłaby dostępna dla wszystkich zainteresowanych polską i światową numizmatyką. Dzięki jej decyzji o ofiarowaniu zbiorów męża Narodowi możemy dzisiaj podziwiać zbiory hrabiego w Muzeum jego imienia przy ulicy Marszałka Józefa Piłsudskiego 12 w Krakowie. Elżbieta poprzez dar realizowała plan zachowania kolekcjonerskiego dziedzictwa męża. Wspierała go zresztą w jego pasji już wcześniej. Pomagała mu przy pracach nad zbiorem, wykonując precyzyjne rysunki monet i medali. Pamięci hrabiny Elżbiety Hutten-Czapskiej pragniemy zadekować obecny tom naszego czasopisma.

Redakcja

Dear Readers,

We are delighted to present you with volume 18 of *Notae Numismaticae – Zapiski Numizmatyczne*. As is our policy, we publish all texts in the congress languages, with English and Polish abstracts. The contents of the current volume and archive numbers are available as PDF files on the website of the National Museum in Krakow (<https://mnk.pl/notae-numismaticae-zapiski-numizmatyczne-1>). The website also provides all general information about the journal, along with guidelines for authors and reviewers.

The year 2023 marked the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Czapski Family Donation. The donation was made by Elżbieta Hutten-Czapska, née Meyendorff (1833–1916), and her sons Jerzy (1861–1930) and Karol Hutten-Czapski (1860–1904), and comprised Count Emeric Hutten Czapski's (1828–1896) magnificent collection of numismatic items from Poland and connected with Poland, as well as a museum pavilion designed according to his wishes and completed by his widow. It was given to the Municipal Commune of Krakow, i.e. de facto to the Polish Nation, and was of enormous significance not only for the numismatic collection of the National Museum in Krakow, but also for the development of Polish numismatics in general. Including many rare and unique pieces, the more than 11,000 Polish coins, medals, and paper money that comprise the collection have been, and will continue to be, the basis for exhibitions organised by the Museum for the numismatic and economic education of the general public, as well as research into various problems in Polish numismatics and beyond. The social significance of the Czapski Family Donation should not be forgotten either. Since 1903, generations of donors inspired by this act have contributed to the enrichment of the numismatic collection of the National Museum in Krakow in their desire to follow in the footsteps of the Czapski family or to supplement the museum's holdings with objects that the Count did not have. While admiring the quality of the collection assembled by Emeryk Hutten-Czapski, however, we cannot forget the actual donor, his widow Elżbieta. Without her and her decision, this fantastic, unique collection would probably have been dispersed, like many other collections, and in any case would not have been accessible to all those interested in Polish and world numismatics. Thanks to her decision to donate her husband's holdings to the nation, today we can admire the Count's collection in the eponymous museum at 12 Marszałka Józefa Piłsudskiego Street in Krakow. Through the donation, Elżbieta pursued a plan to preserve her husband's collecting heritage. In fact, she had already supported her husband in his passion previously, assisting him in his work on the collection by making precise drawings of coins and medals. We would like to dedicate the present volume of our journal to the memory of Countess Elżbieta Hutten-Czapska.

The Editors

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## Medal “To the Ruthenian Brethren Murdered by the Muscovite Tsar for Their Fidelity to the Church and Poland” (the So-Called Chełm Commemorative Medal) from 1875 Engraved by Ernest Paulin Tasset

**ABSTRACT:** The “To the Ruthenian Brethren” medal belongs to those examples of fine relief art which represent the commemorative-patriotic trend in our medal-making. It commemorates the massacre of Uniates in Podlachia by the Russian army in 1874. Matters related to the issue were coordinated by the Medal Committee, established in Lwów (now Lviv, Ukraine) in October 1874 and chaired by Kornel Ujejski. The idea itself, as indicated by the notes in the press, came from an anonymous witness to the bloody events in Podlachia who probably also made the first proposals for the design of the dies. The final design was the collective work of the Lwów Committee, with Kornel Ujejski having the decisive influence on the content of the message and Karol Młodnicki probably supervising the artistic side. Cyprian Norwid’s authorship, commonly claimed in numismatic literature, has no confirmation in the sources. The medal was originally intended to be minted in Paris, but as a result of Russia’s diplomatic intervention, the order was executed in Brussels, while the mintage can be estimated at a minimum of 750 pieces, but most probably 1,000, half of which were intended for distribution in Poland, and the other half among Poles in exile and foreigners.

**KEY WORDS:** Polish medal-making of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Uniate Church, Kornel Ujejski, Cyprian Norwid, Ernest Paulin Tasset

ABSTRAKT: *Medal „Braciom Rusinom pomordowanym przez carat moskiewski za wierność dla Kościoła i Polski” (tzw. pamiątkowy medal chełmski) dłuta Ernesta Paulina Tasseta z 1875 roku*

Medal „Braciom Rusinom” należy do tych przykładów sztuki drobnego reliefu, które reprezentują w naszym medalierstwie nurt komemoratywno-patriotyczny. Upamiętnia masakrę unitów przez wojska rosyjskie na Podlasiu w 1874 roku. Sprawy związane z emisją koordynował Komitet Medalowy powołany we Lwowie w październiku 1874 roku, działający pod przewodnictwem Kornela Ujejskiego. Sam pomysł wybicia medalu – jak wskazują na to notatki w prasie – wyszedł od anonimowego świadka krwawych wydarzeń, który przedstawił również najprawdopodobniej pierwsze propozycje odnośnie do wyglądu stempli. Projekt ostateczny jest dziełem zbiorowym lwowskiego Komitetu, przy czym decydujący wpływ na treść przekazu miał Kornel Ujejski, a nad stroną artystyczną czuwał najprawdopodobniej Karol Młodnicki. Autorstwo Cypriana Norwida, podnoszone powszechnie w literaturze numizmatycznej, nie znajduje potwierdzenia w źródłach. Medal pierwotnie zamierzano wybić w Paryżu, jednak na skutek dyplomatycznej interwencji Rosji zamówienie zrealizowano w Brukseli. Nakład można określić na minimum 750 egzemplarzy, ale najprawdopodobniej wynosił on 1000, z czego połowa była przeznaczona do dystrybucji na ziemiach polskich, połowa zaś wśród Polaków na emigracji i cudzoziemców.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE: medalierstwo polskie XIX wieku, kościół unicki, Kornel Ujejski, Cyprian Norwid, Ernest Paulin Tasset

The medal mentioned in the title of this paper (Fig. 1) is one of those examples of fine relief art which represent the commemorative-patriotic trend in our medal-making. It commemorates the massacre of Uniates in Podlachia by the Russian army in 1874.<sup>1</sup> As we shall see, the considerable historical value of this miniature masterpiece is unfortunately not matched by the accuracy of the information about it available in the literature, both 19<sup>th</sup> century and more recent. The present paper aims to put the existing hypotheses in order, to refine or falsify them, and to set the whole issuing enterprise in the context of the socio-political realities of the time.

What can typically be found about the Chełm medal in numismatic literature today (mainly in catalogue-type works) can be summarised as follows: it was made in 1874 at the Paris mint on the initiative of Polish emigrants living in the French capital, the author of the drawing design was Cyprian Norwid, and the dies were

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<sup>1</sup> The broad historical background of the events commemorated with the medal is presented in the following publications: LEWANDOWSKI 1996 and OSADCZY 2007. More information about the massacre of Uniates in Podlachia is provided by, among others: MATWIEJUK 1995; with further literature there. The historical events commemorated by the medal are concisely presented by Julian Skelnik (2018).

made by Ernest Paulin Tasset. Of the above, only the last is not in doubt, as the artist signed his name on the obverse die. As for the rest, the matter is not so clear.

The medal "To the Ruthenian Brethren" featured the literature relatively quickly. In 1876, a more extensive passus was devoted to it by Bernhard von Köhne (1817–1886) in the pages of the journal *Revue belge de Numismatique*. Köhne was at that time the caretaker of the numismatic collection of the State Hermitage in St. Petersburg, as well as a member of its scientific council and, among other things, an associate member of the Académie Royale des Sciences, des Lettres et des Beaux-Arts de Belgique.<sup>2</sup> He gives a brief historical sketch of the Uniates, which he essentially paints as a picture of the oppression of the Uniate Church, originally firmly rooted in the Eastern rite, by the Catholic Polish lords, who sought to make the liturgy more similar to the Roman rite. They incited the peasant-Uniates against their own clergy who wished to restore the purity of the Uniate Church. The latter therefore turned to the government for help, and the army was sent to bring order. The soldiers, Köhne explains, were attacked with stones and sticks, so despite the fact that "the patience of the Russian soldier and his discipline are widely known and admired", in the end, in view of the aggressive, life-threatening behaviour of the peasants, the order was given, in self-defence, to open fire and tragedy occurred. The victims were not martyrs for the faith and Poland, because they were not Poles, but rebels acting, with Polish incitement, against the rites of their own church. This is why Baron Köhne called the medal in the title of his article "deceitful" (*une médaille mensongère*), although he did appreciate its high artistic level.<sup>3</sup>

The appearance of the medal was also reported three years later in German-language literature. In 1879, in the pages of the Viennese periodical *Numismatische Blätter*, Gothilf Kohn described a specimen in the collection of the Ossolineum in Lwów, minted to commemorate "the persecution of the Uniates in Podlachia by the Russians".<sup>4</sup> According to Kohn, the decision to issue the medal was taken by "all of Poland" (which probably means all Polish citizens from all three partitions), and he also mentions – probably informed by the curator of the Ossolineum's numismatic collection Edward Pawłowicz – its partial confiscation (more on this later). Already at that time he regarded the medal in question as *eine grosse numismatische Rarität*, though he limited himself to a detailed description.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> More extensively on him: RYSZARD n.d. entry "Köhne Bernard"; RYSZARD 1886.

<sup>3</sup> KÖHNE 1876.

<sup>4</sup> KOHN 1879: 85. I would like to thank Professor Hubert Emmerig of the Institut für Numismatik und Geldgeschichte (University of Vienna) for his help in reaching this article.

<sup>5</sup> Kohn's observation that the medal is roughly the size of a thaler (*ungefähr in der Grösse eines Thalerstückes*), i.e. about 40 mm, is rather puzzling. I will return to this issue later in the text.

The medal “To the Ruthenian Brethren” was also included in Emeryk Hutten-Czapski’s catalogue. He entitled it rather peculiarly, as “In Commemoration of the Reunion of the Uniates of the Kingdom of Poland with the Russian Orthodox Church”<sup>6</sup> – certainly to circumvent censorship – and attributed it to the Brussels mint. The very inclusion of this medal in the collection (then kept in Stańkowo in the Mińsk region, in the territory of the Russian Empire) can be considered a somewhat risky act, because, as we read in *Tygodnik Ilustrowany*, on the territory of Russia and Congress Poland

this medal was severely persecuted by the Moscow Tsar, as a symbol of the Uniates’ attachment to Poland and at the same time as a symbol of the barbarism of Russia. The holders of such a medal, in case of denunciation and finding the medal at the search, were punished on the same level as political criminals.<sup>7</sup>

Apparently, great collectors were exempted from this law, as the medal “To the Ruthenian Brethren” was also in the collection of Teofil Rewoliński in Radom, who published it both in the lithographic version of his catalogue (again under a misleading title of “Medal for the Integration of the Union into the Orthodox Church in the Kingdom of Poland”, although with the legend on both sides quoted *in extenso* in the description<sup>8</sup>) as well as in his opus magnum, published in Krakow in 1887 (here as “In commemoration of the persecution of the Uniates and their incorporation into the Orthodox Church in the Kingdom of Poland”, with drawings of the obverse and reverse).<sup>9</sup> Other 19<sup>th</sup> century publications do not bring anything new to the issue.<sup>10</sup>

Marian Gumowski was probably the first to describe this medal as “sponsored by our emigration”,<sup>11</sup> a view that took firm root in later literature. After World War II, new information was added by the eminent researcher of Polish medal-making, Adam Więcek. He strengthened the claim that the medal had been made to order by the Paris émigré circles and added that the author of the design was Cyprian Norwid, though he did not substantiate the latter claim with sources.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless,

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<sup>6</sup> “En souvenir de la Reunion des Grecs-unis du Royaume de P[ologne] a l’église d’Orient-Russe” – HUTTEN-CZAPSKI 1880: 79, no. 6101.

<sup>7</sup> “Medal bity w r. 1874 na cześć pomordowanych unitów”, *TI* 11, 16 March 1918: 129 (signed K.S.).

<sup>8</sup> REWOLIŃSKI n.d.: 178–179, no. 1002.

<sup>9</sup> IDEM 1887: 67, no. 1313, Pl. XXVI.

<sup>10</sup> See for example: UMIŃSKI 1885: 76, no. 825. He titles the medal “To the Uniates Fallen for the Faith”, considers it to be not described in the literature and states that there is an inscription under the cross on the obverse: “1873 TASSET”. This is certainly an error, as the events commemorated by this medal had not yet occurred in 1873.

<sup>11</sup> GUMOWSKI 1925: 156.

<sup>12</sup> WIĘCEK 1989: 144.

Więcek's opinion was accepted, albeit not universally, by museologists – authors of catalogues of medals.<sup>13</sup> The question that arises here is, how do all these hypotheses relate to the facts?

The events in the Chełm region reverberated not only in Poland, but also in many European countries. Leaflets with the names of those killed were widely circulated and found their way to Lwów as well.<sup>14</sup> For the local patriots, there was no doubt that the memory of the martyrs from Polubicze, Drelów and Pratulín should be preserved for future generations – the only thing left to do was to choose the form. It was finally decided on a medal, and a Medal Committee was formed, consisting of Kornel Ujejski (1823–1897), Alfred Młocki (1804–1882), Mieczysław Darowski (1810–1889), and Father Dalmacy Ufryjewicz (1812–1882).<sup>15</sup> Lwów tradition has also preserved the name of Waclaw Koszczyc (Walery Waclaw Wołodźko) (1831–1904) – a writer, road and bridge engineer, and January Uprising insurgent who lived in Lwów from 1870, where he was involved in underground independence work<sup>16</sup> – as being involved in the issuing of the medal,<sup>17</sup> but this is not confirmed by any sources. Nevertheless, it cannot be ruled out that he also took part in the work of the Committee, joining later, which is why his name is missing from the first reports. At the time, Kornel Ujejski held a lease from the city of Lwów on the Zubry, Sichów and Pasieki estates. By the 1870s, he was already a well-known and much-appreciated poet, often dubbed the Bard, and author of, among other things, the song *Z dymem pożarów (Choral)*, widely regarded at the time as the Polish national anthem. Alfred Młocki, in turn, an insurgent of the November Uprising, uncompromising patriot, city councillor of Lwów and member of the National Sejm, distinguished himself as a philanthropist and political activist, engaging in all manner of national endeavours (on his initiative, many relief and educational societies were also established).<sup>18</sup> A friend of Młocki's was Mieczysław Weryha Darowski, another November insurrectionist, philanthropist, prominent pro-independence activist, organiser of craft associations, and protector of Polish youth, who persistently

<sup>13</sup> Cf. DUBROWSKA 1998: 155; GACEK 2001: 43, no. 59; SZYSZKO-CZYŻAK 2001: 69–70, no. 71. More recently, the question of authorship has been approached more cautiously by Magdalena Karnicka (2019: 356–357, item 690), who chose not to mention Norwid as the author of the design, leaving the medal virtually without comment.

<sup>14</sup> See Bibl. Jagiell., 224649 V N 2 (<https://jbc.bj.uj.edu.pl/dlibra/publication/897029/edition/862342/content>).

<sup>15</sup> "Odezwa", TL 8, 8.11.1874: 134.

<sup>16</sup> DETKO 1969.

<sup>17</sup> "Dziwne losy medalu", *Tydzień. Dodatek literacko-naukowy Kurjera Lwowskiego* 48, 9.12.1906: 384. We read here that the medal was issued by "a committee which **reportedly** [emphasis by W.G.] included Kornel Ujejski and Waclaw Koszczyc". The uncertainty as to Ujejski's role in this venture proves that the writer had a rather poor grasp of the events from 30 years before.

<sup>18</sup> LECHICKI 1976.

aroused national awareness among them.<sup>19</sup> Another ardent Polish patriot was Father Dalmacy Ufryjewicz, known in Galicia for his many patriotic actions, who at the time was Prior of the Lwów Dominicans.<sup>20</sup> All members of the Medal Committee had already cooperated with each other in the fields of pro-independence and patriotic activities and charity.

But who first proposed the idea of honouring the heroic peasants with a medal? In a short note in *Dziennik Poznański* (in the correspondence from Lwów), we read that “the idea of minting a medal for Podlachia Ruthenians was first raised among the local [e.g. Lwów] Ukrainians”.<sup>21</sup> No names are mentioned, however. In turn, *Gazeta Toruńska*, published in Toruń (West Prussia), put the issue differently and at the same time more poetically:

The idea for the medal was conceived in those parts of the Chełm region where the bloody struggle between the Union and the schism was taking place, by one of those eyewitnesses who loved the people with all the might of his soul, and whose life became one with the life of the common people. He sent a drawing to a Galician citizen, the details of which were modified by Kornel Ujejski and Karol Młodnicki, and which was subsequently acknowledged and accepted by Messrs Młocki Alfred, Darowski Mieczysław, Dalmacy Ufryjewicz and several others.<sup>22</sup>

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In *Gazeta Narodowa* of Lwów, on the other hand, it was reported that “the first thought of minting the medal, as well as the idea for it, was given by a certain citizen from Podlachia, an eye-witness of the heroic sacrifice of the Uniate people”, but we do not find out who exactly it was, either. Further on we read:

M[r] Mi. K. to whom this citizen sent the above mentioned design, having presented it to a number of people, recently entrusted its execution to Kornel Ujejski, Alfred Młocki, Mieczysław Darowski and Father Prior Dalmacy Ufryjewicz. Inspired by the thoughts of the author of “Jeremy’s Complaints”, they slightly modified the original idea and presented it in the form in which we see it now.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> TYROWICZ 1938.

<sup>20</sup> MIŁAWICKI 2021.

<sup>21</sup> “Lwów, 28 października”, DP 250, 1.11.1874: 3.

<sup>22</sup> “Medal pamiątkowy”, GT 150, 6.07.1875: 3.

<sup>23</sup> “Medal pamiątkowy”, GN 149, 3.07.1875: 2. It should be noted that Antoni Ryszard (1889: col. 19) considered Mieczysław Darowski, whom he knew personally, to be the initiator of the minting of the medal. He wrote: “Darowski gave the initiative to mint a medal in 1874 to commemorate the murdered Uniates in Pratulín, and for this purpose he established a committee to which the following members belonged: Darowski, Młocki, X. Ufryjewicz, Ujejski”. This is not confirmed by any other source. The question of authorship will be discussed further in the text.

Could this "Mr Mi. K." actually be, as a result of a proofreading error, "Mr Mł. K.", that is, Młodnicki Karol (1835–1900), an excellent Lwów painter and graphic artist, mentioned in *Gazeta Toruńska*?<sup>24</sup> This is not impossible, although difficult to confirm at present. Młodnicki enjoyed considerable esteem in Lwów at the time, and there would be nothing surprising in this if the "raw" design for the medal had been sent to him for "processing".

But who could this mysterious citizen from Podlachia have been? Among those particularly involved in the campaign to issue the Chełm commemorative medal, Józef Barwiński (1849–1883), who also published under the pen name "Nadbużanin",<sup>25</sup> is sometimes mentioned in the literature. After the fall of the January Uprising, in which he took part as a 14-year-old, Barwiński, who had lived and studied in Warsaw, went first to Kraków, where he published in the so-called "popular magazines" (including the *Włościanin* of Kraków and the *Przyjaciel Domowy* of Lwów), and then, in the early 1870s, stayed for some time in Brussels before finally settling in Paris, where he eventually died.<sup>26</sup> Due to his strong involvement in the defence of the Uniates (in 1879, his book describing the persecution in Podlachia was published in Chicago, and he also published several other texts on the subject), he is sometimes considered to have been the initiator of the minting of the "To the Ruthenian Brethren" medal.<sup>27</sup> Such a view, however, has no support in the sources. Barwiński was in exile in 1874, and it is unlikely that he would have risked tsarist repression by visiting his native land and participating directly in the bloody events taking place there. He may indeed have taken an active part in some work undertaken by the Lwów Committee in Brussels or Paris (which, however, also remains to be confirmed), and this activity might have been significant enough to become an important part of the local Chełm tradition.

Once the decision to mint the medal had been taken in Lwów, a *Proclamation* to the public followed, dated 19 October 1874, which was sent to Polish newspapers in Galicia and the Kingdom of Prussia (distribution in the Russian partition should rather be ruled out), as well as to émigré centres. It was printed, among others, in *Tydzień Literacki, Artystyczny, Naukowy i Społeczny* of Lwów.<sup>28</sup> It is worth quoting the text in full here:

<sup>24</sup> Karol Młodnicki studied in the years 1857–1861 at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich, among others, thanks to the help of Mieczysław Darowski – DOMAŃSKI 1976.

<sup>25</sup> HORDEJUK 2012. I would like to thank Mr Julian Skelnik for bringing this article to my attention.

<sup>26</sup> BARWIŃSKI 1935.

<sup>27</sup> HORDEJUK 2012. This view was maintained without comment by Julian Skelnik (2018).

<sup>28</sup> "Odezwa", TL 8, 18.11.1874: 134. It should be noted that the news about the plans to mint the medal reached the Prussian partition even before the Proclamation was issued. In the 17<sup>th</sup> October issue of the *Kuryer Poznański*, the following short information appeared: "To commemorate those murdered in defence of the Union in Podlachia in 1874, the idea of minting a medal was taken up in Lwów" – KP 237, 17.10.1874: 2.

Polish children died for the faith. This happened recently, less than a year ago. The Polish people, against the advice of the renegades and doubters claiming the “uselessness” of sacrifice, once again demonstrated Poland’s undying spirit, and felt the need to bear witness to the truth and to protest against oppression, if not by force, then at least with martyr’s blood. We were sent a list of those murdered in Podlachia. And we asked: How do we honour these names? Medals for the famous are being minted – then let us put in bronze the names of some of those whose virtues and silent merits no one, apart from God, records. This act is all the more necessary today, the deeper we fall. For there are already voices and desires demanding, out of hatred for the German Tsar, an agreement and alliance with the Moscow Tsar! The followers of God must not choose between two devils. The very thought of doing so is blasphemy and sin. We want to sanctify the names of martyrs unknown to the world and raise them to the altar of lasting national veneration. We want to sober up the insane compatriots seeking alliance with Moscow, shake them up – and convert them to the thorny path of a penitent and recovering nation. To this end, we, the undersigned, have set ourselves up as a committee with the intention of minting a medal to honour the Polish peasants murdered by the Muscovites in Podlachia for their love of faith and homeland. We would like to mint a large medal, which could accommodate the names of all the victims. Subscriptions for bronze medals, at the price of 3 zloty [Rhine zlotys] w.a. [of Austrian currency] will be kindly accepted by all free Polish newspapers as well as persons expressly authorised by the committee to do so. All money consignments are to be addressed to Mr Alfred Młocki, residing in Lwów on Pańska Street at number 3.

The proclamation was signed by the Medal Committee. The editorial staff of *Tydzień* also joined the initiative, by accepting contributions and subscribing to two medals themselves. The newspaper began to publish the names of the subscribers.

In parallel with the issuing of the Proclamation, the design of both sides of the medal began to be collectively determined, as has already been mentioned. As regards the reverse, attention should be drawn to a medal issued two years earlier (1873) in the French capital, this time on the initiative of the Polish Historical and Literary Society in Paris (*Towarzystwo Historyczno-Literackie*). It was in honour of Teodor Morawski (Fig. 2), in recognition of his publishing the 6-volume work *History of the Polish Nation* (Poznań 1871–1872).<sup>29</sup> One side of this medal is clearly similar in composition to the Chełm medal: the centre is occupied by an open book with written pages, surmounted by a star (but without spreading rays), and a floral motif appears at the bottom (intertwined laurel branches), with the inscription occupying only the upper part of the border. The resemblance is undeniable, and it is

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<sup>29</sup> HUTTEN-CZAPSKI 1891: 169, no. 8110.

rather difficult to dismiss it as coincidence. It is therefore likely that the designer(s) of the "To the Ruthenian Brethren" medal were inspired by the earlier emigration medal, adapting the general concept to the specific, quite different content.

Only after the design of the dies was finally approved could a prospectus promoting the medal be produced and distributed among Poles and foreigners sympathetic to the Polish cause (Fig. 3). It contained drawings of the obverse and reverse, and an explanation of the content in both Polish and French.<sup>30</sup> It reads, among other things, that "This medal is a protest against the hypocritical lies of the Moscow government, against its cruel persecutions, its killings and murders of clergy and peasants who defended the faith and national legacy of their ancestors".<sup>31</sup>

In the context of the design of the "To the Ruthenian Brethren" medal, the question of Cyprian Norwid's participation in the whole endeavour should also be raised. Since Adam Więcek's publication there seems to be no doubt as to Norwid's authorship of the drawing design for the medal, but this is only true for numismatic literature. In publications on art history and literature, this matter is no longer so clear-cut. The first to question Norwid's authorship was probably Kazimierz Wyka.<sup>32</sup> Łucja Kondratowicz, in turn, while accepting Wyka's findings, writes that

A separate chapter in Norwid's oeuvre is the so-called fine sculpture – medals and medallions. His first work in this category, a posthumous medallion of Zygmunt Krasiński, was created in 1860. The next – and at the same time the last – was a medal to commemorate the anniversary of the Union of Lublin, which he made in 1869. He received three more proposals for designing medals: to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the declaration of independence of the United States, the martyrdom of the Podlachia Uniates, and Jan Matejko's successes at the Paris Exposition in 1874, but he did not take up any of them.<sup>33</sup>

Admittedly, Elżbieta Zielińska is inclined towards Norwid's authorship of the "To the Ruthenian Brethren" medal, but her opinion is based on very weak grounds, namely on the analogy with the Union of Lublin medal of 1869 (see below).<sup>34</sup> Similarly, Zofia Trojanowiczowa and Elżbieta Lijewska see Norwid as the author of the project, but they do not present any new sources to support this hypothesis,

<sup>30</sup> At the time, the publication of such brochures was one of the standard measures for the promotion of medals for which a wide public reception was assumed. Despite the probably quite large print runs of such publications, they are now extremely rare items.

<sup>31</sup> Prospectus of the medal "To the Ruthenian Brethren" from the collection of the Cyprian Norwid Museum in Dębinki. I am indebted to the director of this museum, Jacency Matysiak, for permission to publish it.

<sup>32</sup> WYKA 1946: 131.

<sup>33</sup> KONDRATOWICZ 1989: 76.

<sup>34</sup> ZIELIŃSKA 2001: 80.

and only refer to the opinion of Adam Więcek.<sup>35</sup> Finally, Edyta Chlebowska, an eminent expert on Norwid's artistic legacy, considers the Chełm commemorative medal among works that cannot now be credibly attributed to the author of the *Promethidion*.<sup>36</sup>

In view of the press information cited above, I believe that the hypothesis positing Norwid's participation in the design of the medal can be definitively dismissed, which is also indirectly confirmed by the poet himself. In December 1874, he sent a letter to Józef Bohdan Wagner, accompanied by an Appendix, in which he clearly distanced himself from the decisions of the Bureau set up in Paris concerning the Uniate medal, stating that he would not sign the declaration passed because of the Bureau's rejection of all his proposals on the matter. As he writes: "I confine myself to collecting the prepayment, which is not going smoothly because of the proclamation (...) Me being short of time and my poor hearing let justify the rest".<sup>37</sup> What specifically did Norwid mean here? First and foremost, he accused the Lwów proclamation of 19 October 1874 of focusing on problems that, while important for the local community, did not promise to resonate in wider circles, in particular among the Polish emigres. He criticised intentions to steer the nation "on thorny and penitential paths of revival", and objected to the use of the term "martyrs" in public acts, which, in his opinion, included the *Proclamation*, believing it to be too lyrical and lacking the strict constitutive force of a legal act. "The proclamation is *parochial* and *sentimental*", he wrote, "two qualities adequate for closely acquainted private individuals and nervous natures, but in the field of public life these qualities border on effeminacy. The Committee will probably issue another, less exclusive, proclamation".<sup>38</sup> As regards commemorating the fallen Uniates, Norwid first of all proposed – in line with his understanding of martyrdom as a "religious and heroic" act – a decoration in the form of a civic jewel (a ring) or the Virtuti Militari Cross, and after these proposals were rejected, he came up with the initiative of a ceremonial funeral at Wawel, with all the appurtenances of a "knightly burial". Norwid does not seem to have supported the idea of minting the medal, but he nevertheless raised the issue in the Appendix (presumably at the Bureau's request), opting for an open bid for the design<sup>39</sup> and recommending Ludwik Nabelak, who "can most aptly serve as regards the minting of the medal, if such a medal were to be fashioned in Paris

<sup>35</sup> TROJANOWICZOWA and LIJEWSKA 2007: 576.

<sup>36</sup> CHLEBOWSKA 2023: 350–351.

<sup>37</sup> GOMULICKI 1971: 34.

<sup>38</sup> IDEM 1973: 177.

<sup>39</sup> Which may mean that the Poles in Paris did not fully approve of the design sent from Lwów. Norwid, while preferring the competition, at the same time criticised collective action (so the design of the medal was considered in émigré circles to be the work of the entire Lwów Committee), writing that both sides of the medal "can only be filled creatively by individual selfhood" – GOMULICKI 1973: 178.

rather than Vienna – for the reason that Mr Nabelak has recently dealt with the same matters as regards the Union of Lublin medal and knows the worker, as well as the conditions and prices”.<sup>40</sup> It is therefore clear that Norwid not only did not express any interest in making a project for the dies (the Lwów version of which he had certainly seen – at most he could have drawn up a competing project, which would have required the approval of the Lwów Committee anyway), but also distanced himself from the whole venture, contenting himself with activities which, as a Polish patriot, he could in no way refuse to take part in (collecting subscriptions). I therefore think that Adam Więcek simply mistakenly assumed, without any source basis, the authorship of our great poet on the basis of an analogy with the medal for the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Union of Lublin, produced at the Paris mint in 1869 and also engraved by Tasset, whose design was evidently made by Norwid on the commission of a committee formed in Paris.<sup>41</sup>

Concluding the discussion on the authorship of the medal design, let us take a small detour into great art. As it turns out, among those involved in the discussion on the design of the die was also Jan Matejko,

who intended to place on the main face of the medal a fragment of an episode from this battle, as we see, for example, in the painting by Walery Eliasz. The completed project [so Matejko even made a draft project! – W.G.] is brimming with profound thought, but by depicting Poland’s emblematic thought, it speaks from the heights of history in the language of abstraction, in what we might call historiosophic language; that one [Ujejski’s] would speak more visually to the hearts of our people.<sup>42</sup>

If Matejko, then director of the School of Fine Arts in Kraków and the celebrated author of such paintings as *Kazanie Skargi*, *Unia Lubelska* and *Stefan Batory pod Pskowem*, had been involved in the medal project, the matter must have aroused considerable public resonance and emotion. We do not know whether the Committee approached our greatest painter directly (unlikely), or whether something like a closed competition was announced (also unlikely), or maybe Matejko offered to collaborate on the medal on his own initiative when the matter, after the publication of the *Proclamation*, attracted publicity (probably so – Matejko, it seems beyond

<sup>40</sup> GOMULICKI 1973: 178.

<sup>41</sup> Such a conclusion has also been reached by Edyta Chlebowska (2023: 351). The Museum of Medallic Art (a branch of the City Museum of Wrocław) does not hold any sources on the basis of which Więcek could formulate a hypothesis about Norwid’s authorship – for this information I thank Mr Przemysław Zdych of the museum. The “To the Ruthenian Brethren” medal is also on display at the permanent exhibition of the Cyprian Norwid Museum in Dębinki as the poet’s work, but again there are no sources that would confirm this authorship – for the information I thank the director of this museum, Mr Jacenty Matysiak.

<sup>42</sup> “Medal pamiątkowy”, GN 149, 3.07.1875: 2.

doubt, highly regarded the art of medal-making). The fact remains that the sublime, allegorical composition in the spirit of historicism lost out this time to explicit symbolism.

The *Proclamation*, which the project's initiators had probably not anticipated, unleashed a political storm that spread across two partitions. Immediately after the proclamation was made public, two distinct views emerged in Lwów itself on how to commemorate the murdered Uniates. In the pages of the biweekly *Przegląd Lwowski*, the following passages appeared in early November 1874:

Someone mischievous said that Lwów has a special talent for turning the most serious thing into ridicule. What more serious and sacred than the martyrdom of 18 peasants, Chełm Uniates, for the Catholic faith. All of Catholic Europe took note of this incident with adoration and religious reverence for the martyrs. That, it seems, would be enough; the fact speaks for itself. But no, the spirit of flashiness that still lingers in Lwów has come up with a medal, a medal to commemorate the martyrs, and this with the inscription: "for faith and fatherland!" These good folk died for the faith, but, dying, they declared themselves clearly with loyalty and obedience to the Tsar. The persecuted Uniate population in the Chełm diocese is also doing the same thing; how can anyone mint a medal with the inscription "for fatherland", i.e. for Poland? Great political imprudence!<sup>43</sup>

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The author points out here that such an attitude makes the Podlachia peasants into rebels, and the whole action of the army an effort to crush the rebellion, legitimate from the point of view of state security. A medal with such an inscription, it was argued, would therefore be grist to the mill of Russian propaganda (and indeed – this is clearly seen in the article by Baron Köhne quoted at the beginning), which, in justifying its action, would emphasise precisely the political rather than religious aspect of the massacre in Pratulin and the other villages – not to mention exposing the inhabitants of the Chełm region to Russian harassment. It was therefore postulated to change the legend to "for the faith of the fathers", but this proposal went unheeded.

More numerous, however, were those of opposite opinion, who approved of the issuing of the medal according to the proposed design. Thus, for example, Józef Rogosz, one of the editors of *Tydzień Literacki, Artystyczny, Naukowy i Społeczny*, first condemned the "shielding themselves with ever thicker conservatism" by the nobility and the decline of more lively patriotic activity among his contemporary Poles, young people in particular, and then wrote:

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<sup>43</sup> PL 8 (21), 1 November 1874: 834–835.

The medal to commemorate the murdered Polish peasants we consider to be one of those peaceful and solemn demonstrations which, precisely because of the silence all around, we need more than ever. We are sure that every Pole, by sharing this opinion, will contribute to the realisation of the ideas of our Bard [Ujejski], to whom, for this truly patriotic act, we send the traditional Polish: God bless you!<sup>44</sup>

Therefore, the concept of perceiving the Ruthenians as an inseparable part of the broadly understood Polish nation inhabiting the borders of the Most Serene Commonwealth, as citizens united by a common faith, liturgy and language, as comrades in arms in the fight for independence against tsarism, prevailed in maintaining the proposals of mutual legends, cultivated especially among the patriotically active Polish intelligentsia, which is clearly confirmed by the coat of arms of the January Uprising, which also appears on the medal, where, next to the Polish Eagle and the Lithuanian Pogoń, there is also Saint Michael the Archangel, representing the Ruthenian lands. Therefore, the martyrdom of peasants from the Uniate diocese of Chełm became part of Polish martyrology, which was also emphasised on the reverse die.

The issuing of the medal received much wider publicity when, as early as 23 October, a commentary on the situation appeared in the pages of *Dziennik Poznański*, published alongside the Lwów *Proclamation*.<sup>45</sup> In the article, the author emphasised that the very idea of commemorating the Uniates killed in defence of the faith would certainly gain universal approval among compatriots. "There is not and will not be a Polish heart that would not beat with compassion for the victims of Podlachia, there is not a Polish mind that would not see in their blood, besides the grave sin on the part of Russia, her political error, a hundred times more grave perhaps". He pointed out that Russia had missed a historic opportunity to appear as a modern civilised state respecting the faith of all its citizens (which would have been of particular value against the backdrop of religious persecution in "enlightened" Prussia), and severely dented pan-Slavist hopes in some quarters of Polish society. Further on we read:

In spite of this, however, we do not consider the idea of minting this medal to be fortunate in the present circumstances because of the polemical emphasis given to it in the aforementioned proclamation. This proclamation turns *polemically* against the supporters of an "alliance with the Moscow Tsar". We do not know them in Polish

<sup>44</sup> [J. ROGOSZ], "Medal na uczczenie pamięci pomordowanych włościan na Podlasiu", TL 8, 8.11.1874: 1.

<sup>45</sup> "Medal galicyjski", DP 242, 23.10.1874: 1–2, although in the passage "to choose between two devils", the word "devils" was dotted out. The Proclamation itself, without comment, was also reprinted by the *Kuryer Poznański*: "O zamiarze wybicia medalu", KP 242, 23.10.1874: 2.

society. We know only the people and movements trying to come to terms with Russia and the Russian nation if and when it renounces deeds of the kind to be commemorated by the projected medal. To cast anathema on a thought of this kind is neither right nor political.

The author of the commentary continues by saying that Russia should not be provoked in the present situation by “idle demonstrations”, as this can only backfire on the compatriots living under the rule of Tsar Alexander II. He calls for political prudence and for restraining emotions inflamed by the events, concluding by stating:

We regret the blood spilled in Podlachia; we condemn the persecution and the persecutors in the strongest possible terms; however, we do not consider it to be in the well-understood Polish interest in the present moment to commemorate these sad events with demonstrations that do not bring the slightest relief or improvement, only make the plight of our countrymen more difficult, and can only harm and impede the development of our national life, which is beginning to sprout anew under Russian rule.

Expressing such an opinion was like throwing a cat among Galician pigeons and provoked a vivid, deeply emotional reaction from the Lwów milieu. In *Dziennik Polski* of 28 October, *Dziennik Poznański* was explicitly accused of “displaying openly the banner of reconciliation with Moscow, which is all the more disastrous and compromising to national dignity when there is not even the slightest sign of good intentions to support such an idea”. It was emphasised that the position of *Dziennik Poznański* would certainly not be accepted by the Polish community under the Russian and Austrian partitions, and it was hoped “that neither in Poznań had madness taken hold to such an extent for the views advanced by the aforementioned paper to be shared there”. A fragment of Zygmunt Krasiński’s *Psalm miłości* [Psalm of love], written in 1844–1845, was quoted as a memento: “Nought is Siberia/nought the knout/but the corrupted spirit of a nation/that only is the pain of pains”.<sup>46</sup> In a somewhat calmer manner, *Dziennik Poznański* received a “friendly warning” from the Lwów-based *Gazeta Narodowa*, which had previously declared “a common principle and the same goal” with *Dziennik Poznański*. Here too, however, emotions took over, as we read that the Poznań newspaper, “which until recently presented an image of the purest patriotism, is now showing its face stained with a terrible, internal disease, which in political language is called Pan-Slavism”. According to *Gazeta Narodowa*, seeing Russia as the lesser evil and a possible partner in a future national revival was a grave mistake, one already confirmed as such by

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<sup>46</sup> Translation after: GARDNER 2015: 262–263 [translator’s note].

the ineffectiveness, or even the opposite effect (*vide* the case of the Uniates), of conciliatory approaches to Moscow. What is more – Russia, doing Emperor Wilhelm I a favour in this matter, was bringing German settlers to its territory and clearly favouring them over the Poles, condemning the latter to marginalisation. So what kind of Polish revival could we speak of here? What effect could the “Poznań courtings” have? “Extending one’s hand with a smile of flattery to an executioner who yesterday killed and today slaps, is outrageously repulsive. Vile means have always brought disaster with us. The strength of a weak nation lies in virtue, purity of principles, perseverance in hope and work towards liberation”. And then, very sharply: “*Dziennik Poznański* got a fever, raves as in delirium about the necessity of uniting with the Muscovites”, and thus “flounders into ever greater disharmony with Polish principles”. The article expressing disapproval of the idea of minting the medal was called “insincere” and “perversely written”, and its purpose – according to the Lwów press – was “to arouse doubt in the Poles and push them into the arms of the Muscovites”.<sup>47</sup>

These strong words naturally prompted a response from *Dziennik Poznański*. In early November, it published its polemic with the publications in the Lwów press.<sup>48</sup> There we read that, first of all, the accusation of Pan-Slavism based on Russian domination is completely unfounded, and that, on the contrary, no one in Poznań doubts the independent existence of the Polish nation in the future, based on its own traditions and achievements. “We do not want, God forbid, to drown Polishness in an all-Slavic chasm, but, on the contrary, to pull it out of the depths onto a permanent, independent and secure national ground”. The means to this end may be a future agreement with the Russian people, “fair” and “on clearly defined terms”, obviously if that people renounces its previous *modus operandi* towards the Poles; for the time being, however, all manifestations of the involvement of compatriots in public life in the lands incorporated into Russia should be encouraged, in order to make national existence more bearable and prepare solid foundations for a future revival. “We are not convinced that it is politically sound for the Polish press outside Russia to tease, jerk and provoke, which, of course, does not preclude thorough criticism of Russia’s conduct and ardent defence of our national interests”. The developments currently unfolding in Europe must steer Russia away from the path of collaboration with Germany, which is fatal to the Polish national interest and harmful to Russia itself, and towards a fundamental revision of the policy in which the Polish cause will play a fundamental role. This is why a policy of ruthless bridge burning cannot now be regarded as reasonable. The reaching of a shared consensus on the question

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<sup>47</sup> Based on a note in *Kuryer Poznański* – “Lwów, 30 października”, KP 249, 31.10.1874: 4.

<sup>48</sup> “Pisma galicyjskie”, DP 250, 1.11.1874: 2.

of the medal that triggered the whole dispute can be heard in the last paragraph of the article in question:

Galician periodicals are outraged by our article on account of [the medal] designed in honour of the Uniates murdered in Podlachia. No need for the outrage. We expressed our most sincere sympathy for the victims, our disgust for the persecutors. We were the first to give the names of those who died for their faith. In addition, we expressed our warmest appreciation for the idea of honouring these noble victims. We have only declared ourselves against the polemical accent which has been given to this idea. This position, from which we do not retreat, does not, however, prevent us from acting as an intermediary in accepting contributions from those who would wish to support the projected medal, and we do so all the more eagerly as the committee appointed to mint the medal, in asking us to act as an intermediary, speaks of a medal in honour of those murdered for their faith and freedom. We will do so with the same readiness with which we accepted contributions for Uniate priests expelled by the Russian government.

The *Proclamation* of the Lwów Committee was also reported by *Gazeta Toruńska*, where we read:

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As we can see, the purpose of the projected medal is to be twofold: first to honour the victims who shed their blood for their faith and devotion to the Church, and then to ‘convert the insane’ compatriots seeking alliance with Russia. Let us state clearly that we do not subscribe to such a splitting of the purpose, we do not agree with one side of the medal expressing honour to the fallen victims and the other side anathema to the living, to those standing for a political idea, be it a good or a false one,

because

the purpose of sacred commemoration should not be tainted by any admixture of other purposes (...). Let the cause of honouring those who have earned it go its own way, and let political ideas and theories, which today are still vague and have not yet matured to the point where they can be judged decisively, least of all to be unconditionally condemned, go their own way. Let the expression of a noble sentiment today not prejudge the decisions of reason and logic, which alone, without infusions of affection, we shall perhaps follow in the future.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> “Medal na cześć pomordowanych unitów”, GT 250, 30.10.1874: 1.

And the article goes on to make its authors' position clear:

We are not opponents of an agreement with Russia, but it does not follow from this that we should stigmatise ourselves as humble servants and lackeys of Russia. Such a role would make us despised by Russia itself, while openness, nobility of character and due respect for our own dignity would be a better guarantee for Russia in a future agreement.

*Gazeta Toruńska* declared itself in favour of minting the planned medal, but only if it was dedicated exclusively to the fallen Uniates. At the same time, it took issue with the expression "idle demonstrations" used by *Dziennik Poznański*, arguing that it was definitely not acceptable in the context, because "the more frequent and clearer the manifestations of our sympathy for the Ruthenian population, the more they will strengthen the old ties between us and the Ruthenians, and the more they will break away from Russia". The Toruń journalists declared their readiness to accept pre-payments for the medal, while hoping that their position would be taken into account in Lwów. They recalled that they had been the first in the Prussian partition to start collecting contributions for expelled Unitarian priests, adding: "we also expect that our support for the idea of minting a medal in honour of the murdered victims, a medal that will constitute an outstanding historical memento, will have the desired effect".<sup>50</sup>

Therefore, while *Gazeta Toruńska* supported, with some reservations, the idea of striking a medal, and eventually *Dziennik Poznański* also accepted it, *Kuryer Poznański*, published in the city on the Warta River, consistently held the opposite position. In an article summarising the exchange of views taking place in the Polish press, one could read:

The only question that remains is the reason for the dispute, whether or not to mint a medal in honour of the Chełm Uniates murdered by Muscovites. Currently, this matter has quieted down. It would be best not to raise it at all. (...) It seems to us that a more appropriate commemoration would be to write down these Union martyrdom acts in Russian and Polish in a reliable manner, in accordance with historical truth, without any political additions. It would strengthen loyalty to the Union in Galicia and help break the influence of the *świętojurcy*<sup>51</sup> who clearly leaning towards the schism; It would also encourage the perseverance of the people of Greater Poland in the ongoing struggle between the state and the Church. The political benefit will be self-evident, because in Galicia it will block the path of Pan-Slavist Moscow propaganda among the Ruthenians;

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<sup>50</sup> *Ibidem*: 2.

<sup>51</sup> Regarding the meaning of this term see: <https://encyklopedia.pwn.pl/haslo/swietojurcy;3984644.html> (accessed on 20 March 2024).

because in Greater Poland, along with the Catholic religious feeling, political civic awareness will strengthen, which will bring to naught all Germanization efforts.<sup>52</sup>

The discussion in the Lwów newspapers continued in the following days of November, in a rather conciliatory spirit, as emotions began to subside.<sup>53</sup> The Krakow-based *Czas* also joined the discussion (in its issue of 4 November), raising the issue of Pan-Slavism (described there as pan-Muscovitism) and Poles' attitude to it, but without naming the sides in the dispute.<sup>54</sup> The issue was even taken up by the Lwów satirical-political weekly *Szczutek*,<sup>55</sup> with a full-page drawing "depicting *Dziennik Poznański* presenting Russia, portrayed as a bear eating the Crown of Poland, Ruthenia and Lithuania, with the Grand Duchy of Posen on a platter" (Fig. 4).<sup>56</sup> Incidentally, it may be noted that the minting of the medal was also mentioned by *Posener Zeitung*, a German newspaper published in Poznań. It highlighted the unexpected volte-face of *Dziennik Poznański* regarding the attitude towards Russia, clearly underpinned by the desire of Poles to break out of the German embrace.<sup>57</sup> These anti-German accents could not, of course, go down well with Poznań's Germans, as the commentary made clear.

It is worth adding that, at about the same time as the *Proclamation* was issued, two pamphlets by Fr Józef Bojarski appeared in Lwów, in which he argued strongly against the unification efforts of Fr Marceł Popiel, who had actively participated in the forced conversion of the Uniate diocese of Chełm and its incorporation into the Russian Orthodox Church.<sup>58</sup> In Poznań, in turn, a book by Fr Edward Likowski entitled *History of the Union of the Ruthenian Church with the Roman Church* came out at the beginning of 1875. It was mentioned in the Lwów *Tydzień*, with the following comment: "Moscow's new assaults on the union in the Chełm diocese inspired the honourable author to write this work".<sup>59</sup> The issuing of the medal "To the Ruthenian Brethren" would thus be part of a wider plan to raise the issue of the persecution of Uniates in the Russian Empire on a national forum.

<sup>52</sup> "Medal dla Unitów", KP 266, 20.11.1874: 1.

<sup>53</sup> "Lwów, 5 listopada", DP 256, 8.11.1874: 3. See also: "Próżne obawy", DP 258, 11.11.1874: 1.

<sup>54</sup> "Kraków 3 listopada", *Czas* 252, 4.11.1874: 1.

<sup>55</sup> *Szczutek* 43, 1.11.1874: 4.

<sup>56</sup> "Lwów, 2 listopada", DP 254, 6.11.1874: 2.

<sup>57</sup> "Ein in Lemberg zusammengetretenes Komite", PZ 743, 23.10.1874: 3. *Kuryer Poznański* also draws attention to this issue – "Medal dla Unitów", KP 266, 20.11.1874: 1.

<sup>58</sup> "Lwów, 28 października", DP 250, 1.11.1874: 3. These were: "Review of the ordinance of Fr Popiel, pseudo-administrator of the Chełm diocese, issued with the intention of eradicating the Catholic religion of the Uniate rite" and "On the introduction of the Muscovite language into the rites of the Catholic religion in Lithuania and Poland, intended by the Muscovite government, with a map of the western provinces of Moscow and four statistical tables by Martynov, translated from the French by Fr Bojarski".

<sup>59</sup> "Bibliografja. Polska", TL 4, 24.01.1875: 302.

The medal in honour of the peasants murdered in Podlachia was struck in June 1875.<sup>60</sup> The composition on the obverse and reverse was carefully thought out, each element carrying its own symbolism, and together making up a clearly understandable message. Thus, the main side depicts a stone barrow (grave) with a roughly hewn village cross on top. At the point where its arms cross, a martyr's palm is depicted, entwined with thorny branches (crown of thorns). Leaning against the stones of the barrow is a tripartite shield with the coats of arms of Poland, Lithuania and Ruthenia in the form introduced during the January Uprising, thus unambiguously associated with independence. In the inscription, "the words engraved remind us of the historical unity of Ruthenia with Poland and point to their common enemy in the Muscovite Tsar".<sup>61</sup> On the reverse, the central motif is an open book "with the left side in the past thicker and the right side symbolising the future thinner, and the shining star at the top is a harbinger of blissful hope".<sup>62</sup> In this great book of history, under the words "Polish Martyrdom", are engraved the names of the fallen peasants, whose martyrdom is further reminded by two palm leaves crossed at the bottom. The fact that the book is opened on almost the last page, a detail that is barely visible at first glance, heralds the end of national martyrdom and thus the imminent casting off of the chains of oppression. No wonder, then, that both Russia and the other partitioning powers reacted to this medal with firm hostility.

In *Gazeta Narodowa* we read that

given the need to distribute such a souvenir among the nation's poor, it is regrettable that, in addition to the expensive medal already minted, a little more money was not found to mint small and cheap copper, silver, and zinc medals: the small number of medals intended for the peasants will not popularise the idea, and the drawing in Kostkiewicz's lithography cannot replace the durable metal.<sup>63</sup>

Thus, a certain batch of the medals was intended to be distributed (or sold at a greatly reduced price) to Galician peasants. Small medals were never minted, so Gothilf Kohne's observation quoted at the beginning (footnote 5) about a medal "roughly the size of a thaler" (approx. 40 mm), which he saw in the Ossolineum, is probably a misunderstanding.<sup>64</sup> The mentioned lithograph by Jędrzej Kostkiewicz is probably the same one that appears in the medal prospectus.

<sup>60</sup> As can be inferred from the fact that in Lwów the first batch of medals appeared at the end of June (see below).

<sup>61</sup> Text included in the prospectus for the medal.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>63</sup> "Medal pamiątkowy", GN 149, 3.07.1875: 2.

<sup>64</sup> There is currently no such medal in the Ossolineum collection – I would like to thank Ms. Teresa Sokół from the Numismatic Department of the Princes Lubomirski Museum at ZNiO for the information. I haven't seen this anywhere else either.

Let us now take a closer look at the identification of the mint at which the “To the Ruthenian Brethren” medals were made. Emeryk Hutten-Czapski, as already mentioned, recorded in his catalogue that this took place in Brussels, with all subsequent mentions of the Belgian capital in this context probably following that opinion from the Count, without going into the substance of the matter.<sup>65</sup> This information is confirmed by a note from *Dziennik Poznański* from the beginning of July 1875, based on reports from *Dziennik Polski* in Lwów, from which we learn that “this medal had to be minted in Belgium as a result of the intervention of the Russian envoy in Paris”.<sup>66</sup> However, it should be noted that other press reports rather suggest the Paris Mint.

In the Lwów-based *Gazeta Narodowa* the following is reported: “[the medal was] made by Mr Tasset of Paris. This workshop ranks first in Europe in terms of the beauty of drawing and excellence of workmanship”.<sup>67</sup> So we have here a clear suggestion that the medal was made at the Paris mint (as the word “workshop” refers to the mint rather than the artist’s private atelier). A slightly different wording is given by *Gazeta Toruńska*, where we read:

This medal, of the same size as the medal of the Union [of Lublin], was made by the same medal sculptor Mr Tasset in Paris, and it was made with the same regularity of drawing, accuracy and grace that distinguishes the French school of medal-making and has long put it ahead of other schools.<sup>68</sup>

The information “in Paris”, in my opinion, does not necessarily indicate the location of the mint, but may refer to the place of Tasset’s activity.

In the existing literature, the hypothesis that the medal was minted in Paris was based on quite strong premises, such as the name of the engraver. Ernest Paulin Tasset (1839–1921), a disciple of Eugène-André Oudiné (1810–1887), was a long-time employee of the Paris mint, the leading medallist during the last years of the French Emperor Napoleon III (1852–1870), an author of dies for both medals and coins (e.g. for Brazil, Colombia, Bolivia, Uruguay, Greece, Romania, and Serbia). It can be assumed that his long-standing association with the Paris mint, his knowledge of the people working there and the procedures in place, predestined him to work

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<sup>65</sup> WOJTULEWICZ 1974: 46; GACEK 2001: 43, no. 59. Some authors sidestep the question of the place of minting: KAMIŃSKI and KOWALCZYK 1969: 41, no. 352; BIAŁKOWSKI, TARKA and ŚLIWIŃSKA 1974: 242, no. 2890; OLEJNICZAK 1982: 133, no. 439; BOGACZ and KOZARSKA-ORZESZEK 1995: 146, nos. 223, 224; CHOMYŃ 2015: 247, no. 916; KARNICKA 2019: 356–357, no. 690.

<sup>66</sup> DP 150, 6.07.1875: 3.

<sup>67</sup> “Medal pamiątkowy”, GN 149, 3.07.1875: 2.

<sup>68</sup> “Medal pamiątkowy”, GT 150, 6.07.1875: 3.

with this particular establishment. The second clue is the active involvement of the Paris émigrés in the issuing campaign, resulting in the setting up of a special Bureau, whose members – according to Norwid’s correspondence – discussed all matters connected with the planned undertaking, from ideological aspects to technical ones. If the Paris Bureau fulfilled the role of an émigré “branch” of the Lwów Committee<sup>69</sup> then it was much easier to arrange all matters with the company on the spot, rather than in the capital of another country nearly 400 kilometres away. It can also be noted that the vast majority of Polish emigration medals were made precisely at the Paris mint,<sup>70</sup> and the medal in honour of the murdered Uniates was evidently distributed in Paris.<sup>71</sup>

What speaks in favour of the Brussels option, however, is the absence of the CUIVRE stamp plus the mint mark on the edges of the bronze medals I know of, which was customary for bronze medals produced in Paris at the time.<sup>72</sup> This is only one argument, but, it seems, a significant one. Together with the press note quoted above, indicating the involvement of Russian diplomacy in the matter, it confirms Emeryk Hutten-Czapski’s information that the Chełm medal was minted in Brussels, although originally – as everything indicates – it was intended to be done in Paris. Kornel Ujejski, who – given his great authority – can be considered the President of the Lwów Committee, maintained close relations with the Polish émigré community in Belgium. On his way “to sea-baths” to improve his health in 1869, he passed through Brussels and Liege (Leodium), where “he received a warm welcome from the many Poles living there”.<sup>73</sup> He was treated to a sumptuous feast by his fellow countrymen in Brussels on 16 October, for which the author of the *Choral* thanked them with a lofty speech and a rhymed toast (similarly, on 6 November, in Liege, when the poet was entertained by Polish youth at a ceremonial banquet).<sup>74</sup> Therefore, organising the minting of a medal at the Brussels mint does not seem

<sup>69</sup> Zofia Trojanowiczowa and Elżbieta Lijewska (2007: 575) consider the Paris Office to be the “agenda of the Lviv Committee” (medal committee).

<sup>70</sup> The following medals can be mentioned here: medal in honour of Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski, 1847 (HUTTEN-CZAPSKI 1872: 183, no. 3840); medal in honour of Aleksander Fredro, 1864 (HUTTEN-CZAPSKI 1872: 206, no. 3890); medal for the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Union of Lublin, 1869 (HUTTEN-CZAPSKI 1891: 148, no. 8036); medal in honour of Count Adam Potocki, 1872 (HUTTEN-CZAPSKI 1880: 185, no. 6739); medal in honour of Teodor Morawski, 1873 (HUTTEN-CZAPSKI 1891: 169, no. 8110); medal in honour of Jan Matejko, 1875 (HUTTEN-CZAPSKI 1891: 168, no. 8104).

<sup>71</sup> The collection of the Museum of Warsaw holds a medal “To the Ruthenian Brethren” in a box made by the Parisian jewellery company “A Lesperance Jung Horloger Bijoutier. Rue de Rivoli 180” – DUBROWSKA 1998: 155, no. II/69.

<sup>72</sup> All the medals mentioned in footnote 70 have these punches. In turn, the medal “In Memory of the Fallen and Wounded on the Streets of Warsaw” made in 1861 by J.N. Dargent and minted in Brussels (HUTTEN-CZAPSKI 1872: 496, no. 5375) does not have punches on the edge.

<sup>73</sup> BĄDZKIEWICZ 1893: 48.

<sup>74</sup> UJEJSKI 1877: 40–50.

to be a particularly difficult undertaking, considering the contacts of the Lwów Committee with Poles living in Brussels, and it is also possible that the Paris Office took on the role of an intermediary in this matter.

The first batch of 250 medals,<sup>75</sup> brought to Galicia at the end of June 1875, was distributed without hindrance among eager buyers. After a month or so, a second batch of the same quantity arrived in Lwów, but now unexpectedly legal problems emerged. Realising that the unrestricted distribution of this medal could seriously damage relations with Russia, the Austrian government confiscated the entire second batch.<sup>76</sup> The State Prosecutor's Office found here an insult to the honour of the Russian tsars and "praising unlawful and immoral acts"<sup>77</sup> (i.e. open anti-state rebellion) allegedly committed by Uniates against the Russian empire. The Committee challenged this decision, with the result that the District Court lifted the confiscation, but the arrest of the medals was upheld by the Higher Land Court in Lwów in a ruling of 24 August 1875, which read as follows:

In the Name of His Imperial Majesty, the Imperial and Royal Higher Regional Court in Lwów, amending, upon the complaint of the Imperial and Royal State Procurator's Office, the resolution of the Imperial and Royal Regional Court of Lwów of 13 August 1875 abolishing the confiscation of the so-called Chełm commemorative medal, ruled on the basis of §§. 489, 492 and 493 of the Criminal Procedure Act that the ordered confiscation of the so-called Chełm commemorative medal for the inscription 'To the Ruthenian brethren murdered by the Muscovite Tsar' placed on it, as having the features of an offence against security under §§. 487 l. a. 488 l. 60 and 493 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, and the inscription on the reverse of the medal, beginning with the words "Polish martyrdom..." and ending with the words "Tomasz Onufry", as having the features of an offence against public peace and order under §. 305 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, the destruction of the seized copies of the medal and the prohibition of its further distribution is hereby approved and authorised.<sup>78</sup>

To what specifically did the above-mentioned paragraphs refer? This is explained in *Dziennik Poznański*:<sup>79</sup>

<sup>75</sup> "Lwów, 2 września", DP 204, 7.09.1875: 2.

<sup>76</sup> The Russian government had already "attempted the Austrian authorities to prohibit the collection of contributions for this medal and the publication of a popular painting about the massacres in Podlachia" – DP 150, 6.07.1875: 3. In the latter case, it is probably a reproduction of Walery Eljasz-Radzikowski's painting "The Martyrs of Pratulín".

<sup>77</sup> "Dziwne losy medalu", *Tydzień. Dodatek literacko-naukowy Kurjera Lwowskiego* 48, 9.12.1906: 384.

<sup>78</sup> "Ogłoszenie (3317)", GL 200, 1.09.1875: 6.

<sup>79</sup> "Lwów, 2 września", DP 204, 7.09.1875: 2.

Paragraph 487 and the following paragraphs deal with misdemeanours and offences against honour; thus the first of these paragraphs states: "whoever falsely accuses someone of a crime becomes guilty: etc.". The second of these paragraphs states: "whoever, by giving fabricated or distorted facts, falsely accuses someone of an dishonourable act or of an act so immoral that it may make him contemptible in public opinion: etc.", while the third paragraph speaks of the penalty (...). Equally peculiar is the application of paragraph 305 to the inscription "Polish Martyrology". Now, this paragraph decrees: "whoever calls for, encourages or tries to incite to immoral acts or acts prohibited by the law, or praises such acts or tries to justify them, is guilty of a misdemeanour against public peace and order".

As we can see, the verdict turned peasants defending their faith into disruptors of public order (once again, it turned out that the above-mentioned publicist from *Przegląd Lwowski*, questioning the wording of the obverse legend, was right), and those protesting against tsarist repression in Galicia were accused of unjustified, false and biased slander. The case must have aroused great emotion, as the prosecutor's office confiscated the *Lwów Dziennik Polski* of 3 September 1875 (no. 201), which contained a commentary on the above ruling, in which it was argued "that according to the Austrian code it was the Russian government that was guilty of the crime of violating religion".<sup>80</sup>

Ultimately, the entire second batch of medals brought to Lwów was not destroyed, but was placed in state deposit. These medals were still under judicial custody in 1906 (more than 30 years after they were minted!), which began to arouse justified criticism from Polish circles. "It would be desirable" – we read in the *Lwów Tydzień* – "that the court itself and the prosecutor's office would resolve to lift this ruling, which did not bring any honour to the authorities of the day, and release the Chełm medals from the court deposit to some public institution".<sup>81</sup> It can be assumed that the medals "To the Ruthenian Brethren" eventually left Austrian custody, most probably before the First World War (otherwise the whole batch would rather have been melted down for war purposes), as evidenced by their relatively frequent appearance on the market today, as well as their abundant presence in public collections.<sup>82</sup>

Finally, let us try to establish the size of the mintage. Rewoliński gives these medals a rarity of R2 on a scale from R to R8, so he does not consider them

<sup>80</sup> "Dziwne losy medalu", *Tydzień. Dodatek literacko-naukowy Kurjera Lwowskiego* 48, 9.12.1906: 384.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>82</sup> For example, there are as many as 13 pieces of this medal in the National Museum in Warsaw – for the information I thank Mr Tomasz Teinert from the Cabinet of Coins and Medals of the NMW.

particularly rare.<sup>83</sup> Hutten-Czapski, on the other hand, does not specify the degree of rarity at all, which probably means that he classifies this issue as a high-volume one. We know that 500 pieces eventually arrived in Lwów, half of which were confiscated (I believe the medals sent to Prussia also came from this pool). For sure, a certain batch remained at the disposal of Poles in exile, with the “distributing centre” presumably in Paris (despite the fact that the medal was minted in Brussels). We can speak here, in my opinion, of at least 250 copies intended for Poles living in Western European countries. However, given the relatively frequent occurrence of this medal in public collections and on the auction market, I believe that the “Paris” batch was larger (probably also 500 pieces) and, without risking a major mistake, the total mintage can be estimated at 1,000 pieces.

Summing up, we can therefore conclude that the information available in the literature about the medal in honour of the Uniates murdered in the Chelm region is largely inaccurate. The medal was made in June 1875 in bronze,<sup>84</sup> the responsibility for the design rested with the Medal Committee established in Lwów in October 1874, and the idea itself (which – if the press notes are to be believed – originated in Podlachia) crystallised among local citizens. The design is a collective work of the Lwów Committee, based on an idea by an anonymous witness to the commemorated events, with Kornel Ujejski having the decisive say over the content of the message, and Karol Młodnicki most likely supervising the artistic side. The medal was originally intended to be minted in Paris, but as a result of Russia’s diplomatic intervention, the order was executed in Brussels. The total mintage can be estimated at a minimum of 750, but most probably 1,000 copies, half of which were intended for distribution in Poland, and half among Poles in exile and foreigners. The “To the Ruthenian Brethren” medal is not only a tribute to the heroes who gave their lives in defence of the faith of their fathers, but also a testimony to the clash of various political concepts within Polish society, as well as to the Poles’ struggle for the freedom to express their own opinions in the Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria, where – it should be recalled – the policy in the matter of nationality was still much more liberal than in Congress Poland incorporated into Russia or in the Grand Duchy of Posen (later renamed the Province of Posen), which was part of the Kingdom of Prussia.

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<sup>83</sup> REWOLIŃSKI 1887: 67, no. 1313, Pl. XXVI (under 1874).

<sup>84</sup> At this point, one may ask whether – despite the fact that all sources are unanimously silent on the subject – a small number of medals were not made in silver as well? Knowing the practice in this type of situation, it is, in my opinion, not out of the question that a dozen or so medals in this metal left the mint.

## ABBREVIATIONS

n.d. = no date

n.p. = no place

DP = *Dziennik Poznański*

GL = *Gazeta Lwowska*

GN = *Gazeta Narodowa*

GT = *Gazeta Toruńska*

KP = *Kuryer Poznański*

PL = *Przegląd Lwowski*

PZ = *Posener Zeitung*

TI = *Tygodnik Ilustrowany*

TL = *Tydzień Literacki, Artystyczny, Naukowy i Społeczny*

## PRIMARY SOURCES

"Bibliografja. Polska", TL 4, 24.01.1875: 302.

"Dziwne losy medalu", *Tydzień. Dodatek literacko-naukowy Kurjera Lwowskiego* 48, 9.12.1906: 384.

"Ein in Lemberg zusammengetretenes Komite", PZ 743, 23.10.1874: 3.

"Kraków 3 listopada", Czas 252, 4.11.1874: 1.

"Lwów, 2 września", DP 204, 7.09.1875: 2.

"Lwów, 28 października", DP 250, 1.11.1874: 3.

"Lwów, 30 października", KP 249, 31.10.1874: 4.

"Lwów, 2 listopada", DP 254, 6.11.1874: 2.

"Lwów, 5 listopada", DP 256, 8.11.1874: 3.

"Medal dla Unitów", KP 266, 20.11.1874: 1.

"Medal galicyjski", DP 242, 23.10.1874: 1–2.

"Medal na cześć pomordowanych unitów", GT 250, 30.10.1874: 1.

"Medal pamiątkowy", GN 149, 3.07.1875: 2.

"Medal pamiątkowy", GT 150, 6.07.1875: 3.

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"Odezwa", TL 8, 8.11.1874: 134.

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PLATE 1

Fig. 1. Medal “To the Ruthenian Brethren Murdered by the Moscow Tsar for their Fidelity to the Church and Poland”, 1875, engraved by Ernest Paulin Tasset; bronze, struck, diam. 64 mm  
Collection of the National Museum in Poznań, Inv. no. MNP GN E 281

Fig. 2. Medal in honour of Teodor Morawski (reverse), 1873, struck at the Paris mint on the initiative of the Literary Society of Paris  
Archive of the Warsaw Numismatic Centre ([www.wcn.pl](http://www.wcn.pl))

PLATE 2

Fig. 3. Prospectus advertising the medal “To the Ruthenian Brethren...”  
Collection of the Cyprian Norwid Museum in Dębinki

Fig. 4. A humorous drawing from the Lwów magazine *Szczutek* (no. 43, 1 November 1874), inspired by the discussion in the press around the medal “To the Ruthenian Brethren...”



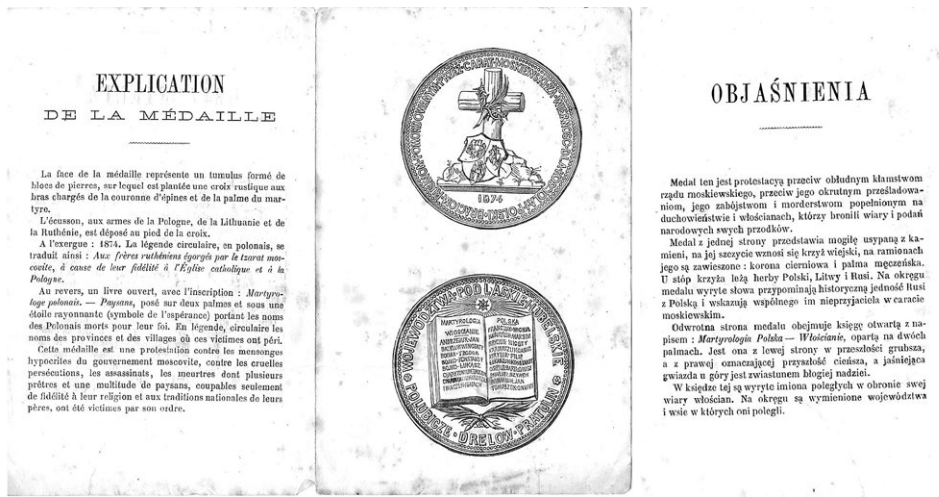


Fig. 3



Fig. 4