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Title: The unknown Norwid

Abstract:

Cyprian Kamil Norwid (1821-1885) is generally considered the most significant Polish poet of the second half of the nineteenth century. But Norwid was also a playwright, prose writer, and artist. His artistic creations include drawings, watercolors, oil paintings, and prints.

In my paper, I will concentrate on his lesser known artistic output: his printmaking endeavors, consisting of approximately forty engravings, etchings, and lithographs. He based these entirely on his own drawings, while finding his subjects in the New Testament, antiquity, and in his own poems. These compositions—even the titles—are imbued with symbolic and often ambiguous meaning.

Norwid's printmaking began in 1844 in Florence where he studied at the Academy of Fine Arts. He continued his work in Paris, attempting to earn his living in this field. His allegorical composition, *Alleluja or Na cmentarzu (In the Graveyard)* dates from this time. Norwid created his most important prints in the 1860s, when he stopped writing for a time to concentrate on this work. In 1861 Norwid collaborated with a Paris lithographer, producing three lithographs composed as rebuses: *Echo Ruin (Echo of the Ruins)*, *Scherzo* and *Solo*. Around this time, he also produced three etchings, *Męczennik (Martyr)*, *Pythia* and *Sybilla (Sybil)*, which were displayed in 1865 at an exhibition in the museum of Nimes. These were well received by French critics. In February of 1868 the journal, *L'Artiste* published two of his works along with a very favorable article. French critics estimated them highly, comparing them to the works of Rembrandt and Dürer. His last engravings were *Muzyk niepotrzebny (Musician Not Needed)* and *Dialog zmarłych (Dialogue of the Dead)*.

In my paper, I will analyze, and interpret Norwid's prints, attempting to discover common threads with his literary creations.