

APOLLO NAŁĘCZ-KORZENIOWSKI AS CRITIC AND TRANSLATOR

Grzegorz Zych

The Jagiellonian University, Cracow

1. APOLLO KORZENIOWSKI AS A LITERARY CRITIC

Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski (1820–1869) was not only one of the most distinctive Polish playwrights of the second half of the 19th century, but also one of the best informed about new currents in literature. After his premature death, however, his poetry and plays were soon forgotten and for almost a century he was known only as the father of Konrad Korzeniowski, otherwise known as the distinguished English writer Joseph Conrad. It is only since the middle of the 20th century that his life and work have once again begun to attract the attention of scholars and literary critics.

Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski is known above all for being a Polish patriot. A couple of years before the outbreak of the 1863 January Uprising, he helped to organize the underground anti-tsarist “Committee of the Movement” in Warsaw – the forerunner of the later 1863 “National Central Committee *qua* Provisional National Government” (*Komitet Centralny Narodowy jako Tymczasowy Rząd Narodowy*). Although the tsarist police never discovered the true extent of his political activity – and in particular his involvement in organizing the “Committee of the Movement” – he was arrested on much lesser charges in 1861 and he and his wife Ewa were subsequently sentenced to a term of exile in Russia.¹ Together with their four-year-old son Konradek, the Korzeniowskis were eventually sent to Vologda. In January 1863 the Russian authorities moved them to Czernihów (Chernihiv / Chernihiv) in north-eastern Ukraine, where Apollo’s wife Ewa (née Bobrowska) died in April 1865. Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski was released from his term of exile (together with his son) towards the end of 1867. In January 1868 father and son came to live in Lwów (Lvov / Lviv / Lemberg) and towards the end of February 1869 they moved to Cracow.

¹ *Conrad under Familial Eyes*. Ed. Zdzisław Najder. Texts translated by Halina Carroll-Najder. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, pp. 62–65; Zdzisław Najder, *Joseph Conrad. A Chronicle*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, pp. 15–16. Cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada Korzeniowskiego*. Ed. Zdzisław Najder and Joanna Skolik. Lublin: Gaudium, 2006, pp. 42–43.

Apollo died of tuberculosis on 23rd May 1869 and was buried at the Rakowicki Cemetery in Cracow.

Of Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski's many writings, which include the epigonic (i.e. post-Romantic) poems entitled *Songs of Purgatory* (*Czyśćcowe pieśni*) written between 1849 and 1854² (and which are yet to be published) and numerous mediocre poems, only some have stood the test of time. These are the two plays *Komedia* (*A Comedy*) [first published 1854–1855,³ published separately in 1855 (bearing the date 1856); first performed in 1856⁴] and *Dla milego grosza* (*For Dear Money's Sake*) [staged and published in 1859],⁵ the anti-tsarist political memoir entitled *Poland and Muscovy* (*Polska i Moskwa. Pamiętnik *** zaczęty 186...*) written in 1864,⁶ a translation of Alfred de Vigny's play of 1835 entitled *Chatterton* (*Czatterton*)⁷ and a translation of Charles Dickens's novel of 1854 entitled *Hard Times for These Times* (*Ciężkie czasy na te czasy*).⁸

Nałęcz-Korzeniowski wrote a dozen or so plays, including some that he never finished. Some plays have not come down to us, but Nałęcz-Korzeniowski would seem to have worked on them between 1859 and 1860. The lost plays, which were never published and of which only the titles remain, include: *Praktyczny człowiek* (*The Practical Person*),⁹ *Rok 1959* (*The Year 1959*) [alternatively entitled: *1960 rok* (*The Year 1960*) and *Świat w r. 1960* (*The World in 1960*)],¹⁰ *Humański dureń* (*The*

² Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. *Czyśćcowe pieśni*. Rkps BJ (manuscript held by the Jagiellonian Library), sygn. 6577 IV, Vol. I: *Poezje z lat 1849–1854*.

³ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. "Komedia. Dramat". *Biblioteka Warszawska. Pismo Poświęcone Naukom, Sztukom i Przemysłowi* 1854, Vol. III, pp. 507–526; 1855, Vol. II, pp. 31–81, 233–255.

⁴ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. *Komedia. Dramat w trzech aktach i Strofy oderwane*. Wilno: Nakładem Maurycego Orgelbranda, 1856 (in fact: 1855). This work was published for the second time over a hundred years later: Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. *Komedia. Dramat we trzech aktach*. Ed. Tadeusz Mikulski. Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1954.

⁵ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. *Dla milego grosza. Komedia w trzech aktach*. [In:] *Pismo zbiorowe*, Vol. II. Petersburg: wydane przez Józafata Ohryzko, 1859, pp. 136–231. This work was published for the second time over a hundred years later: Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. *Dla milego grosza. Komedia w trzech aktach*. Ed. Roman Taborski. Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1964.

⁶ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. "Polska i Moskwa. Pamiętnik *** zaczęty 186...". *Ojczyzna. Dziennik Polityczny, Literacki i Naukowy*, Leipzig 1864, Nos 27–29, 31, 34–36, 42–52.

⁷ Alfred de Vigny. *Czatterton. Dramat, powiedziany po polsku przez Apolla Korzeniowskiego*. Kiev: Nakładem I.B. Czerniaka w Białocerkwi, 1857.

⁸ Karol Dickens. "Ciężkie czasy na te czasy, przekład z angielskiego przez Apolina N. f.". *Gazeta Polska* 1866, Nos 267–283, 292; 1867, Nos 1–2, 14–20, 26–27.

⁹ Cf. Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [List do Karola Szajnochy / Letter to Karol Szajnocha]. B.m. i d. [Żytomierz, przed 31 sierpnia 1859 roku / before 31st August 1859]. [In:] *Korespondencja Karola Szajnochy*, Vol. II. Ed. Henryk Barycz. Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich – Wydawnictwo, 1959, p. 176.

¹⁰ Cf. Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [List do Karola Szajnochy / Letter to Karol Szajnocha]. B.m. i d. [Żytomierz, ok. 17 grudnia 1859 roku / around 17th December 1859]. [In:] *Korespondencja Karola Szajnochy*, Vol. II, ed. cit., p. 186; *idem*. [List do Karola Szajnochy / Letter to Karol Szajnocha], Żytomierz, 1/12 czerwca 1860 roku // OS – i.e. going by the Old Style Julian calendar – 1st June 1860. [In:] *Korespondencja Karola Szajnochy*, Vol. II, ed. cit., p. 218; *idem*. [List do Kazimierza Kaszewskiego / Letter to Kazimierz Kaszewski], dnia 9 lipca 1860 roku / 9th July 1860. Rkps BJ (manuscript held by the Jagiellonian Library), sygn. 3057 II, f. 18.

Idiot of Uman),¹¹ *Bez przesądów (Without Prejudice)*,¹² *Rejtan*¹³ and *Żywoł jenerała Kołyszki (The Life of General Kołyszko)*.¹⁴

The plays that were published during the author's lifetime – apart from *Komedia (A Comedy)* and *Dla milego grosza (For Dear Money's Sake)*, which have already been mentioned – are: *Akt pierwszy (Act One)* [written in 1866, staged in Lwów (Lviv) in 1868 and published in 1869]¹⁵ and a children's historical play on the life of Tadeusz Kościuszko entitled *Batożek (The Little Riding Crop)* [staged in Żytomierz (Zhitomir) in 1859; first published in 1861].¹⁶ Works that have never been published include a dozen or so (fragments of) unfinished plays and a one-act comedy entitled *Nowy mizantrop i druciarz (The New Misanthrope and the Tinker)* [staged in Warsaw in 1855 and in Lwów in 1859],¹⁷ which is the translation of a French play – probably

¹¹ Cf. Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [List do Karola Szajnochy / Letter to Karol Szajnocha]. B.m. i d. [Żytomierz, ok. 17 grudnia 1859 roku / around 17th December 1859]. [In:] *Korespondencja Karola Szajnochy*, Vol. II, ed. cit., p. 186.

¹² Cf. Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [List do Kazimierza Kaszewskiego / Letter to Kazimierz Kaszewski], dnia 9 lipca 1860 roku / 9th July 1860. Rkps BJ (manuscript held by the Jagiellonian Library), sygn. 3057 II, f. 18.

¹³ Cf. Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [List do Karola Szajnochy / Letter to Karol Szajnocha]. B.m. i d. [Żytomierz, przed 31 sierpnia 1859 roku / before 31st August 1859]. [In:] *Korespondencja Karola Szajnochy*, Vol. II, ed. cit., p. 176; *idem*. [List do Karola Szajnochy / Letter to Karol Szajnocha]. B.m. [Żytomierz], 23 sierpnia / 4 września 1860 roku // OS 23rd August 1860. [In:] *Korespondencja Karola Szajnochy*, Vol. II, ed. cit., p. 250.

¹⁴ Cf. Stefan Buszczyński. *Mało znany poeta – stanowisko jego przed ostatniem powstaniem, wygnanie i śmierć. Ustęp z dziejów współczesnych południowej Polski*. Kraków: Drukarnia "Czasu" W. Kirchmayera, 1870, p. 32. The titular hero of this work was General Benedykt Kołyszko, who took part in the Kościuszko Uprising, led the Podolian insurgents during the 1830 November Uprising and commanded the Polish insurgents during the battle of Daszów in Podolia on 14th May 1831 (in which the Poles were defeated by Russian forces). His son Władysław Kołyszko was a friend of the Bobrowski family.

¹⁵ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. *Akt pierwszy. Dramat w jednej odstonie (Nieoryginalnie wierszem napisany)*. Lwów: Nakładem Zelmana Igła, 1869.

¹⁶ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. "Batożek, komedyjka dla dzieci w dwóch aktach". *Przyjaciel Dzieci*, Lwów 1861, № 9. This is the simple retelling of an event which took place during the 1794 Kościuszko Uprising. Tadeusz Kościuszko – the leader of the uprising (who does not appear on stage) – buys a little riding crop from a poor boy called Antoś, who made the crop himself. Antoś and his sister Funia have to take care of their house themselves because their father Jan (who is a saddle maker) has left to fight in the uprising and their mother is gravely ill. Thanks to the publicity they receive from Kościuszko's purchase of the riding crop their saddle making business in Warsaw is swamped with orders and the family becomes rich almost overnight. Antoś also wins a new friend – the rich Marcelek, who used to scorn him and who failed to pay for work that Antoś had done for him, but who now – having seen the error of his ways – apologizes for his bad behaviour. The play ends with cheers for Kościuszko, who has liberated Warsaw from the Russians.

¹⁷ In his translation Apollo Korzeniowski only changed the setting by adapting it to Polish geographical realities. This is a typical comedy with stock characters and elements of farce. The main character Anzelm – a confirmed bachelor – is a mistrustful and embittered person who takes in a poor, yet honest tinker whom he enjoins to tell the truth at all times and to expose all lies, even in the presence of the perpetrators. This leads to various situations that are very embarrassing for Anzelm, who is forced to give his excuses to his friends and acquaintances. Eventually Anzelm manages to get the plain-spoken tinker to move somewhere else. Cf. Roman Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski. Ostatni dramatopisarz romantyczny*. Wrocław: Zakład im. Ossolińskich – Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1957, pp. 74–75.

Le Misanthrope et l'Auvergnat, written in 1852 by Eugène Labiche, Paul Siraudin and Pierre-Michel Martin (who used the pseudonym Lubize). In the present article I will discuss comedies of manners and similar shorter works for the stage that are not translations.

We know that Nałęcz-Korzeniowski wrote reviews of many of the plays that were staged during his lifetime. In September 1859 at the theatre in Żytomierz (Zhitomir) he saw *The Lady of the Camellias* (*La dame aux camélias* – 1852) by Alexandre Dumas (fils), which – somewhat characteristically – he found to be “salacious” and “devoid of talent and conscience”.¹⁸ Other plays which were then staged in Żytomierz, including *Adrienne Lecouvreur* (1849) by Eugène Scribe and Ernest Legouvé, fared little better: Nałęcz-Korzeniowski found them “ghastly”.¹⁹ He was also very critical of Polish translations of foreign works on literary subjects, an example being *The Life of Goethe* (1855) – written by the English critic George Henry Lewes – which was translated by Antoni Nowosielski (whose real name was Marcinkowski). In a letter to Kazimierz Kaszewski, he wrote of this translation:

I wonder what you think of the unhappy marriage of the protestant Lewes to the ultracatholic Nowosielski. What I mean is Nowosielski's translation – or rather gross misrepresentation – of Lewes' book on Goethe. It's an interesting work, but the continual cacophony of strident protestantism with equally strident ultracatholicism leaves the reader more than a little confused. And the language! Oh, my God! Nowosielski's knowledge of Polish is about as bad as his knowledge of English.²⁰

In Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski's letters to Kazimierz Kaszewski and Stefan Buszczyński we can find hidden quotations from the works of the Polish Romantic poets Adam Mickiewicz²¹ and Zygmunt Krasiński.²² Scholars have also found that his

¹⁸ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. “Korespondencja ‘Tygodnika Ilustrowanego’. Żytomierz 2 stycznia 1860 r.”. *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* 1860, № 20, pp. 168–169.

¹⁹ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski, “Korespondencja ‘Tygodnika Ilustrowanego’. Żytomierz 1 marca 1860 r.”. *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* 1860, № 26, p. 230; *idem*. “Korespondencja ‘Tygodnika Ilustrowanego’. Żytomierz 2 stycznia 1860 r.”. *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* 1860, № 20, p. 169.

²⁰ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [List do Kazimierza Kaszewskiego / Letter to Kazimierz Kaszewski], dnia 9 lipca 1860 roku / 9th July 1860. Rkps BJ (manuscript held by the Jagiellonian Library), sygn. 3057 II, f. 18; *idem*. “Korespondencja ‘Gazety Codziennej’. Zza Buga, dnia 6 (18) lipca 1860 r.”. *Gazeta Codzienna* 1860, № 226, p. 2.

²¹ In one of his letters to Kazimierz Kaszewski Apollo Korzeniowski makes a crypto-quotation from the Fourth Part of Mickiewicz's *Dziady* (*Forefathers' Eve*) when he writes about the grave of his wife Ewa Korzeniowska, who was buried in Czernihów (Chernihiv): “A ja tu tak sam jestem: nie mam innego towarzystwa tylko ten grób milczący, który zaklęty w milczeniu, głuchy na modły, na lzy zimny, twardszy od Adamowego kamienia nawet, bo lza weń nie przecieka.” (I'm here alone, with no company other than that silent grave, which has been bound by some spell to remain silent and which is deaf to my prayers, cold to my tears and harder than the hardest stone, being impervious to my tears) – Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [List do Kazimierza Kaszewskiego / Letter to Kazimierz Kaszewski], [Czernihów], dnia 29 maja/10 czerwca 1865 roku // OS 29th May 1865. [In:] *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego. Dokumenty rodzinne, listy, wspomnienia*, Vol. I. Ed. Zdzisław Najder and Joanna Skolik. Lublin: Gaudium, 2006, p. 153.

²² In one of his letters to Stefan Buszczyński Apollo Korzeniowski makes a crypto-quotation from Zygmunt Krasiński's poem entitled *Dzień dzisiejszy* (1849) when he writes about his son's upbringing: “Zresztą drugim celem, jeśli nie pierwszym, jest wychowanie Konradka nie na żadnego demokrate, ary-

poetic style is modelled on that of Zygmunt Krasiński and that he was more than a little attuned to the poetry of Juliusz Słowacki.²³

In a letter to Karol Szajnocha written in 1859 he mentions having written some essays (*studia*) on *Alkhadar* – a novel by Edmund Chojecki that was published in Paris in 1854.²⁴ Although these essays have not come down to us, the fact that Nałęcz-Korzeniowski tried to have them published in Paris shows that he had contacts among the Polish émigré community there. He also wrote a very favourable review of Leonard Sowiński's allegorical play entitled *Z życia* (*Taken from Real Life*) [1860].²⁵

The breadth of Nałęcz-Korzeniowski's literary interests is shown by the fact that he wrote commentaries on the books that were published by an association for the sale and publication of books that had been set up in Żytomierz (Zhitomir) in 1859 (*Stowarzyszenie Księgarsko-Wydawnicze*) and with which he then cooperated. These books included an everyman's guide to the history of Poland by Princess Izabela Czartoryska and her daughter, which was entitled *Pielgrzym w Dobromiłu, czyli nauki wiejskie z dodaniem powieści pióra księżnej Marii Wirtemberskiej* (*A Pilgrim in Dobromil*) [first published in 1819], a novel-cum-Polish-nobleman's-yarn by Ignacy Chodźko entitled *Pamiętniki kwestarza* (*The Memoirs of an Alms Collector*) [published between 1843 and 1845],²⁶ a collection of fables, legends and miscellaneous stories entitled *Czytanie postępowe. Zbiór powiastek moralnych, wschodnich, legend, żywotów, obrazów moralnych i przypowieści polskich* (1847)²⁷ by Lucjan Siemieński, a novel entitled *Dwa duchy* (*Two Ghosts*) [1860]²⁸ by Teodor Trippin (who was the grandfather of Polish science fiction), a book on the history of art and poetry by Lucjan Siemieński entitled *Kartka z dziejów sztuki i poezji* [1860] and a story about King John III by Karol Szajnocha entitled *Opowiadania o królu Janie III. Opowiadanie I. Mściciel* [1860].²⁹

stokrate, demagoga, republikanina, monarchistę albo na jakiegoś sługę i lokaja tych partii, a tylko na Polaka ...” (Besides, the second (if not the first) goal is to bring Konradek up – not as any sort of democrat, aristocrat, demagogue, republican, monarchist or as a servant or lackey of these parties, but just as a Pole ...) – Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [List do Stefana Buszczyńskiego / Letter to Stefan Buszczyński], [Lwów], dnia 5/17 marca 1868 roku // OS 5th March 1868. [In:] *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego. Dokumenty rodzinne, listy, wspomnienia*, Vol. I, ed. cit., p. 191.

²³ Cf. Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski. Ostatni dramaturg romantyczny*, ed. cit., pp. 22–24, 30–31, 40–41.

²⁴ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [List do Karola Szajnochy / Letter to Karol Szajnocha]. B.m. i d. [Żytomierz, przed 31 sierpnia 1859 roku / before 31st August 1859]. [In:] *Korespondencja Karola Szajnochy*, Vol. II, ed. cit., pp. 175–176.

²⁵ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. “*Z życia, okruchy poematu*, przez Leonarda Sowińskiego. Kijów 1861”. *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* 1861, № 83.

²⁶ See: Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. *Korespondencja z Żytomierza dla “Tygodnika Ilustrowanego” w Warszawie, dnia 10/22 listopada 1859 roku*. Rkps BJ (manuscript held by the Jagiellonian Library), sygn. 6577 IV, Vol. II: *Fragmety utworów dramatycznych, poezje i fragmety prozy z lat 1855–1868*, f. 104.

²⁷ See: Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski, “Do redakcyi ‘Biblioteki Warszawskiej’”. *Biblioteka Warszawska. Pismo Poświęcone Naukom, Sztukom i Przemysłowi* 1859, Vol. III, p. 746.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 746.

²⁹ See: Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. “Korespondencja ‘Gazety Codziennej’. Zza Buga, 25 czerwca 1860 r.”. *Gazeta Codzienna* 1860, № 189, p. 3; *idem*. *Korespondencja z Żytomierza dla “Tygodnika*

In his article-cum-memoir entitled *Cuique suum* (1866) Nałęczę-Korzeniowski mentions the books which brought him solace during the grief that beset him in Czernihów (Chernihiv) after the death of his wife:

The room was like a coffin. The house was like a tomb. The place was like a cemetery. My instinct for self-preservation made me search for life among the dead, whose bodies lay in cemeteries, but whose thoughts lived on in books – those whose memory lived on in human hearts and whose souls lived on in heaven. I stretched out my arm and found the company of ... people. Here was Tacitus – a pagan – hand in hand with Bishop Naruszewicz, coming to tell me that the story was the same, except that Tacitus was no longer alive. And here was Shakespeare – that great connoisseur of human kind – who was quite amazed to see that beyond the boundaries [of his theatre] there were nondescript characters, compared with whom such individuals as Falstaff and Caliban seemed to be models of civic virtue. I got hold of Bishop Krasicki and listened to his lecture on *Poets...*³⁰

Nałęczę-Korzeniowski also recalls a little-known episode concerning the history of Polish literature during the period of the Enlightenment: having won Stanisław Trembecki's translation of the fourth song of Torquato Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered* (1575) while playing cards with him, the obscure Rococo poet Wojciech (Adalbert) Mier published it as his own.

Describing the person who had told him this story, Nałęczę-Korzeniowski mentions the names of many other lesser-known writers and poets, from which we can gather that his source was very well informed about matters of literary history and that Nałęczę-Korzeniowski himself was a meticulous bibliographer who cherished the inexhaustible riches of Polish literature:

When I was fortunate enough to be visited by the old man, he [always] came in the company of great writers – ancient and modern, foreign and Polish – from Kochanowski and Skarga down to writers such as Molski, Płazowski and Wigura. [...] Polish and foreign poets would come before us and speak to us in their own words, particularly those whose talent did not heed the call of fame or allow itself to be stymied by the printing press – vibrant, home-grown poets such as Stanisław Starzyński, Franciszek Kowalski, Jakub Cichoński, Walery Cichoński and others. Their names are all but forgotten, but how many of us [now] sing their songs and repeat their witty sayings! How many of us laugh with them [all the more] heartily, cry with them [all the more] freely and contemplate [life] with greater dignity!³¹

It was no doubt because of his little son Konradek that Nałęczę-Korzeniowski also took an interest in children's literature. He wrote an enthusiastic introduction to the

Ilustrowanego” w Warszawie, dnia 10/22 listopada 1859 roku. Rkps BJ (manuscript held by the Jagiellonian Library), sygn. 6577 IV, Vol. II: *Fragmenty utworów dramatycznych, poezje i fragmenty prozy z lat 1855–1868*, f. 104; *idem*. [List do Karola Szajnochy / Letter to Karol Szajnocha], Żytomierz, 1/12 czerwca 1860 roku / OS 1st June 1860. [In:] *Korespondencja Karola Szajnochy*, Vol. II, *ed. cit.*, pp. 217–218; *idem*. [List do Karola Szajnochy / Letter to Karol Szajnocha]. B.m. [Żytomierz], 23 sierpnia/4 września 1860 roku / OS 23rd August 1860. [In:] *Korespondencja Karola Szajnochy*, Vol. II, *ed. cit.*, pp. 248–251.

³⁰ Apollo Nałęczę-Korzeniowski. “Cuique suum”. *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* 1866, № 330, p. 32.

³¹ See: *ibid.*, p. 33.

seventh edition of a collection of tales and fables by Stanisław Jachowicz (*Powiastrki i bajki* – 1842–1847).³²

The tremendous breadth of his literary interests also extended to the realm of foreign literature and was in keeping with his activities as a literary critic, translator, writer and home educator.

Nałęcz-Korzeniowski's biography has many points in common with the biographies of many other Polish writers of his times, with whom he was often in direct contact and with some of whom (Józef Ignacy Kraszewski and Stefan Buszczyński in particular) he corresponded.

Being a prolific reader and ardent theatre-goer, Nałęcz-Korzeniowski was, of course, familiar with the plays of the distinguished writer Fryderyk Skarbek (1792–1866), as is shown by the title of one of his non-extant works: *Rok 1959* (*The Year 1959*), which was finished in 1860.³³ There were two versions of the final title: *1960 rok* (*The Year 1960*) and *Świat w r. 1960* (*The World in the Year 1960*). The similarities with Fryderyk Skarbek's play entitled *Rok 1935, czyli Kobiety XX wieku* (*The Year 1935, or the Women of the 20th Century*) – staged in 1835 – are not coincidental and we may presume that Nałęcz-Korzeniowski was inspired by Skarbek's play, if only because he had heard about it. Skarbek's play was never published and had not been staged since the 1830's. The plot of both plays is set in the hundredth year after the year in which their respective authors began work on them. In the case of Nałęcz-Korzeniowski's play the year is 1959 – amended in the following year to 1860.³⁴

Nałęcz-Korzeniowski may even have had the opportunity to meet Fryderyk Skarbek in person, as Skarbek was one of the judges in a drama competition that had been held in Warsaw in 1859, on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the stage debut of the distinguished actor Alojzy Żółkowski (junior). The other judges included Józef Ignacy Kraszewski, Kazimierz Kaszewski and Kazimierz Władysław Wójcicki. Nałęcz-Korzeniowski's play entitled *Dla milego grosza* (*For Dear Money's Sake*) won the second prize, while the first prize went to Józef Korzeniowski.³⁵

Nałęcz-Korzeniowski was well acquainted with the work of his namesake Józef Korzeniowski (1797–1863), whose plays then enjoyed great popularity in Poland. In one of his reviews he comments on Józef Korzeniowski's play entitled *Majątek albo imię* (*Name or Fortune*) [1859] – the very play that had won the first prize in the 1859 competition – though not in a very favourable manner:

³² Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. *Wstęp*. [In:] Stanisław Jachowicz. *Powiastrki i bajki*, Vol. I. Żytomierz: Druk. A. Kwiatkowski, wyd. 7 (7th ed.), 1860, pp. I–XXIV.

³³ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [List do Karola Szajnochy / Letter to Karol Szajnocha]. B.m. i d. [Żytomierz, ok. 17 grudnia 1859 roku / around 17th December 1859]. [In:] *Korespondencja Karola Szajnochy*, Vol. II, *ed. cit.*, p. 186.

³⁴ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [List do Karola Szajnochy / Letter to Karol Szajnocha], Żytomierz, 1/12 czerwca 1860 roku / OS 1st June 1860. [In:] *Korespondencja Karola Szajnochy*, Vol. II, *ed. cit.*, p. 218.

³⁵ See: Roman Taborski. *Wstęp*. [In:] Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. *Dla milego grosza. Komedia w trzech aktach*. Ed. Roman Taborski. Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1964, p. 16.

The characters are positive and intrepid – always spirited and always amiable. They belong to the past. Even the one negative character – Count Janusz (whom the author’s talent has also rendered amiable) – belongs to the past and is unlike any modern count...³⁶

The characters of Józef Korzeniowski’s plays are – the critic continues – “poorly drawn, colourless and have no vitality”.³⁷ In another article, however, Nałęcz-Korzeniowski appreciates the social dimension of his rival’s play:

... as an example let us take a passage from J. Korzeniowski’s prize-winning comedy entitled *Majątek albo imię* (*Name or Fortune*), where praise is given to those who were born with great names but who did not fight shy of plying an honest trade.³⁸

Nałęcz-Korzeniowski was also familiar with the work of Aleksander Fredro (1793–1876), who at that time was the most distinguished Polish writer of comedies. In his “correspondent’s reports” to the *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* weekly he mentions having seen Fredro’s early farce entitled *Nowy Don Kiszot, czyli sto szaleństw* (*The New Don Quixote, or a Hundred Mad Antics*) – written in 1822 and staged in 1824 – at a theatre in Żytomierz (Zhitomir) at the beginning of 1859. The following sentence bears testimony to the high esteem in which he held Fredro’s plays:

There is more wit, life and truth in any of Fredro’s plays than in a hundred French comedies put together.³⁹

He also knew the less well-known plays of Karol Drzewiecki (1805–1879), who was best known for his drama entitled *Kontrakty* (*The Annual Fair*) [1842], as is shown by a letter he wrote to Józef Ignacy Kraszewski on 17th March 1859, in which he mentions buying theatre tickets “to go and see Karol Drzewiecki”⁴⁰ and also by a quotation from Drzewiecki’s comedy entitled *Skapiec* (*The Miser*) [written between 1851 and 1857; published in 1880]. Complaining that his daughter’s suitors have their eyes on his fortune, the miser at one point says that – for various reasons – they share the same goal, which is to get hold of his “dear money” (*miły grosz*):

JAN ... oni tu przyjechali, na umizgi, do miłego grosza, nieprawdaż? Co dom ma, co dom ma.⁴¹

JAN ... they’ve come here to court my dear money, haven’t they? To see how much we’re worth.

³⁶ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. “Porządni ludzie, komedia J. Chęcińskiego”, *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* 1863, № 179, p. 85.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. “Korespondencja ‘Gazety Codziennej’. Zza Buga w końcu listopada”. *Gazeta Codzienna* 1860, № 344, p. 2.

³⁹ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. “Korespondencja ‘Tygodnika Ilustrowanego’. Żytomierz 2 stycznia 1860 r.”. *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* 1860, № 20, p. 169.

⁴⁰ We do not know, however, which of Drzewiecki’s plays Nałęcz-Korzeniowski had in mind. See: Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [List do Józefa Ignacego Kraszewskiego / Letter to Józef Ignacy Kraszewski], dnia 14/26 czerwca 1859 roku / OS 14th June 1859. Rkps BJ (manuscript held by the Jagiellonian Library), sygn. 6468 IV, f. 481.

⁴¹ Karol Drzewiecki. *Skapiec*. [In:] *idem. Pisma*. Ed. J.I. Kraszewski, Vol. II, *ed. cit.*, p. 168.

Nałęcz-Korzeniowski used this expression as the theme and title of his play *Dla milego grosza* (*For Dear Money's Sake*), which he wrote between 1857 and 1858 and published in 1859.⁴²

Nałęcz-Korzeniowski's knowledge of the works of Józef Ignacy Kraszewski (1812–1887)⁴³ – who at that time was Poland's greatest novelist – is borne out by an article in which he defends Kraszewski against conservative critics such as Michał Grabowski. Defending the artistic and intellectual value of Kraszewski's novels, Nałęcz-Korzeniowski mentions the titles of those that he has read: *Ostap Bondarczuk* (1847), *Interesa familijne* (*Family Interests*) (1853), *Złote jabłko* (*The Golden Apple*) (1853), *Powieść bez tytułu* (*A Novel Without a Title*) (1855) and *Choroby wieku. Studium patologiczne* (*Diseases of Old Age. A Pathological Study*) (1857).⁴⁴ In his article Nałęcz-Korzeniowski uses the term “tendency” (*tendencja*), by which he means the educational function of Kraszewski's works, which proceeds from “a need to ennoble Society more and more”⁴⁵ in order to inspire its members to act in such a way as to improve their material and intellectual lot.

Younger playwrights whose first plays were staged around the year 1860 were also known to Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. At the beginning of January 1860 he recalled having seen *Szlachectwo duszy* (*A Noble Soul*) [1859] by Jan Chęciński (1826–1874) in Żytomierz (Zhitomir) towards the end of 1859.⁴⁶ Almost two months later he reported that the same play had been staged by an amateur company in Korystyszów at the beginning of 1860.⁴⁷

In his review of Jan Chęciński's play entitled *Porządni ludzie* (*Decent People*) [1861] Nałęcz-Korzeniowski also passes judgement on *Szlachectwo duszy* (*A Noble Soul*), finding that its greatest quality is that it resonates with the author's conviction that:

the freshest content and the most vibrant inspiration can be found only in life on our native soil – in its religious, moral and social goals; even in its material interests.⁴⁸

Chęciński's views on the sources of poetry – implicit in the same play – would seem to concur with those of Nałęcz-Korzeniowski:

⁴² Originally the play's title was to have been *Rubel* (See: Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski. Ostatni dramaturg romantyczny*, ed. cit., p. 60).

⁴³ Apollo Korzeniowski corresponded with Józef Ignacy Kraszewski and 14 of his letters to Kraszewski have come down to us. See: Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [Listy do Józefa Ignacego Kraszewskiego / Letters to Józef Ignacy Kraszewski]. Rkps BJ (manuscript held by the Jagiellonian Library), sygn. 6468 IV, ff. 469–500.

⁴⁴ See: Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. “Korespondencja ‘Gazety Warszawskiej’. Nieruszek dnia 30 listopada 1856 r.”. *Gazeta Warszawska* 1857, № 23, pp. 3–4.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁴⁶ See: Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. “Korespondencja ‘Tygodnika Ilustrowanego’. Żytomierz 2 stycznia 1860 r.”. *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* 1860, № 20, p. 169.

⁴⁷ See: Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. “Korespondencja ‘Gazety Codziennej’. Zza Buga, dnia 28 lutego 1860 r.”. *Gazeta Codzienna* 1860, № 79, p. 2.

⁴⁸ See: Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. “*Porządni ludzie*, komedia J. Chęcińskiego”, *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* 1863, № 179, pp. 83–84.

Like everything that is divine, poetry must become immortal. It can only live if it flows from the sources of its own existence and breathes the air of its own times and its own soil.⁴⁹

It would therefore appear – as is shown by the preceding quotations – that Nałęcz-Korzeniowski was of the opinion that the subject of a play ought to be relevant to modern life and that a play ought to deal with the most pressing problems of “one’s own times and one’s own soil”. He held that a comedy of manners ought to shape the morality and spirituality of Society. While praising Chęciński’s dramaturgical skill, he finds fault with his play *Porządni ludzie* (*Decent People*) on the score that:

... its content and its earthiness are way behind the content and earthiness of real life.⁵⁰

In Nałęcz-Korzeniowski’s view, Chęciński fails to express sufficiently strong disapproval of human vices in his play:

The satirical title *Porządni ludzie* (*Decent People*) reveals the author’s forthright views on [the state of] our Society and the abuses that it tolerates [...] It is all the more [surprising and] regrettable, therefore, that – having given the play such a sarcastic title – Mr Chęciński drew his characters the way he did.⁵¹

The play’s characters are not very convincing because they have been drawn too superficially. Their virtues and vices have been deliberately tempered to such an extent that they are not at all reminiscent of real people.⁵² Nałęcz-Korzeniowski was of the opinion that contemporary playwrights ought to be more outspoken in their portrayals of people and the social repercussions of their actions. He favoured individualized characters rather than the stock characters of traditional comedy and was averse to stereotyping the “represented world”, even if this meant foregoing a “happy” ending.

Nałęcz-Korzeniowski corresponded with the political writer, columnist and playwright Stefan Buszczyński (1821–1892), who happened to be a good friend of his. Sixteen of his letters to Buszczyński have come down to us.⁵³ His contacts with other writers – and in particular with the other playwrights of his day – were manifold. As well as reading their work, he went to the theatre to see their plays and wrote reviews of them. He also corresponded with authors and sometimes even met them. Being just one of many Polish playwrights who were active around the middle of the 19th century, he stands out as an incisive critic with a passion for exposing the truth –

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 85.

⁵³ See: Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [Listy do Stefana Buszczyńskiego / Letters to Stefan Buszczyński]. Rkps Bibl. PAN, Kraków (manuscript held by the Polish Academy of Sciences in Cracow), sygn. 2064, vols. I and II. Most of these letters have been published in *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego. Dokumenty rodzinne, listy, wspomnienia*, Vol. I, ed. *cit.*, *passim*. See also: *Conrad under Familial Eyes*. Ed. Zdzisław Najder. Transl. Halina Carroll-Najder. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983; *Conrad's Polish Background. Letters to and from Polish Friends*. Ed. Zdzisław Najder. Transl. Halina Carroll. London: Oxford University Press, 1964.

a critic who not only had an acute theoretical awareness of his calling, but one who had a deep understanding of the phenomena of tragedy and comedy in the theatre and whose immense knowledge of ancient and modern literature (both Polish and foreign) belied the adversities and hardships of his private life.

2. APOLLO NAŁĘCZ-KORZENIOWSKI AS A TRANSLATOR

Nałęcz-Korzeniowski's activities as a translator show that he was well aware of the latest literary trends and that he could read the most important works of ancient and modern literature in the original. His translation of Alfred de Vigny's *Chatterton* (1835) – published in 1857⁵⁴ – was favourably reviewed in 1857 by the critic and poet Adam Pług, who nevertheless found fault with certain passages whose stylistic tone, he believed, was too far removed from the original.⁵⁵ Another review, however – written in 1870 by Stefan Buszczyński – praised Nałęcz-Korzeniowski for an expressive translation that matched the original French.⁵⁶

In the introduction to his translation of Alfred de Vigny's *Chatterton*⁵⁷ Nałęcz-Korzeniowski revealed what was then an innovative understanding of the concept of originality. Defending himself against those critics who had pointed out that his play of 1855 entitled *Komedia (A Comedy)* was merely an adaptation of Aleksander Griboedov's comedy entitled *The Woes of Wit (Gope om yma / Bieda z rozumem / Mądreemu biada*; written in 1823 and published in 1833) and was therefore not original, he wrote that it had always been standard practice for writers to emulate and allude to other works of literature and that – when a writer created a new work of literature – it was a perfectly natural thing for him to take his inspiration from works that he had read or seen on the stage:

Besides, in the whole world there are few works [of literature] that do not derive from others and that do not remind one of something that one has read or seen before. There are few works that are devoid of imitation or even allusions. [...] I saw a performance of Griboedov's comedy several years before I wrote my own play. I was struck by its *truth* and this is what I endeavoured to imitate. If, in quoting dialogues that I had heard [in the theatre] I sometimes happened to repeat the exact words of Griboedov, I am guilty of hardly anything at all and that is that!⁵⁸

⁵⁴ De Vigny. *Czatterton. Dramat*, ed. cit.

⁵⁵ See: Adam Pług, "Korespondencja 'Gazety Warszawskiej'. Potok na Podolu, 19 października 1857 r. 'Czatterton', dramat Alfreda de Vigny, powiedziany po polsku przez Apolla Korzeniowskiego – Kijów, w drukarni Uniwersytetu Śgo Włodzimierza, nakładem Czerniaka w Białocerkwi". *Gazeta Warszawska* 1857, № 304, p. 5.

⁵⁶ Stefan Buszczyński, *Mało znany poeta – stanowisko jego przed ostatniem powstaniem, wygnanie i śmierć. Ustęp z dziejów społecznych południowej Polski*, ed. cit., pp. 28–29. Later this translation was favourably reviewed by Roman Taborski (See: *idem. Apollo Korzeniowski. Ostatni dramatopisarz romantyczny*, ed. cit., pp. 75–77).

⁵⁷ See: Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. *Od tłumacza*. [In:] de Vigny. *Czatterton*, ed. cit., pp. XXIII–XXVI.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. XXIII–XXIV, XXV–XXVI.

What Nałęcz-Korzeniowski therefore had in mind were not those usual intertextual relations such as allusions, quotations and hidden quotations, but rather those more complex relations that we now refer to as being hypertextual.⁵⁹ These include any transformation of a previous literary text such as, for example, a paraphrase or a parody. The examples given by Nałęcz-Korzeniowski speak of his immense literary erudition, which encompassed the literature of several ages and several nations. He collates older literary texts with their later paraphrases or references and / or allusions to them (in sets of two or more): Corneille's *Polyeucte* (1643) and Eugène Scribe's opera grande *La muette de Portici* (1828); *Don Juan*⁶⁰ and *Faust*;⁶¹ the Faustian myth and Calderón's *El mágico prodigioso* (1637); Juvenal's *Third Satire* and Shakespeare's *Macbeth*;⁶² Charles Nodier's *Jean Sbogar* (1818), George Sand's *Leone-Leoni* (1834) and *Pauline* (1838) by Alexandre Dumas (père).

From his correspondence we know that apart from Alfred de Vigny's *Chatterton*, Nałęcz-Korzeniowski translated all the plays which Victor Hugo had written before 1869, with the sole exception of *Cromwell* (1827): *Amy Robsart* (1828), *Marion de Lorme* (1829), *Hernani* (1830), *Le roi s'amuse* (1832),⁶³ *Lucrèce Borgia* (1833), *Marie Tudor* (1833),⁶⁴ *Angelo, tyran de Padou* (1835), *Ruy Blas* (1838)⁶⁵ and *Les Burgraves* (1843). He had originally planned to publish a collected edition of Hugo's works translated by himself, Antoni Pietkiewicz (who used the pseudonym Adam Pług) and Kazimierz Kaszewski, as is shown by a letter written to Kaszewski in the summer of 1860.⁶⁶ Eight years later – after his return from exile in 1868 – he was only

⁵⁹ Gérard Genette. *Palimpsesty. Literatura drugiego stopnia* (1982). Transl. Aleksander Milecki. [In:] *Współczesna teoria badań literackich za granicą: antologia*, Vol. IV, cz. 2: *Literatura jako produkcja i ideologia; Poststrukturalizm; Badanie intertekstualne; Problemy syntezy historycznoliterackiej*. Ed. Henryk Markiewicz. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2nd ed., 1996, p. 322–366.

⁶⁰ Here Apollo Korzeniowski was probably thinking of the legend of Don Juan, which is present in modern literature, e.g. in Molière's comedy entitled *Dom Juan* (1665).

⁶¹ I am not referring to Goethe's play, but to the numerous and often anonymous tales about Faustus that have existed since at least the 16th century.

⁶² Apollo Korzeniowski quotes from Juvenal's Third Satire: "ut somno careas" (line 56) and sets these words alongside those which are spoken by Macbeth to his wife in Act II Scene 2 of the "Scottish play": "Sleep no more!" Nałęcz-Korzeniowski sees this as an instance of the emulation of ancient masterpieces by writers living in later times.

⁶³ Cf. Ewa Korzeniowska. [List do Władysława Górskiego / Letter to Władysław Górski], dnia 6 stycznia 1862 roku / 6th January 1862. Rkps BJ (manuscript held by the Jagiellonian Library), sygn. 8711/IV.

⁶⁴ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. "Korespondencja 'Gazety Codziennej'. Zza Buga, 25 czerwca 1860 r.". *Gazeta Codzienna* 1860, № 189, p. 3.

⁶⁵ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [List do Kazimierza Kaszewskiego / Letter to Kazimierz Kaszewski], dnia 26 lutego/10 marca 1865 roku // OS 26th February 1865. Rkps BJ (manuscript held by the Jagiellonian Library), sygn. 3057 II, f. 25; *idem*. [List do Kazimierza Władysława Wójcickiego / Letter to Kazimierz Władysław Wójcicki], [Czernihów], dnia 2/14 grudnia 1866 roku / OS 2nd December 1866. [In:] *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego. Dokumenty rodzinne, listy, wspomnienia*, Vol. I, *ed. cit.*, p. 180; *idem*. [List do Kazimierza Kaszewskiego / Letter to Kazimierz Kaszewski], [Lwów], dnia 23/11 marca 1868 roku / 23rd March 1868. [In:] *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego. Dokumenty rodzinne, listy, wspomnienia*, Vol. I, *ed. cit.*, p. 196.

⁶⁶ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [List do Kazimierza Kaszewskiego / Letter to Kazimierz Kaszewski], dnia 9 lipca 1860 roku / 9th July 1860. Rkps BJ (manuscript held by the Jagiellonian Library), sygn. 3057 II, f. 17.

prepared to publish the plays of Victor Hugo, and then only in his own translation. On 9th July 1868 he wrote a letter to Władysław Łoziński, the editor of the *Dziennik Literacki* in Lwów, suggesting that he publish translations of Hugo's plays in his weekly magazine. Nałęcz-Korzeniowski argued that Hugo's plays could do a lot to improve what he saw as the sorry state of Polish drama and the Polish theatre at that particular time.⁶⁷ The offer was not accepted.

Very few of Nałęcz-Korzeniowski's translations of plays by Victor Hugo have come down to us: only part of *Les Burgraves* and his translations of two other plays, of which the original texts were unfortunately incomplete: *Hernani*⁶⁸ and *Marion de Lorme*.⁶⁹ He translated *Les Burgraves* in the early 1860's and part of this translation was published in 1846.⁷⁰ In later years he admitted to having burnt the translation because he thought that it was not a very good one. Kazimierz Kaszewski's translation of *Les Burgraves* (published in 1861) contributed to Nałęcz-Korzeniowski's severe criticism of his own translation.⁷¹

The clarity of the translations of *Hernani* and *Marion de Lorme* make them good from an artistic point of view, but – being translations of texts that were specially abridged for the theatres of the time – they are incomplete.⁷²

Together with Adam Pług, Nałęcz-Korzeniowski also planned to translate the whole of the first series of Victor Hugo's philosophical poem on the history of mankind entitled *La Légende des Siècles* (*The Legend of the Ages*) [1859].⁷³ In the event, they translated and published only two poems of the series: *Le sacre de la femme* (translated by Nałęcz-Korzeniowski) and *Les pauvres gens* (translated by Pług).⁷⁴

⁶⁷ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [List do Władysława Łozińskiego / Letter to Władysław Łoziński], przez Łopuszanę – Topolnica, dnia 9 lipca 1868 roku / 9th July 1868. [In:] Karol Kosek. "Nieznane listy Apolla Korzeniowskiego do Władysława Łozińskiego i kontakty literackie obydwu Korzeniowskich w Galicji w latach 1868–1874". *Rocznik Przemyski*, Vol. 22, 1983, pp. 511–512.

⁶⁸ Hugo Victor. *Hernani. Dramat*. Transl. Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. Warszawa: w Drukarni "Gazety Polskiej", 1862. This play (in Nałęcz-Korzeniowski's translation) had its Polish premiere in 1866 in Cracow, with the famous actress Helena Modrzejewska playing the part of Doña Sol. See: Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski. Ostatni dramaturg romantyczny*, ed. cit., p. 79.

⁶⁹ Victor Hugo. "Marya Delorme. Dramat w pięciu aktach". [Przekład Apolla Nałęcz-Korzeniowskiego]. *Biblioteka Warszawska. Pismo Poświęcone Naukom, Sztukom i Przemysłowi* 1863, Vol. III, pp. 491–520; Vol. IV, pp. 39–66, 203–249. This play (in Nałęcz-Korzeniowski's translation) had its Polish premiere in 1870 in Cracow. It was staged in Warsaw in 1873. Helena Modrzejewska played the title role in both cases. See: Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski. Ostatni dramaturg romantyczny*, ed. cit., p. 79.

⁷⁰ See: Victor Hugo. "Kilka scen z *Burgrafów*, trylogii V. Hugo". Przekład A. Krzemińskiego (translated by A. Krzemiński) [sic! The table of contents gives the correct name of the translator: A. Korzeniowski]. *Dzwon Literacki. Pismo Zbiorowe* (Warszawa) 1846, Vol. II, pp. 27–66.

⁷¹ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [List do Kazimierza Kaszewskiego / Letter to Kazimierz Kaszewski], dnia 9 lipca 1860 roku / 9th July 1860. Rkps BJ (manuscript held by the Jagiellonian Library), sygn. 3057 II, f. 17.

⁷² Cf. Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski. Ostatni dramaturg romantyczny*, ed. cit., pp. 78–79.

⁷³ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [List do Kazimierza Kaszewskiego / Letter to Kazimierz Kaszewski], Żytomierz, dnia 20 stycznia 1860 roku / 20th January 1860. [In:] *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego. Dokumenty rodzinne, listy, wspomnienia*, Vol. I, ed. cit., p. 99.

⁷⁴ See: Victor Hugo. *Legenda wieków: Namaszczenie niewiasty, Ubodzy*. Transl. Adam Pług and Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. Żytomierz: Nakład A.N. Korzeniowskiego, 1860.

In 1874 they published *Eviradnus* – another poem from *La Légende des Siècles* – translated by Nałęcz-Korzeniowski.⁷⁵ These translations of fragments of Hugo's work are faithful to the original, but are marred by their somewhat high-flown style, which – as Roman Taborski has observed⁷⁶ – is typical of Polish post-Romantic poetry.

In 1868 Nałęcz-Korzeniowski wrote a paraphrase of Victor Hugo's poem entitled *Au peuple*, which was part of a collection entitled *Les Châtiments* (1853). He gave his paraphrase – which deals with social issues – the title *Morze-Lud (A Sea of Humanity)*.⁷⁷ This work no doubt inspired the poems which Nałęcz-Korzeniowski wrote in 1855 on the occasion of the Ruthenian (Ukrainian) peasant revolt of that year against the tsarist authorities in the Skvir district of the province of Kiev.⁷⁸

Nałęcz-Korzeniowski also translated the preface to and the final poem of Victor Hugo's *Les chansons des rues et des bois* (1865).⁷⁹ He expressed his boundless admiration for Hugo's poetic genius in a letter to Kazimierz Kaszewski in 1866:

That V. Hugo is a very clever nobleman. Just see how those *Chansons des rues et des bois* have been laid out in a masterful and elegant fashion. Feeling that he ought to shy from nothing that is human, he takes the present realist trend in West European poetry – carefully, between two fingers – and shows that it is only good for eighteen-year-olds writing about Spring – or a “Spring” of eighteen years. And with the proviso that one chooses nothing but flowers, women, birds and stars, transforming them spiritually the one into the other: a flower sings to the poet, a woman twinkles like a star, a bird flowers in flight and stars clothed in misty dresses glide past. But anyhow, what Hugo has done is to show when and how the realist trend does not offend one's sense of morality. He sums it all up in the Preface, which shows just how hard it is for a Poet to invoke Inspiration and the Divine Spirit – to bring down to the Reality of everyday life the Reality of what is Above and to draw into [our] rosy, fragrant, fresh and flimsy Reality the awesome, everlasting Ideals. That is why this trend is so favoured by lesser artists, who lead not their spirit, but merely themselves to the pastures of Reality – and even delight in doing so. The closing poem is as it were an act of atonement for this violation of Inspiration, which is restored to its inherent sphere: the homeland of inspiration and revelation is heaven and the life of Man on earth.⁸⁰

As we can see, what Nałęcz-Korzeniowski valued in Victor Hugo's poetic style was concrete reality and a fondness for authentic detail in descriptions of the real world. It is to this concrete reality that – in his view – the “represented world” in Hugo's poems owes its credibility. Equally, however, he appreciated the fact that

⁷⁵ Victor Hugo. “Legenda wieków. Błądny rycerz. Ewiradnus”. Transl. A.N. Korzeniowski. *Kłosa* 1874, № 483, pp. 222–223; № 485, pp. 242–243; № 486, pp. 258–259; № 487, pp. 279–280; № 488, pp. 291, 294.

⁷⁶ Cf. Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski. Ostatni dramatopisarz romantyczny*, ed. cit., pp. 79–80.

⁷⁷ See: Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. *Morze-Lud* (printed in 1868). [In:] Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski. Ostatni dramatopisarz romantyczny*, ed. cit., p. 158.

⁷⁸ These poems are discussed in detail by Roman Taborski (See: *idem*, pp. 31–41).

⁷⁹ Victor Hugo. “Śpiewki z ulic i gajów, przez Apolla Nałęcz K.”. *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* 1866, № 348, pp. 245–246; № 349, pp. 257–258.

⁸⁰ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [List do Kazimierza Kaszewskiego / Letter to Kazimierz Kaszewski], dnia 4 marca 1866 roku / 4th March 1866. Rkps BJ (manuscript held by the Jagiellonian Library), sygn. 3057 II, f. 38–39.

Hugo's poetry was also the product of inspiration, thanks to which its "realism" is not hackneyed or banal – unlike that of many of his lesser contemporaries.⁸¹

What Nałęcz-Korzeniowski demanded of truly realist art was therefore not only fidelity to life, but also a certain non-literalism which is needed to express important and lofty ideas and which goes beyond the exact reproduction of reality. At the same time he was well aware of the fact that it was very difficult and even painful for a poet to have to use great ideas in his descriptions of everyday life.

In 1866 – during his stay in Czernihów (Chernihiv) – he also translated two of Victor Hugo's novels: *Les Misérables* (*Nędznicy*) [1862] and *Les Travailleurs de la mer* (*Pracownicy morza*) [1866]. Although these translations have not come down to us, we know of their existence from a letter which Nałęcz-Korzeniowski wrote to Kazimierz Kaszewski in the November of 1866, comparing the quality of his translation of Dickens's *Hard Times* with his translations of the two novels by Hugo.⁸²

Years later – remembering his sad life in Czernihów (Chernihiv) just after the death of his mother Ewa Nałęcz-Korzeniowska – Joseph Conrad mentioned the fact that his father had made a translation of Hugo's *Les Travailleurs de la mer*:

I have tried to discover since the reason for this mildness, and I imagine that all unknown to myself I had earned, in my father's mind, the right to some latitude in my relations with his writing-table. It was only a month before – or perhaps it was only a week before – that I had read to him aloud from beginning to end, and to his perfect satisfaction, as he lay on his bed, not being very well at the time, the proofs of his translation of Victor Hugo's *Toilers of the Sea*. Such was my title to consideration, I believe, and also my first introduction to the sea in literature.⁸³

In his *Memoirs* (*Pamiętniki 1879–1893*) [published in 1900] Tadeusz Bobrowski – Nałęcz-Korzeniowski's brother-in-law – writes that Apollo also translated the poetry of the German Romantic poet Heinrich Heine.⁸⁴ We also know that Nałęcz-Korzeniowski knew Heine's poetry from a quotation in a letter he sent to Stefan Buszczyński in October 1868:

On Saturday I'll be in Lwów. I'm glad to hear that you've been walking in the mountains, where, having heard of the stupidity and filth of the entire province, [you can] call out with Heine: "Auf die Berge will ich steigen".⁸⁵

⁸¹ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [Komentarz do:] "Victor Hugo, *Śpiewki z ulic i gajów*, przez Apolla Nałęcz K.". *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* 1866, № 349, p. 257.

⁸² Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [List do Kazimierza Kaszewskiego / Letter to Kazimierz Kaszewski], [Czernihów], dnia 10/22 listopada 1866 roku / OS 10th November 1866. [In:] *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego. Dokumenty rodzinne, listy, wspomnienia*, Vol. I, ed. cit., p. 177.

⁸³ Joseph Conrad. *A Personal Record. Some Reminiscences*, 1912, chapter IV. Conrad also mentions this translation in two letters written to Poles. See: Joseph Conrad. [List do Wincentego Lutosławskiego / Letter to Wincenty Lutosławski], Ivy Walls Farm, Stanford-le-Hope, dnia 9 czerwca 1897 roku / 9th June 1897. [In:] *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego. Dokumenty rodzinne, listy, wspomnienia*, Vol. II. Ed. Zdzisław Najder and Joanna Skolik. Lublin: Gaudium, 2006, p. 41; Joseph Conrad. [List do Aleksandra M. Jasińskiego / Letter to Aleksander M. Jasiński], Capri, Italia, dnia 25 kwietnia 1905 roku / 25th April 1905. [In:] *ibid.*, p. 83.

⁸⁴ Tadeusz Bobrowski. *Pamiętnik mojego życia* (published in 1900), Vol. I: *O sprawach i ludziach mego czasu*. Ed. Stefan Kieniewicz. Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1st ed., 1979, p. 426.

⁸⁵ This quotation from Heine may be translated as "I want to climb the mountains". See: Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [List do Stefana Buszczyńskiego / Letter to Stefan Buszczyński], [Topolnica, dnia

The quotation is from the prologue to Heine's collection of poems entitled *Aus der Herzreise* (1824). None of Nałęcz-Korzeniowski's translations of Heine's poetry have come down to us.

Nałęcz-Korzeniowski also translated several plays by Shakespeare. A letter written by his son Joseph Conrad to Edward Garnett on 20th January 1900 gives the following list: *A Comedy of Errors*, *As You Like It*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*,⁸⁶ *Much Ado about Nothing*⁸⁷ and *Othello*. Conrad recalls that the proofs of the translations were sent to his father for correction and adds that the number of translations of Shakespeare might have been greater.⁸⁸ Only Nałęcz-Korzeniowski's translation of *A Comedy of Errors* has come down to us.⁸⁹

In translating Shakespeare's *A Comedy of Errors*, Nałęcz-Korzeniowski attempted to create both a thematic and a metrical equivalent of the Bard's poetics. Although he was not always entirely successful, it is to his credit that he was aware of the importance of choosing the right metre in order to convey the rhythm of the original as accurately as possible. This is evident from the following passage in a letter he wrote to Kazimierz Kaszewski on 6th September (NS 18th September) 1865:

It is such an excellent comedy that it could be staged even today. I have tried to preserve not only the sense, but also – to a certain extent – the same words and the metre. Shakespeare conducts serious dialogues or dialogues full of pathos in non-rhyming verse, with occasional

12 października 1868 / 12th October 1868], poniedziałek (Monday). [In:] *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego. Dokumenty rodzinne, listy, wspomnienia*, Vol. I, ed. cit., p. 215. See also: *Conrad under Familial Eyes*. Ed. Zdzisław Najder. Transl. Halina Carroll-Najder. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, p. 120.

⁸⁶ Joseph Conrad mentions this translation in his book entitled *A Personal Record*: "My first introduction to English imaginative literature was *Nicholas Nickleby*. [...] It was, I have no doubt, an excellent translation. This must have been in the year '70. But I really believe that I am wrong. That book was not my first introduction to English literature. My first acquaintance was (or were) the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and that in the very MS. of my father's translation. It was during our exile in Russia, and it must have been less than a year after my mother's death, because I remember myself in the black blouse with a white border of my heavy mourning." – Joseph Conrad. *A Personal Record*. Ed. Zdzisław Najder and J.H. Stape. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, Part IV, p. 71.

⁸⁷ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [List do Kazimierza Kaszewskiego / Letter to Kazimierz Kaszewski], [Czernihów], dnia 10/22 listopada 1866 roku / OS 10th November 1866. [In:] *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego. Dokumenty rodzinne, listy, wspomnienia*, Vol. I, ed. cit., pp. 176–177.

⁸⁸ See: Joseph Conrad. [Letter to Edward Garnett], Pent Farm, 20th January 1900. [In:] Joseph Conrad. *The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad*, Vol. II: 1898–1902. Ed. Frederick R. Karl and Laurence Davies. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986, p. 246.

⁸⁹ See: William Shakespeare. "*Komedya obłędów w pięciu aktach*, przełożył Apollo Nałęcz K****". *Kłosy* 1866, № 36, pp. 426–429; № 37, pp. 438–441; № 38, pp. 453–455; № 39, pp. 465–467; № 40, pp. 474–475; № 41, pp. 485–487. This translation was ready by the end of February or the beginning of March 1865, as is testified by a postscript to a letter sent by Apollo Korzeniowski to Kazimierz Kaszewski at the end of February 1865. The postscript mentions the translations that he wished to send to the editor of *Kłosy* in the hope that they will be published. See: Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [List do Kazimierza Kaszewskiego / Letter to Kazimierz Kaszewski], dnia 26 lutego/10 marca 1865 roku // OS 26th February. Rkps BJ (manuscript held by the Jagiellonian Library), sygn. 3057 II, f. 25; *idem*. [List do Kazimierza Kaszewskiego / Letter to Kazimierz Kaszewski], [Czernihów], dnia 29 maja/10 czerwca 1865 roku // OS 29th May 1865. [In:] *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego. Dokumenty rodzinne, listy, wspomnienia*, Vol. I, ed. cit., p. 156.

rhymes at more important points. These I have rendered in rhymed verse of 13 syllables. He usually uses prose for lively, witty or wittyish dialogues and I have rendered these in rhymed prose of 13 syllables. For love scenes, Shakespeare uses alternating rhymed verse (short and long) and this is how I have rendered them, alternating lines of 8 and 11 syllables. I have asked the editors to show you this translation of Shakespeare. I have translated him for the first time and am not too sure of myself.⁹⁰

The passage quoted above shows that Nałęcz-Korzeniowski had a good working knowledge of versification and had a feel for the variety of styles and metres which Shakespeare drew upon in his works. He tried – though not always successfully⁹¹ – to convey these stylistic differences by varying the metre of his translation.

For Nałęcz-Korzeniowski, choosing the most apt poetic style – both for his own works and for his translations of the works of other writers – was a matter of great concern. In a letter to Kaszewski on 19th January (NS 31st January) 1866 he laments the stylistic shortcomings of his own poems:

I promise that, if I ever translate anything again, I will pay more attention to style. For a translator of Shakespeare, it is not enough to hear that *A Comedy of Errors* is delightful because of its content, because that is merely Shakespeare's due. The form should also be good – and that is one of the duties incumbent on a translator. [...] Rhythm, harmony and poetry somehow do not match my present way of life. I would not like others to say this about me, [which is why] I say it myself. [...] For the present I do not wish my name to be associated with a favourable opinion if its author has had to swim in muddy waters [in order to write it]. Take heed of this, my friend, and apply it to what I have enclosed [with this letter]. I shudder at the thought of being at odds with style, even posthumously. It would be difficult to make corrections – too many! Such is my fate. I have always danced in time, but that was with my feet. I have not been able to write anything “in time”. And, as they say, style is a matter of rhythm.⁹²

Although Nałęcz-Korzeniowski rightly thought that the matter of rhythm and that of finding a suitable artistic equivalent for a translated work of literature were inextricably linked, he was often unequal to the task in hand and he himself admitted that he had a complex, which he termed “a lack of style”.⁹³

He also translated *A Strange Story* (1862) – a novel written by the nineteenth-century English author and conservative politician Edward Bulwer-Lytton (1803–

⁹⁰ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [List do Kazimierza Kaszewskiego / Letter to Kazimierz Kaszewski], [Czerniów], dnia 6/18 września 1865 roku // OS 6th September. [In:] *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego. Dokumenty rodzinne, listy, wspomnienia*, Vol. I, ed. cit., pp. 158–159.

⁹¹ Roman Taborski is fairly critical of Nałęcz-Korzeniowski's translation of Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors*, finding fault with his “unnatural” rendering of the sections written in prose. See: Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski. Ostatni dramaturg romantyczny*, ed. cit., pp. 81–82.

⁹² Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [List do Kazimierza Kaszewskiego / Letter to Kazimierz Kaszewski], [Czerniów], 19/31 stycznia 1866 roku // OS 19th January 1866. [In:] *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego. Dokumenty rodzinne, listy, wspomnienia*, Vol. I, ed. cit., p. 169.

⁹³ Nałęcz-Korzeniowski's style was criticized by the nineteenth-century literary critic Aleksander Zygmunt Wicherski, who said (in French) that “Whereas a member of the Academy writes as one ought to write, Apollo writes as he writes”. See: Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [List do Kazimierza Kaszewskiego / Letter to Kazimierz Kaszewski], [Czerniów], 19/31 stycznia 1866 roku // OS 19th January 1866. [In:] *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego. Dokumenty rodzinne, listy, wspomnienia*, Vol. I, ed. cit., p. 169.

–1873). We do not know the Polish title that he chose, but we do know that the translation was ready towards the end of 1865.⁹⁴

It was during his stay in Czernihów (Chernihiv) that Nałęcz-Korzeniowski made his best ever translation – that of Charles Dickens's novel *Hard Times for These Times* (1854). A letter to Kazimierz Kaszewski dated 26th February (NS 10th March) 1865 shows that it was finished at the beginning of 1865. This translation was highly praised by the critics for its evocative and suggestive style and its linguistic correctness. Nałęcz-Korzeniowski was also complimented on his excellent knowledge of English.⁹⁵ Initially, the translation appeared in the *Gazeta Polska* newspaper in the years 1866–1867.⁹⁶ Ninety years later it was reprinted twice with only minor corrections.⁹⁷ It is worthy of note that Charles Dickens's *Hard Times* differs greatly from his earlier works in that it is written in a very sardonic tone. Most of the characters – and in particular the stern father Thomas Gradgrind and the greedy capitalist Josiah Bounderby – are quite repulsive. This did not escape the attention of Nałęcz-Korzeniowski, although English and Polish critics of the 1850's and 1860's failed (or did not wish) to notice that, with the passage of time, Dickens's attitude to social problems had become more and more pessimistic.⁹⁸ Nałęcz-Korzeniowski was one of the first men of letters to be fully aware of this new, harsh emotional tone in Dickens's writing. Indeed, such an attitude to the world was very much like his own, as is shown in the scathing plays he wrote in the 1850's – and, of course, by the fact that he chose to translate such a pessimistic novel as *Hard Times*.

Nałęcz-Korzeniowski had a clear set of views on how to translate literary texts. Passages in two of his letters to Kazimierz Kaszewski – written on 4th March 1866 and 6th March (NS 18th March) 1866 – concerning his translations of poems from Hugo's *Les chansons des rues et des bois* contain elements of a theory of translation. While he was aware of his own shortcomings as a translator, in all his translations he remained faithful to the principles enunciated in his letters to Kaszewski:

⁹⁴ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [List do Kazimierza Kaszewskiego / Letter to Kazimierz Kaszewski], dnia 26 lutego/10 marca 1865 roku // OS 26th February 1865. Rkps BJ (manuscript held by the Jagiellonian Library), sygn. 3057 II, f. 25.

⁹⁵ Cf. Mirosława Kocięcka. *Z dziejów recepcji Dickensa w Polsce XIX w. (do r. 1900)*. *Przegląd Humanistyczny* 1962, № 6, p. 155; Daniela Bielecka, *Dickens in Poland*. [In:] *Literatura angielska i amerykańska. Problemy recepcji*. Ed. Anna Zagórska and Grażyna Bystydzieńska. Lublin: Uniwersytet Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, 1989, p. 124. Andrzej Busza is of the opinion that Nałęcz-Korzeniowski's translation of *Hard Times* is excellent. See: *idem*. "Conrad's Polish Literary Background and Some Illustrations of the Influence of Polish Literature on His Work". *Antemurale* (Romae-Londinii), Vol. X, 1966, p. 126.

⁹⁶ Karol Dickens. "Ciężkie czasy na te czasy, przekład z angielskiego przez Apolina N. f.". *Gazeta Polska* (Warszawa) 1866, Nos 267–283, 292; 1867, Nos 1–2, 14–20, 26–27.

⁹⁷ Karol Dickens, *Ciężkie czasy na te czasy, tłumaczenie z roku 1866 Apolla Korzeniowskiego*. Ed. Janusz Wilhelmi. Warszawa: Czytelnik, 1st ed., 1955; Karol Dickens. *Ciężkie czasy*. Transl. Apollo Korzeniowski. Ed. Zbigniew Żabicki. Wrocław: Zakład im. Ossolińskich – Wydawnictwo, 1st ed., 1957.

⁹⁸ Cf. Maria Łyżwińska, Andrzej Weseliński. "Dickens in Poland: 1839–1981". *Anglica. Studies in English and American Literature*. Ed. Andrzej Weseliński. Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 1st ed., 1988, p. 125.

In a translation one can err greatly and in a variety of ways. What one must *not* do is diminish the original, deprive it of its national traits or correct the author, which is like a clumsy Italian [making] a plaster figure of a masterpiece of woodcarving, or a tallow candle maintaining that it is a representation of the sun, or a cat shown from the front with its tail in the air, claiming to be the translation of a rhinoceros. If my translation is bad, then tear it up and no more said. But why did they have to go and print it? I have started writing details and have crossed them out, because I would [never] finish. But one cannot get away with skewing André Chénier or turning Despréaux into Horace. Firstly, because the national memory of one's compatriots will recall one of the great poets; secondly, because Despréaux and Horace are as similar to each other as I am to Homer. How would *you* react if a translator of Polish poetry into French transformed what was a reference to Słowacki into a reference to Ovid?⁹⁹

What Nałęcz-Korzeniowski was arguing for, therefore, was that translators should maintain a thematic, emotional and aesthetic equivalence as regards the original text, even at the cost of repeating mistakes made by its author. A translator should neither correct nor – of course – simplify the original. Another important requirement is that he should not fully “determine”, “concretize” or specify more precisely those places in the original text which have been left (partially) “undetermined” by the author, as this opens the door to over-interpretation. If the style of the original text is not preserved, then – according to Nałęcz-Korzeniowski – the translation is “dwarfed” by the original and appears to be pitifully inadequate. The style of one particular author cannot be used to translate a text written by a different person. Neither can one use literary conventions that come from a different period of literature, as doing so merely diminishes the credibility and worth of the translation.

Nałęcz-Korzeniowski summed up his views on the art of translation in his *Enquiry into Shakespeare's Dramatic Art (Studia nad dramatycznością w utworach Szekspira)* [written in 1867; published in 1868],¹⁰⁰ where he acknowledged that – on the whole – translations did not do justice to their original texts, as translators were unable to fully convey the qualities of the originals. He was of the opinion that only masterpieces ought to be translated, as otherwise (Polish) readers would be exposed to a flood of books by second- and third-rate authors¹⁰¹ – even if this meant that the access of Polish writers (and readers) to foreign literature were to be quantitatively diminished. Only works of quality – inspired works written by “great” and “holy” authors – merited translation, as only they could be of profit to Polish readers and thus improve the condition of contemporary Polish literature, of which Nałęcz-Korzeniowski was highly critical:

If you ask my opinion, better *tabula rasa* – i.e. nothing – than a heap of rubbishy untruths about life and art. Only the great and the holy ought to be brought into our family homes. There is no reason to search out mundane shallowness anywhere. Searching it out in art is tantamount to murdering the dormant – to murdering the smothered germs of all truth and beauty. We may

⁹⁹ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. [List do Kazimierza Kaszewskiego / Letter to Kazimierz Kaszewski], dnia 6/18 marca 1866 roku // OS 6th March 1866. Rkps BJ (manuscript held by the Jagiellonian Library), sygn. 3057 II, ff. 40–41.

¹⁰⁰ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. “Studia nad dramatycznością w utworach Szekspira”. *Biblioteka Warszawska. Pismo Poświęcone Naukom, Sztukom i Przemysłowi* 1868, Vol. II, pp. 1–17, 219–232.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 230.

be saddened by our poverty in the field of dramatic art, but there can be no reason for shame [...] Ruins are no disgrace, but are rather the traces of overwhelming destinies. Rubbish that is thrown onto ruins detracts from their holy and instructive sadness. Cypresses may grow on them, but to sow clover in order to graze cattle there is to commit sacrilege.¹⁰²

According to Nałęcz-Korzeniowski, Polish translators ought to see it as their mission to give readers access to the world's literary masterpieces so that – as was once proposed by Horace – a reading of them could lead to the formation of literary taste among the reading public and eventually to the creation of works of high aesthetic and moral quality by Polish writers:

When there is a dearth of originality in a particular Society, it is a familiarity of the common people with the masterpieces of other nations – with the whole intricacy of their art – that can prepare minds and at the same time be morally edifying. At a given moment of good fortune [this] Society will be in a position to wish for – nay, to long for and to judge – any native manifestations of this kind. Such a *vox populi*, which always makes itself heard, inspires the soul of a chosen individual; and dramatic art – complete, perfect and local – spontaneously appears! The preparation of the common people is a task that is incumbent on translators and depends not only on their ability to render a foreign text into their own language, but even more on their choice of texts to translate.¹⁰³

Imitators of the great masters cannot replace good translators. Indeed, it is Nałęcz-Korzeniowski's opinion that imitators do a worse disservice to literary masterpieces than mediocre translators. By imitating great works, they diminish and distort the aesthetic qualities of the models that inspire them – becoming, in effect, their “persecutors”.¹⁰⁴

3. APOLLO NAŁĘCZ-KORZENIOWSKI'S AESTHETIC VIEWS

The fact that most of the plays that Nałęcz-Korzeniowski translated were by Shakespeare and Victor Hugo no doubt had a bearing on his own aesthetic views and therefore on his own literary output. The aura of tragicomedy, the fluctuating emotional tonality and the play of contrasts which pervade these plays are also much in evidence in the comedies of manners that Nałęcz-Korzeniowski wrote himself.

Towards the end of his life he expounded his aesthetic views in his *Enquiry into Shakespeare's Dramatic Art (Study nad dramatycznością w utworach Szekspira)* [1868], which was no doubt modelled on contemporary German studies on Shakespeare.¹⁰⁵ In his own study, Nałęcz-Korzeniowski draws attention to the fact

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 231.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, pp. 231–232.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 232.

¹⁰⁵ In particular Georg Gottfried Gervinus's study entitled *Shakespeare* (1850) and Friedrich Kreyssig's study entitled *Vorlesungen über Shakespeare, seine Zeit und seine Werke* (1859). Both these scholars are mentioned by Roman Taborski. See: Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski. Ostatni dramatopisarz romantyczny*, ed. cit., p. 119.

that – even behind their protective masks – the characters of Shakespeare’s comedies are terrified of the external reality that surrounds them. He is of the opinion that in the tragedies and in the historical drama *Richard III* Shakespeare shows us “the reality of the individual”,¹⁰⁶ whereas in the other historical dramas he shows us “the reality of the individual in a particular historical and national context”.¹⁰⁷ In the comedies, Shakespeare shows us Man’s “flight” from the “terrifying truth of human destiny” into the realm of “delusion”.¹⁰⁸

Nałęcz-Korzeniowski’s views on the relationship between the tragic and the comic in Shakespeare’s plays are significant:

The classification of Shakespeare’s own plays as tragedies, dramas and comedies is quite arbitrary and it is hardly possible to draw a clear line between the comic and the tragic in them [...] He saw tears and pain as the [essential] truth of our experience of reality, while laughter was caused by falsehood in Society and in individuals. Tears and fearsome, never-ending struggles are Man’s constant companions – such is our fate. Laughter is a chance acquaintance – the product of individual or collective delusion. Happiness – measured on the scale of the human Spirit – can be found in both cases. Just as tears, pain and struggle do not exclude the raptures of utter joy, so laughter and contentment fulfil certain needs and common cravings.¹⁰⁹

In Shakespeare’s plays – according to Nałęcz-Korzeniowski – the tragic and the comic are inextricably bound up with each other, whereas “the ancient Greek masters of dramatic art were able to differentiate between the comic and the tragic and to separate them.”¹¹⁰ The fact that Molière – whose plays are also discussed in the same study – followed the example of the Ancients in clearly separating the tragic from the comic is something that Nałęcz-Korzeniowski cannot understand. In the complex modern world, which he refers to as a “muddled state of affairs”¹¹¹ there is, in his view, no place for such simple classifications. He therefore asks rhetorically:

How is it that we are shown the comic separately in literature and on the stage, while in everyday life it is entangled in the painfully tragic?¹¹²

Nałęcz-Korzeniowski remarks that Molière’s intuition told him that joy is always mingled with the fear of losing it, hence his attempts to combine various emotional tonalities. It was only Shakespeare, however, who really succeeded in combining the tragic and the comic in his plays:

In his comic art Shakespeare has laid the microscopic germ of almost every idea, every situation, every action, every desire, every passion and every degree of virtue and crime, which –

¹⁰⁶ Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. “Study nad dramatycznością w utworach Szekspira”, *ed. cit.*, p. 11.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 227.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 9–10.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 221.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 222.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

in the rays of the sun of the truth of [human] destinies – assume gigantic and terrifying forms that evoke delight and horror in his tragedies and historical dramas.¹¹³

Nałęcz-Korzeniowski was convinced that nineteenth-century writers of “modern comedy”¹¹⁴ – whose task was to show various shades of reality – should follow in Shakespeare’s footsteps. In particular, he proposed *The Merchant of Venice* as a model for his times:¹¹⁵

The comic flows from the tragic. And the tragic wears the motley costume of Harlequin. And before Shakespeare’s eyes stands the essential content of modern comedy in the full sense of the word. This illusory reality of the existence of the truth about humanity, mingled with the truth of delusions [proceeding from] warped ideas and warped social relations, reflected the state of Society in Shakespeare’s day and will always reflect deceitful relations, as it reflects the world that surrounds today’s dramatic poets. It is in this situation that Shakespeare sees the principles of real comedy [...].¹¹⁶

In his own plays Nałęcz-Korzeniowski did indeed practise what he preached, often combining various aesthetic tonalities.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 225–226.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 229.

¹¹⁵ This observation was made by Piotr Chmielowski in 1902. See: Piotr Chmielowski. *Dzieje krytyki literackiej w Polsce*. Z przedmową Bronisława Chlebowskiego. Warszawa: Nakład Gebethnera i Wolffa, 1902, p. 565.

¹¹⁶ Nałęcz-Korzeniowski, “Studia nad dramatycznością w utworach Szekspira”, *ed. cit.*, pp. 229–230.