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## THE SAMURAI AND THE EUROPEAN QUESTION

The starting point of these considerations is the figure of a Japanese warrior that appeared in Volume III of *Album Orbis* by Cyprian Norwid. Isolated from the other “Far East” illustrations in Volume I, it is a strange inclusion in the part of the work dedicated to the European Middle Ages. An attempt to explain its presence in the exact place of Norwid’s album shows how 19<sup>th</sup>-century travellers, photographers and cartoonists created the European vision of Japan. The style of this colonial narrative was later reproduced many times, and finally found its way to private notebooks (including artistic ones). In the conclusion of my reflections, I would also like to propose an interpretation of the drawing, taking reference to its positioning in Norwid’s artistic notebook and in its original source.

### JAPAN IN THE WORLD OF *ALBUM ORBIS*

The world of the Far East received a very limited representation on the pages of *Album Orbis*; among the countries of that region, Japan is represented by a single drawing of Buddhist monks (AO I, page 64 *recto*), which complements the notes on China. The reasons for this can be of at least twofold nature. Firstly, the Japanese society, living on an archipelago off the eastern edge of the Asian continent, has created a civilisation that is original, fascinating – but it is a specific variant of the Sinitic civilisation<sup>1</sup> and a kind of “cul-de-sac”. In today’s world full of Japanese products, from Honda cars, Casio watches, to *anime* TV series and

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<sup>1</sup> This is not a depreciating remark of a sinologist, but a generalisation of the type “the Polish culture is a variant of the cross between Judaeo-Christian and Helleno-Roman cultures”. The author asks his colleagues dealing with Japanese studies for understanding.

*Hello Kitty*, it is easy to forget that Japan's influence on the history of the pre-modern world was rather insignificant. Constructing an all-encompassing vision of the "civilizations of the world", Norwid had the right to treat Japan marginally, just as he "marginalised", among others, the civilisations of Central and South America.

The second reason is more pragmatic. Japan was simply too little known, while intensive trade with China had lasted from the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century. The members of the Society of Jesus – great precursors of Sinology and Japanology – had started exploring China already from the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. They were educated and fluent in many languages, they studied Chinese culture intensively in order to convert learned mandarins to the Christian faith. Even after 1721, when emperor Kangxi banned missionaries throughout China, a mission of Jesuit scholars remained at his court. In the capital city of Beijing they had been acting as scientists and artists until the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, describing China for Europeans<sup>2</sup>. At this point it is worth mentioning the Polish connections – one of the outstanding early Jesuit sinologists was Michał Boym, son of Zygmunt III Waza's court physician, the author of pioneering works on Chinese medicine and geography (among others *Specimen medicinae sinicae*; *Flora sinica*)<sup>3</sup>. Other Poles operating in China included Andrzej Rudomina, Mikołaj Smogulecki and Jan Bąkowski.

In Japan, the Jesuit's mission was very brief – from their arrival in the 1540s until the edict of Toyotomi Hideyoshi from 1587, which prohibited their activity. The edict of 1597 and subsequent edicts issued by the Tokugawa shogunate in 1614 banned the practice of the Christian faith, and finally a wave of persecutions led to the almost complete eradication of this religion in Japan, despite its initial successes and numerous conversions<sup>4</sup>. In such a short period of time the Jesuits did not manage to learn and explain the Japanese culture to Europeans. This was later complemented by the merchants of the Dutch East India Company, with the most important persons to bring the culture of the Land of the Rising Sun closer to Europeans being the author of *The History of Japan* – Engelbert

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<sup>2</sup> For instance, see L.M. BROCKEY, *Journey to the East: the Jesuit mission to China, 1579-1724*, Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press 2007); *The Jesuits, the Padroado and East Asian science (1552-1773)*, eds. L. Saraiva, C. Jami, Singapore–Hackensack, NJ: World Scientific 2008.

<sup>3</sup> E. KAJDAŃSKI, *Michał Boym: ambasador Państwa Środka*, Warszawa: Książka i Wiedza 1999.

<sup>4</sup> J.W. HALL, *Japonia: od czasów najdawniejszych do dzisiaj*, transl. by K. Czyżewska-Madajewicz, Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy 1979; for more details see J. ELISONAS, *Christianity and the Daimyo*, [in:] *Early Modern Japan*, eds. J.W. Hall, J.L. McClain, the series: *The Cambridge History of Japan* 4, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1997, pp. 301-368.

Kaempfer and his compatriot living much later – Isaac Titsingh (his most important works published in French included *Mémoires et anecdotes sur la dynastie régnante des djogouns*<sup>5</sup> and *Annales des empereurs du Japon*<sup>6</sup>). In general, however, these merchants could not match the education and preparation of Jesuits, and their isolation in the only European factory in Japan, on the artificial island of Dejima in Nagasaki harbour did not facilitate direct observation.

During Norwid's lifetime there was a great, albeit involuntary, opening of China and Japan to the outside world, in particular to Europe. In 1840 (when Norwid was 19), after the First Opium War, the British forced the opening of several harbours for free trade and the establishment of diplomatic relations between Beijing and London. It was not until Norwid's 33<sup>rd</sup> birthday (i.e. 1854) that the Americans, under the threat of force, pressured Japan into ending its self-isolation which had lasted 215 years and signing the Treaty of Kanagawa aimed at establishing friendship and trade between both nations. The "opening up" of Japan to exchange with Europe was proceeding slowly, thus when at the end of the 1860s the first descriptions of journeys around this country appeared, Europeans had already, after the second victorious opium war, invaded the Middle Kingdom<sup>7</sup>.

Paradoxically, thanks to Japan's rapid modernisation and increased exchange with Europe since 1868, its art has had a far deeper and wider impact on European art than Chinese art. However, this influence was particularly visible at the very end of Norwid's life, and the final "eclipse" of China by Japan occurred already after his death. Perhaps that is why Anna Borowiec, who pointed out many sources of materials included in the *Album*, missed some Japanese clues. She published the effects of her painstaking research in the extensive and richly illustrated book "*Album Orbis*" *Cypriana Norwida jako księga sztukmistrza*<sup>8</sup>. The subsequent remarks are not meant to be a criticism of the author's titanic work,

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<sup>5</sup> I. TITSINGH, *Mémoires et anecdotes sur la dynastie régnante des Djogouns, souverains du Japon, avec la description des fêtes et cérémonies observées aux différentes époques de l'année... et un appendice contenant des détails sur la poésie des Japonais, leur manière de diviser l'année, etc.*, ed. A. Rémusat, Paris: A. Nepveu 1820, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k96810387>.

<sup>6</sup> I. TITSINGH, "*Nipon o dni itsi ran*", ou *Annales des empereurs du Japon, traduites par M. Isaac Titsingh... précédé d'un aperçu de l'histoire mythologique du Japon*, 1834, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k6581223m>.

<sup>7</sup> One of the results of this victory was the foundation of a French diplomatic mission in Beijing, which was also the crowning achievement of almost twenty years of diplomatic service in this country by Norwid's cousin, Michał Kleczkowski (1858-1860).

<sup>8</sup> A. BOROWIEC, "*Album Orbis*" *Cypriana Norwida – jako księga sztukmistrza*, Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo słowo/obraz terytoria 2016.

but merely an attempt to develop and clarify some of her statements. In the following I would like to analyse the elements of the *Album* that originated in the Land of the Rising Sun.

The starting point was an illustration from page 14 *verso* in Volume III of the *Album*. It presents a Japanese samurai, armed typically for this class with two slightly curved Japanese swords, of which the shorter, *wakizashi* is visible in full, and the longer, *katana*, partially – only its hilt is visible. The archer also has the traditional asymmetrical bow *yumi* and armour<sup>9</sup>, his hairstyle, shoes etc. are also typical of Japanese tradition. All these details attract the attention of persons familiar with the Far East and looking for the Far East traces in the *Album*, and especially if they are amateurs of the military; however, these do not have to be obvious to an art historian and literature expert. In the first of her texts on the *Album*, Borowiec does not mention the drawing at all<sup>10</sup>, while in the second (*Księga sztukmistrza*), unfortunately, she mistakes it as “a cutting depicting an archer from the times of the Crusades”<sup>11</sup>. The previous researchers of the *Album* did not pay much attention to the illustration. Both Juliusz W. Gomulicki<sup>12</sup> and Piotr Chlebowski<sup>13</sup> note that this is an “oriental warrior with a tightened bow” (it should be noted that in the course of further study, Chlebowski reached the source of the illustration, allowing for a precise identification<sup>14</sup>).

As the author emphasises, the third volume of the *Album* is the only one preserved in its original form, which means that most probably Norwid himself pasted a Japanese samurai between European knights and nuns. Although the poet’s mistake cannot be entirely ruled out, it is unlikely – the succession of epochs in Volume III is obvious. In *Księga sztukmistrza*, Borowiec shows how Norwid develops his vision of history<sup>15</sup>, from the Carolingian times and the period of early battles with Muslims (the figure of Roland mentioned in a note on the page opposing the samurai) to the crusades (and their organisers, Conrad III, Saint Louis) and

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<sup>9</sup> It can be assumed that it is a *hotoke dō gusoku* armour. However, this problem should be examined more thoroughly. See S.R. TURNBULL, *The samurai sourcebook*, London: Cassell 2000.

<sup>10</sup> A. JAWORSKA, “*Album Orbis [III]*”. *Cypriana Norwida – struktura opowieści – struktura dziejów*, “Przestrzenie Teorii” 9 (2008), pp. 107-120.

<sup>11</sup> A. BOROWIEC, “*Album Orbis*”, p. 315.

<sup>12</sup> C. NORWID, *Pisma wszystkie. Aneksy*, vol. XI, ed. J.W. Gomulicki, Warszawa 1976, p. 541.

<sup>13</sup> P. CHLEBOWSKI, *Romantyczna silva rerum. O Norwidowym “Albumie Orbis”*, Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL 2009, p. 405.

<sup>14</sup> P. CHLEBOWSKI, personal interview on 31 January 2017.

<sup>15</sup> A. BOROWIEC, “*Album Orbis*”, pp. 80-81ff.

further to Joan of Arc and Charles VII. I believe that it was precisely this coherence that confused the researcher and caused her to take the archer, in armour and with a sword, for a European from the past centuries, and not for a Japanese that was Norwid's contemporary. His archaic weaponry against the background of the European armies at that time could reinforce the mistake.

However, the question remains as to why Norwid pasted a 19<sup>th</sup>-century Japanese warrior between the Romanesque capitals and the mosaics of Hagia Sophia and the sketches depicting medieval knights and nuns? And where did he get him from? The second question is crucial, because the better the knowledge of the source material, the more sensible interpretation can be made. The sequence of images and texts in the *Album* is not fully chronological, but rather symbolic, which is emphasised by the researchers of this work. For example, next to Charles VII (1403-1461) there appears the throne of the much earlier Dagobert (ca. 602 – ca. 628) of the Merovingian dynasty. Apparently, for the poet, the historical turn that took place during the reign of these two rulers is more important than the century in which they ruled<sup>16</sup>.

Norwid did not sign the cutting with the Japanese archer and cut him so much that the author's signature is missing. Borowiec points out that Norwid did so often and it could have been a conscious procedure aimed at diverting attention from "concrete" images, and directing the viewer to the motifs they represent. Thus the armoured warrior was more important than the one who drew him.

Stylistically, this is a typical 19<sup>th</sup>-century drawing, neutral in its correctness, not a caricature and not betraying the author by the style used – at least not to a non-specialist like me. The relatively small "time window" marked by the dates of the opening of Japan and the creation of the *Album* made it easier to quickly find the source of illustrations, which was *Le Japon illustré* by A. Humbert.

#### SOURCES OF NORWID'S INSPIRATIONS – POLITICIAN, ILLUSTRATOR AND PHOTOGRAPHER

Aimé Humbert (1819-1900), a Swiss politician acting as the plenipotentiary ambassador of Switzerland, set out in 1862 to conclude a treaty with Japan, which six years earlier had been forced by Commander Matthew Perry's "black ships" to open to the world. In February 1864 Humbert signed the treaty on friendship and trade with the government of the Tokugawa Shogunate, and on

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 82.

that occasion visited several Japanese cities. He described his impressions first in a five-part series of articles published in 1866-1869 in the periodical "Tour du Monde"<sup>17</sup> and subsequently in the two-volume work *Le Japon illustré* of 1870<sup>18</sup>. In accordance with the custom at the time, the book and the articles contain not only a description of the journey, but also extensive ethnographic, geographical and historical information. 248 illustrations in the first volume and 227 in the second volume, not counting plans and maps, allowed readers to "really see" this exotic country. The popularity of the publication is evidenced by the fact that four years after the French edition an English translation was published with a slightly different set of illustrations<sup>19</sup>.

Browsing through the first volume of Humbert's book made it possible to identify not only the samurai from Volume III of the *Album*, but also the Japanese monks from Volume I (page 64 *recto*). Borowiec (p. 218) carefully noted that these are "two figures (Japanese?), signed «Bonzes au Japon»" (earlier authors quoted the signature above the illustration, without commenting on the nationality of the characters; today's rarely used but once more popular term "bonzo" was borrowed into European languages, including French, from Japanese *bonsō* – monk). Norwid's "bonzos" is a collage of two illustrations. The figure on the left is Humbert's "higher-ranking monk" from page 117, described as illustration 76 *Bonze d'un grade supérieur – Dessin du Émile Bayard d'après une photographie*<sup>20</sup>. The figure on the right is an "itinerant monk" from page 154, described in the list as illustration 96 *Bonze quêteur – Dessin du Émile Bayard d'après une photographie*<sup>21</sup>. The previously mentioned samurai is illustration 143 *Archer japonais (troupes du Siogoun) – Dessin de E. Thérond d'après une photogra-*

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<sup>17</sup> These included: A. HUMBERT, "Le Japon, par M.A. Humbert, ministre plénipotentiaire de la Confédération suisse", "Le Tour du monde: nouveau journal des voyages", 14 July 1866, pp. 1-80; IDEM, "Le Japon", "Le Tour du monde", 15 January 1867, pp. 289-336; IDEM, "Le Japon", "Le Tour du monde", 18 July 1868, pp. 65-112; IDEM, "Le Japon", "Le Tour du monde", 19 January 1869, pp. 353-416; IDEM, "Le Japon", "Le Tour du monde", 20 July 1869, pp. 193-224.

<sup>18</sup> IDEM, *Le Japon illustré*, vols. I-II, Paris: L. Hachette 1870, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k6580682j>.

<sup>19</sup> IDEM, *Japan and the Japanese Illustrated*, transl. by F. Cashel Hoey, H.W. Bates, London: R. Clay & Son and Taylor, Publishers 1874.

<sup>20</sup> IDEM, *Le Japon illustré*, I, p. 414.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 415. Similarly to the case of samurai, Piotr Chlebowski correctly identified the origin of the illustration already after the publication of *Silva Rerum* (P. Chlebowski, personal interview).

*phie*<sup>22</sup>. As it can be seen, all the drawings were made on the basis of photographs<sup>23</sup> – in the last case there is no doubt that the original was a studio photo entitled *Samurai with Long Bow from 1863*, taken by F. Beato<sup>24</sup>.

Felice (Felix) Beato (1832-1909), a British photographer of Italian origin, was one of the world's first reporter photographers. He gained his first experience during the Crimean War. Then he went to India to observe the great Indian Rebellion – he was late, but he managed to document the aftermath of the fighting and the post-uprising repressions. In 1860, he joined the British expeditionary forces setting off from Hong Kong for a campaign during the Second Opium War<sup>25</sup> and thus became the first ever war photographer in China<sup>26</sup>. Although insufficient lighting did not allow him to capture the moment of the British triumph (the signing of the treaty forced upon the Chinese<sup>27</sup>), his photographs are the only full documentation of the campaign. In later years he accompanied colonial troops during the conflicts in Japan (1864), Korea (1871), Sudan (1885) and Burma (1886)<sup>28</sup>. In other words, Beato was one of the most important representatives of a large group of photographers who enthusiastically documented distant countries. Their significant role in shaping the 19<sup>th</sup>-century visual imagination has been emphasised by researchers dealing with the European culture of that period (e.g. see Piotr Chlebowski<sup>29</sup>).

In 1863, Beato arrived in Japan at the invitation of Charles Wirgman, the illustrator and correspondent of “*Illustrated London News*”, whom he met in China. Together they founded a thriving drawing and photography studio<sup>30</sup>. With his rich

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 416.

<sup>23</sup> It is worth noting that both illustrators, Émile Thérond and Émile Bayard belonged to the group of the leading illustrators of that time; especially Bayard is remembered for his illustrations to Hugo's works (it was his image of Collette that made it to the posters of the musical *Les Misérables*).

<sup>24</sup> Currently in the collection of The Jean Paul Getty Museum, catalogue no. 2007.26.154; <http://blogs.getty.edu/iris/pointing-east-thinking-west-felice-beatos-photographic-view/>

<sup>25</sup> L. GARTLAN, *Felice Beato*, [in:] *Encyclopedia of nineteenth-century photography*, ed. J. Hannavy, New York: Taylor & Francis Group 2008.

<sup>26</sup> A. HACKER, F. WAKEMAN, *China Illustrated: Western Views of the Middle Kingdom*, New York: Tuttle Publishing 2012.

<sup>27</sup> W.T. HANES, F. SANELLO, *Opium Wars: The Addiction of One Empire and the Corruption of Another*, Naperville, Ill.: Sourcebooks 2002.

<sup>28</sup> L. GARTLAN, *Felice Beato*.

<sup>29</sup> P. CHLEBOWSKI, *Romantyczna silva rerum*, pp. 335-336.

<sup>30</sup> A. HOCKLEY, *Felice Beato's Japan: Places. An Album by the Pioneer Foreign Photographer in Yokohama, Visualizing Cultures*, 2012, [https://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/beato\\_places/fb1\\_essay01.html](https://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/beato_places/fb1_essay01.html); L. GARTLAN, *Felice Beato*.



experience gathered in Crimea, India and China, Beato was not afraid of challenges and was able to meet the taste of Europeans interested in distant countries. His photographs of Japan, portraits of warriors, craftsmen, women in traditional costumes etc. were extremely popular in Europe and the USA as the first images from a distant and until recently inaccessible country; today they are an invaluable source of knowledge about mid-19<sup>th</sup> century Japan<sup>31</sup>.

Beato was selling photographs and whole albums in which he skilfully presented photographic narratives supplemented with descriptions. There is a certain similarity between his image-and-text albums and Norwid's *Album Orbis* – however, the fate of both artists is diametrically different. Beato went to China in 1859, while Norwid – despite his plans to take part in such an expedition – never reached China; Beato was wealthy thanks to his art; Norwid died a miserable man; Beato's collages were aimed at the general public; Norwid's album collage remained private; Beato's visions of the world were "small", local and concrete – they were the account of the city tours, a record of the impressions from the visited temples; Norwid's vision of the world was great, overwhelming and mystical – it showed the global civilisation. Beato's "small" vision to a large extent shaped the European perception of the East – Norwid's great vision remained unknown for many years, even for Poles....

But it was not the albums – though sold in a large number – that "for more than fifty years, until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, made Beato's photographs of Asia shape the «Western» view of several Asian societies"<sup>32</sup>. This was due to the progressing revolution in printing. In 1863, "Illustrated London News" published a print based not on a sketch, but photography – the author of the illustration was Charles Wirgman. Shortly after Beato's arrival in Japan in 1864, "Illustrated" published another print by Wirgman based on a photograph – this time it was a work by Beato who was mentioned by his last name. Soon other titles followed the example of the London magazine and although the technique at that time made it impossible to reproduce photographs cost-efficiently, the processed photographs taken by the Italian "were typical illustrative material for travel journals, illustrated newspapers and other published descriptions"<sup>33</sup> (emphasis mine – B.Z.). Even after 1877, when Beato sold the studio to his pupil Raimund von Stillfried-Rathenitz and left Japan, the new owner continued for decades to sell copies of Beato's negatives, which were part of the company's assets. In this way, Beato's perspective on Japanese reality was still exerting strong influence even after his

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<sup>31</sup> A. HOCKLEY, *Felice Beato's Japan: Places*.

<sup>32</sup> L. GARTLAN, *Felice Beato*, 131.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*



departure from that country – due to the reproduction of photographs and works of a large group of photographers and Japanese illustrators trained by him<sup>34</sup>.

In the early years of Beato's stay in Japan, foreigners were not allowed to leave the zones in port cities designated for them by treaties. Being extremely resourceful and wanting to circumvent these bans, Beato joined the mission of Aimé Humbert, taking advantage of the opportunity to photograph places normally inaccessible to him. Humbert recalls Wirgman in the foreword to his book, while Beato appears as a hero of anecdotes and memories<sup>35</sup>. Although most of the descriptions of figures in articles and books do not mention the author of the photograph, there are exceptions – e.g. the illustrations depicting temples in Kamakura<sup>36</sup>.

Among the paintings that would eventually get to Norwid's *Album*, the prototype of the "high-ranking monk" is probably the *Japanese High Priest in full canonical*, which can be seen in the album of Japanese and Chinese portraits<sup>37</sup>. The monk in the photograph is younger, has richer robes, his face facing in another direction; the whole figure is mirrored in relation to the drawing. However, the posture, the layout of robes and the characteristic bright scarf are the same. The second monk is clearly modelled after Beato's photograph depicting a wandering begging monk<sup>38</sup>. Also here the differences are quite small: the monk in the photograph is taking a slight step forward, he is holding the stick diagonally in front, on his right, he is holding a beggar's bowl in the left hand; in the Bayard's figure – the person is standing straight, is holding the stick diagonally and in the left hand he is holding only a rosary. However, apart from the general similarity, there are also a few details which may prove that it is indeed the same person – the

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<sup>34</sup> E.M. HIGHT, *The Many Lives of Beato's «beauties»*, [in:] *Colonialist Photography: Imag(in)ing Race and Place*, eds. E.M. Hight, G.D. Sampson, London: Routledge 2005, pp. 26-58, series: Documenting the Image 9.

<sup>35</sup> This includes the anecdote on how Beato photographed the prince's palace in Takanawa – when he set up the equipment, the guards approached him and forbade him to take pictures; he asked for permission, but the soldiers, having asked the commander, returned with absolute prohibition. Beato did not oppose and politely dismantled the camera – especially that in a few minutes that it took for the samurai to obtain consent, he had already managed to take two negatives. A. Humbert, *Le Japon illustré*, p. 329.

<sup>36</sup> A. HUMBERT, *Le Japon*, "Le Tour du monde: nouveau journal des voyages" 14 July 1866, pp. 1-80.

<sup>37</sup> F. BEATO, "[Studio Portraits of Japanese Officers (Yaconin) and a High Priest Dressed in Robes]", photo, print, drawing, *Library of Congress*, <https://www.loc.gov/resource/cph.3g14550/> [retrieved 25 January 2017].

<sup>38</sup> F. BEATO, "SFA003006344", <http://www.spaarnestadphoto.nl/search.pp?showpicture=94313&page=1&pos=1> [retrieved 25 January 2017].

same arrangement of the hands and head, a characteristic fringe on the rosary, the decorative ending of the stick, the ornamented collar of the garment (although less precisely reproduced in the drawing). It is highly probable that Beato made a series of very similar photographs of one model that he sold to different receivers.

A look from afar

The prints allowed Europeans to take a look at Japan, but directed their gaze at what the photographer considered important and limited their field of vision to what was in the frame of the lens. The “window on the world” was narrow and overlooked a specific corner – viewers could not decide for themselves which way they would look at it. Moreover, the illustrations also “added distance” to this look, producing a “second hand” image. The transformation – the enrichment or impoverishment of the original images – was part of the publishing process<sup>39</sup>. The copied monks lost some details of their robes, while the samurai gained a background in the form of a castle wall with merlons behind which the mountains can be seen in the distance. The form of merlons, which does not provide effective protection, and broken stones lying on top of the wall for an unknown reason, suggest a vision of “Romantic ruins” rather than a precise documentation of the actual fortification. In addition, the samurai in Humbert’s book was captioned as *Japanese Archer (from shogun’s troops)*, while in Beato’s original photography this was simply *Samurai with Long Bow*. The caption matched the illustration to the chapter in which it was placed – the description of the seat of the shoguns in Kamakura and the history of the early shogunatI consider the fact that Norwid’s *Album Orbis* uses the already two-time processed works to be significant. Multiple processing of information, including visual input, was very typical of the early encounter with the Far East, and the further away from the countries directly involved in the “opening” of China and Japan, the more of these transformations could be found. The monks in the *Album* are of the “third order”: Beato’s photographs – Bayard’s drawings – Norwid’s watercolours. At each stage some details were lost – the last stage is only an artistic impression, depicting silhouettes, supplemented (as in the case of the samurai) by a sketchy mountain landscape in the background (this was done by Norwid himself). This is a typical practice for the *Album* – there is a lot of overdrawing and “impressions on the subject”.

The samurai is “secondary” – Norwid pasted the illustration from the newspaper without further modification. The second “secondary” graphic element is a fragment of the mosaic – or more precisely – a mosaic motif created by Norwid, based on Figure 112 *Motifs de mosaïques japonaises*, redrawn by Norwid. – *Fac-*

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<sup>39</sup> E.M. HIGHT, *The Many Lives of Beato’s «beauties»*.

*similé de gravures japonaises* from p. 183 *Le Japon illustré*<sup>40</sup>. I treat it as “secondary” because the *facsimile* assumes full fidelity to the Japanese original. Although this is Norwid’s variation on the illustration, not a copy, it is a strong premise to claim that Norwid was acquainted with *Le Japon illustré* (if he could transform the monks, he could have done the same with the mosaic, and it is unlikely that he would have placed next to the Japanese monks a motif so similar to that appearing in Humbert’s work, taken from elsewhere<sup>41</sup>).

The question remains: How did Norwid come across Humbert’s book? He might have been interested in it after reading the review in “Le Monde illustré”, which he used to read, in which it is described as “the most beautiful of books”, full of drawings and “extremely interesting”<sup>42</sup>. Norwid’s knowledge of *Le Japon illustré* may be important for explaining the mystery of the samurai among the Carolingians. The image of the archer also appears on p. 322, in an earlier article by Humbert in “Tour le Monde”, similarly to the two monks (on p. 59 and 328 respectively)<sup>43</sup>; however, there are no mosaics in any of the texts in this magazine.

#### THE SHOGUN’S WARRIOR

Humbert begins the chapter on the visit to Kamakura Palace with a description of the town and goes on to explain who the shoguns were. According to the author, they had been ruling Japan on behalf of the theocratic ruler *mikado* from the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> to the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, starting with the founder of this system of power, Minamoto Yoritomo, until the rule of (Tokugawa) Ieyasu, who established a new dynasty using the title of *taikun*<sup>44</sup>. Yoritomo, the son of a great family, who came to the imperial court in Kyoto noticed its moral and political weakness. While the aristocrats and the emperor locked in the palace were dealing with small ceremonies and intrigues, the families of provincial feudal lords *daimyō*, from whom no one enforced their obligations towards the crown, usurped

<sup>40</sup> A. HUMBERT, *Le Japon illustré*, I, p. 415.

<sup>41</sup> C. Norwid (*Pisma wszystkie. Aneksy*, vol. XI, p. 525) states: “the pattern of Chinese ornamentation (carpets? rug?)”; P. CHLEBOWSKI (*Romantyczna silva rerum*, p. 388) does the same.

<sup>42</sup> “Le Monde illustré”. [Paris] 23 December 1869, p. 411, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k6235066t>.

<sup>43</sup> A. HUMBERT, “*Le Japon*, par M.A. Humbert, ministre plénipotentiaire de la Confédération suisse”, pp. 1-80, 305-352.

<sup>44</sup> In fact, the Tokugawas also used the title shogun, the term *taikun* was used in specific contexts, such as in contacts with foreigners.

the local power and were fighting among themselves; the country started to plunge into anarchy. Yoritomo received extensive powers from the emperor to put things in order. In place of the temporarily appointed levy in mass, he organized the first disciplined and permanent army in Japan. He defeated the *daimyō* who tried to maintain their independence, forcing them to take an oath of obedience to him as the emperor's representative. He introduced order to administration and law, but he also manipulated the imperial court, forcing the emperors who opposed him to abdicate. He ruled during the reigns of several Japanese emperors (76<sup>th</sup> to 83<sup>rd</sup> emperor); the 82<sup>nd</sup> emperor bestowed on him the official title of *shogun* (commander-in-chief). From then on, there had been two courts: Mikado in Kyoto and Yoritomo in Kamakura; the Kyoto courtiers showed disregard to the shogun court, ridiculing its courtiers as simpletons and parvenus, who appeared to themselves as saviours of the divine crown of the mikado. But when the Mongolian Khan Kubilai demanded that Japan obey him, the emperor tried to negotiate, while the shogun organised defence and repulsed the then greatest maritime invasion in the history of the Far East. From then on, the shoguns had been treated as saviours of the nation and Kamakura became a viable alternative to Kyoto, eventually taking full control of the imperial government<sup>45</sup>.

I provided this long passage on the history of Japan because it presents shoguns as the organisers of the state, introducing strong and effective secular power instead of degenerated theocratic power; as the defenders and saviours of the nation<sup>46</sup>. The description of the temples in Kamakura complements this picture – both are dedicated to the deified emperor-warrior and mention the heroes of the past. Four illustrations are interwoven into the whole, showing (as written directly in the captions) – an officer and Japanese soldiers from the time of the civil wars in the 13<sup>th</sup> century; a camp on a hill; a Japanese archer (from the shogun's troops) and a Japanese lancer (from the shogun's troops)<sup>47</sup>.

Let us assume that the figure in the illustration represents the text in which it is situated; the dominant figure is a single hero (Minamoto) – this eliminates the drawing of a group of soldiers and the sketch of the camp. There are two soldiers left – both of them are directly connected with the shogun via the caption – a warrior with a lance and a warrior with a bow. The latter was used in *Album Orbis*. Why him? I think that the artistic, not cognitive reasons were decisive here – his

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<sup>45</sup> A. HUMBERT, *Le Japon illustré*, pp. 226-232.

<sup>46</sup> For a more factual and balanced description of Minamoto Yoritomo's deeds, see more contemporary publications, e.g. J. TUBIELEWICZ, *Historia Japonii*, Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich 1984.

<sup>47</sup> A. HUMBERT, *Le Japon illustré*, pp. 226-232.

representation is more dynamic, more attractive, it is simply artistically better than a static image of an infantryman with a lance.

If the archer “embodies” the shogun, if Norwid substituted him for Yoritomo, his presence among Charlemagne and the organisers of the crusades makes sense. Yoritomo – like Charlemagne – was the organiser of the army and the state in which he introduced order in place of chaos; he was, similarly to Roland on the opposite page, the captain of his ruler, not the ruler himself; in fact, he exercised full power, although he was not a descendant of the royal family. The emperor of Japan, whose power Yoritomo seized, was a distant descendant of the goddess Amaterasu, his power had sacred legitimacy. Similar hereditary-sacral legitimacy can be attributed to the Germanic kings of Francia – the Merovingians, whose power were seized by the Carolingians (first *de facto*, and then *de iure*). There is also a second set of parallels – Charles was the defender of the papacy and the pope, a theocratic and supreme ruler, crowned by the emperor. According to Humbert, Yoritomo saved *trône pontifical* and it was *l’empereur théocratique* who gave him the title of shogun<sup>48</sup>.

The archer looks “archaic” enough to represent a 13<sup>th</sup>-century shogun; it does not disturb the graphic layout of Norwid’s collage. Norwid, who was not a Japan studies or weapon expert, might have thought that this archer really looked like a soldier from 700 years before. It should be added that Humbert performs certain “archaisation”, which I would associate with his exotic and orientalisng observational attitude. In *Le Japon illustré* he included many drawings of older warriors, more historically adequate to Yoritomo’s times. However, they illustrate even earlier, pre- and early historical times, including stories about the first legendary emperor of Japan, Jinmu. In this way, the illustrations were historically shifted – warriors from the Middle Ages depict antiquity, whereas those from the 19<sup>th</sup> century depict the times of the Minamotos.

To what extent did Norwid consciously make reference to Minamoto as a state builder in this very place in *Album Orbis*? Removing the caption could be an intentional procedure to erase the “Japanese origin” of the image, which otherwise

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<sup>48</sup> It is interesting, albeit marginal here, that among the Japanese themselves, Minamoto Yoshitsune, Yoritomo’s younger brother, by far surpasses the fame and popularity of his sibling, who is undoubtedly one of the most important figures in the history of the country. Yoshitsune, an extremely talented general, was one of the leaders of Yoritomo’s victorious army – but later the brothers parted their ways and Yoshitsune, fiercely pursued by his older brother, was eventually forced to commit suicide. He is remembered by the Japanese as a young, noble, uncompromising hero (of a Romantic type); the final tragic defeat made him an even more dramatic figure. Numerous plays, stories, and today even a film and a TV series have been devoted to him. See I. MORRIS, *The Nobility of Failure: Tragic Heroes in the History of Japan*, New American Library 1975.

would create a dissonance for the reader – and perhaps even for Norwid himself. Although, in combination with other graphic elements, the samurai indicates that the poet knew the works of Humbert, the illustration itself comes from a newspaper (the paper shows a print arranged in three columns). The samurai “wandered” through all editions of *Les races humaines*<sup>49</sup>, but the drawing pasted into the *Album* does not come from “Tour de Monde” or any of the editions of L. Figuier’s<sup>50</sup> book. Perhaps Norwid pasted it into the *Album* many years after reading Humbert, when he remembered about the vision of a lawmaker, leader and creator of stable power, but his Japanese, exotic specificity faded a bit away. Maybe he came across the archer once seen in a newspaper by accident and used his image to represent a character whose deeds he remembered, but not his name.

It remains to be hoped that future researchers of Norwid’s work will be able to find answers to these questions and finally solve the riddle of the origin of the drawings in *Album Orbis*.

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<sup>49</sup> L. FIGUIER, *Les races humaines*, Paris: Hachette 1872, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k2038525>.

<sup>50</sup> In all the mentioned prints on the reverse side of the page with the archer there are images or text formatted differently from the one piercing through the cutting in the *Album*.

## SAMURAJ A SPRAWA EUROPEJSKA

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

Tekst analizuje pierwotne pochodzenie grafik z *Albumu Orbis*: japońskich mnichów (t. I) i japońskiego łuczника (t. III). Zapożyczone przez Norwida z *Le Japon illustré* Aimé Humberta ilustracje są przekształconymi fotografiami autorstwa Felice Beato, przetworzonymi na grafiki drukowane w prasie i książce, a następnie przerysowane lub wycięte przez Norwida i umieszczone w nowym kontekście ilustracyjno-narracyjnym *Albumu*. To kilkietapowe zapożyczenie (fotografia–grafika–rysunek) i związane z tym przekształcenia ilustrują nie-bezpośredni charakter przepływu wiedzy między Japonią a Europą w połowie XIX w. Ta wymiana kulturowa była silnie osadzona w kontekście europejskiej, w tym francuskiej, ekspansji kolonialnej w Azji. Umieszczenie przez Norwida ryciny japońskiego łuczника między obrazami z wczesnego europejskiego średniowiecza może sugerować, że stworzył on paralelę między działaniami dynastii karolińskiej względem papieżstwa i działaniami pierwszych *siogunów* rodu Minamoto względem japońskiego dworu cesarskiego, tak jak te ostatnie opisuje A. Humbert.

**Słowa kluczowe:** *Album Orbis*; Japonia; wymiana kulturowa; Felice Beato; orientalizm; Aimé Humbert.

## THE SAMURAI AND THE EUROPEAN QUESTION

## S u m m a r y

The article analyses the origins of the pictures in C.K. Norwid's *Album Orbis*: Japanese monks from Vol. I and a Japanese archer from Vol. III. Norwid borrowed the illustrations from Aimé Humbert's book *Le Japon illustré*; these illustrations originated as photographs by Felice Beato, transformed first into graphics printed in books and in press articles, and later cut-out or re-drawn by Norwid and placed in an entirely new illustrative and narrative context within his *Album*. Such multi-stage borrowing (photography-graphic-drawing) required many modifications; this process reflected the indirect and multi-stage transfer of knowledge between Japan and Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and this knowledge exchange was taking place in the context of European, including French, colonial expansion in Asia. The fact that Norwid placed the Japanese archer among illustrations from early medieval Europe may suggest that he wanted to create a parallel between the actions of the Carolingian dynasty in relation to the papacy and the actions undertaken by the first Minamoto shoguns with regard to the Japanese emperor, as the latter were described by A. Humbert.

**Key words:** *Album Orbis*; Japan; cultural exchange; Felice Beato; orientalism; Aimé Humbert.

*Translated by Rafał Augustyn*