

**Przemysław Dąbrowski**

Pomeranian Academy in Słupsk, Poland  
przemyslaw.dabrowski@apsl.edu.pl  
ORCID 0000-0003-4051-7576

## **Augustyn and Tadeusz Wróblewski – difficult brotherly relations as presented in family correspondence. At the genesis of social, political and legal thought**

### **Abstract**

In the relationship between Augustine and Tadeusz, three periods can be distinguished. The initial agreement and recognition lasted until 1887. The second period was filled with gradual hatred, although there are still remains of mutual respect. The total severance of ties, imbued with numerous pretensions and accusations, fell in the early 20th century.

**Keywords:** political and legal thought, Tadeusz Wróblewski, Augustyn Wróblewski, Vilnius.

### **1. Introduction**

Augustyn August (1866–1924)<sup>1</sup> and Tadeusz Stanisław (1858–1925) Wróblewski are well known characters in the literature. The first of the brothers is a famous chemist and biochemist, propagator of anarchist slogans. The latter is an esteemed Vilnius attorney, philanthropist, founder of the Wróblewski Library in Vilnius that exists until today. Both brothers came from Wróblewski family, bearer of Ślepowron coat of arms. Their parents were Eustachy and Emilia née Beniowska<sup>2</sup>. The activities and views of each of the brothers have already been studied, however hardly any of the authors mentions their mutual relations — extremely difficult, sometimes even catastrophic. Jerzy Franke was one of the first to mention the need of characterising these relations<sup>3</sup>.

### **2. Brotherly love**

The brothers were brought up in a spirit of family respect. In their family home, the role of the fellowman, mutual love and respect for the closest played central roles<sup>4</sup>. Eustachy Wróblewski believed that love and brotherly friendship could support the

---

<sup>1</sup> See: P. Dąbrowski, *Tradycja Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego a rzeczywistość. Myśl polityczno-prawna i działalność Tadeusza Wróblewskiego (1858–1925)*, Gdańsk 2018, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> See more: *ibidem*, pp. 24–30.

<sup>3</sup> J. Franke, *“Czystość” (1905–1909) Augustyna Wróblewskiego albo iluzja etycznej krucjaty*, Warsaw 2013, p. 24.

<sup>4</sup> E. Wróblewski, *List do Tadeusza Wróblewskiego*, MS, dat., Wilno, 3 XI 1886, Lietuvos Mokslų Akademijos Vrublevskių Biblioteka, Rankraščių Skyrius (LMAVB), ref. fond 7, folder 1481, fol. 25; *idem*, *List do Tadeusza Wróblewskiego*, MS, dat., Wilno, 5 I 1887, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 1481, fol. 28.

brothers during the course of their *long* lives and it would be *pleasant* and *useful* for them<sup>5</sup>.

Despite slowly shaping differences in beliefs, the relationship between the brothers was initially good<sup>6</sup>. They supported each other during their time in St. Petersburg and confided in one another about the most delicate aspects of their lives<sup>7</sup>. In correspondence to his brother, Augustyn confessed overwhelming indolence affecting various areas of his activity. Tadeusz advised that it was a very bad habit impeding the development of an individual. He compared it to an utterly harmful moral disease that could only be overcome thanks to one's strong will<sup>8</sup>. Augustyn also mentioned his aversion to learning. Tadeusz explained to him that it did not stem from indolence, but rather sluggishness. He suggested that Augustyn could be working too slowly and that his mind was occupied with other matters. Moreover, Tadeusz emphasized the need of paying attention to and cultivating such values as prudence, perseverance and the ability to focus one's thoughts<sup>9</sup>. He warned his brother not to *let go of* his heart and mind, saying these could play a *graceful role in sowing nationalism*<sup>10</sup>.

Tadeusz also admitted that Augustyn had a tendency to *daydream*, which was a very dangerous feature that could once stand in the way of becoming a *man of action*. He believed that material goods should neither determine one's goals nor become a foundation of life. They should merely be a stimulus encouraging the work. He argued that [...] *the enemy does not sleep and does not dream — instead he keeps vigil, he fights and sends you one blow after the other. Do you still want to keep pondering about some bloody visions? I object! Work! So that one day you can go out into the field... not defenceless [...], but as a knight in a full armour*<sup>11</sup>.

### 3. First crisis

Relations between brothers decayed at the beginning of 1887. During his stay in Riga<sup>12</sup>, Augustyn joined the ranks of a *secret political organisation*, and a *mysterious hand* pushed him into actions that were a far cry from the values cultivated in Wróblewski family<sup>13</sup>. As a result of apprehension, Augustyn was placed in a *military*

<sup>5</sup> A. Wróblewski, *List do Tadeusza Wróblewskiego*, MS, dat., Wilno, 1 III 1888, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 1481, fol. 18v.

<sup>6</sup> P. Dąbrowski, *op. cit.*, pp. 56–57.

<sup>7</sup> See: *ibidem*, p. 74.

<sup>8</sup> T. Wróblewski, *List do Augustyna Wróblewskiego*, MS, dat., Petersburg, 1886, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 2002, fol. 1.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*, fol. 2.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*, fol. 3.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*, fol. 3v; see: idem, *List do Augustyna Wróblewskiego*, MS, dat., Jahutorowsk, 8 (20) II 1883, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 2045b, fol. 19, 19v, 20.

<sup>12</sup> A. Wróblewski, *List do Tadeusza Wróblewskiego*, MS, dat., Ryga, 6 II 1887, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 1480a, fol. 7.

<sup>13</sup> T. Wróblewski, *List do Augustyna Wróblewskiego*, MS, dat., Petersburg [1887], LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 2002, fol. 5v; A. Wróblewski, *List do Tadeusza Wróblewskiego*, MS, dat., Ryga, 23 II 1887, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 1480a, fol. 8, 8v.

*jail*, where he spent over 2 years. He asked his brother for legal help in case of a trial or recommending a good lawyer<sup>14</sup>. Tadeusz, however, refused to help his brother.

Many years later, in one of his letters, Augustyn stated that it was his brother who played an *ugly* and dishonest role in his 2-year incarceration. He did not consider Tadeusz to be his brother any more, rather a *dishonest person*<sup>15</sup>. Moreover, he accused him of being overly attached to St Petersburg, of *careerism*, of being deceitful about raising money, which was allegedly a *cover for another pursuits*. He was asking: *Why do you need this St Petersburg? After all, you are not working for a career, not for personal fame, not for selfish feelings. You want to direct all your efforts to bring happiness to your family and only to your family, so why aren't you doing it?*<sup>16</sup> In another place of his letter he added: [...] *we should be helping each other, supporting each other morally, trying to make our lives not only easier but also more pleasant. We should try lighting a ray of happiness for each other*<sup>17</sup>.

In his reply, Tadeusz pointed out that he had never been the social climber, and that his eternal dream was to devote himself to scientific and social work and, simultaneously, stay with his family. This thought always accompanied him when he went to St Petersburg after his holidays in Vilnius. Also, after *swift* implementation of his plans, he always returned home for Christmas<sup>18</sup>.

It is worth mentioning that Augustyn began military service after his release from custody<sup>19</sup>. As Augustyn pointed out, due to his *past sins*, his initial destination was to be distant Tiflis<sup>20</sup>. However, the Caucasian Headquarters decided to send him to a more distant place. In February 1890, he was conscripted into the 5th Rifle Battalion stationed in cities of Seraksa and Puli-Chatun in Turkmenistan. His service lasted less than a year<sup>21</sup>.

After his service, Augustyn settled down in Krakow. Brotherly relations returned on the right track. Tadeusz supported his brother financially in his research on organic chemistry<sup>22</sup>. He even considered staying permanently in Krakow, only to be closer to his brother. This plan ultimately failed<sup>23</sup>. The younger Wróblewski addressed

<sup>14</sup> A. Wróblewski, *List do Tadeusza Wróblewskiego*, MS, dat., Ryga, 1 II [1890], LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 1480a, fol. 10v.

<sup>15</sup> *Idem*, *List do Niny Symonowiczowej*, MS, dat., Kraków, 22 VIII 1905, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 225, fol. 3.

<sup>16</sup> *Idem*, *List do Tadeusza Wróblewskiego*, MS, dat., Ryga, 6 II 1887, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 1480a, fol. 7v.

<sup>17</sup> *Idem*, *List do Tadeusza Wróblewskiego*, MS, dat., [Seraksa], 23 XI [1890], LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 1480a, fol. 24.

<sup>18</sup> T. Wróblewski, *List do Augustyna Wróblewskiego*, MS, dat., Petersburg 9 II [1887], LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 2002, fol. 3v.

<sup>19</sup> A. Wróblewski, *List do Eustachego Wróblewskiego*, MS, dat., Ryga, 26 XII 1889, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 2041a, fol. 32v.

<sup>20</sup> *Idem*, *List do Eustachego Wróblewskiego*, MS, dat., Seraks, 21 III [1890], LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 2041a, fol. 33.

<sup>21</sup> *Idem*, *List do Tadeusza Wróblewskiego*, MS, dat., Aszchabad, 27 II [1890], LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 1480a, fol. 11; *idem*, *List do Eustachego Wróblewskiego*, MS, dat., Seraks, 29 XI 1890, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 2041a, fol. 51v.

<sup>22</sup> P. Dąbrowski, *op. cit.*, pp. 80–81.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 81–82.

his *only* brother with these words: *If it really comes to you with ease and if you are really willing to give, only my ambition could be an obstacle. But that is not rightful. One way or the other, I am using your help in my work [...]. I believe that you are not giving it [money] to me, but to the one I love, science*<sup>24</sup>. In warm words he wished Tadeusz success in his work as a lawyer and that he would marry and thus achieve “family happiness”<sup>25</sup>. Commenting on this, Tadeusz believed that it was too late for marriage, which he deemed as *unnecessary*<sup>26</sup>. He also stressed that he was sometimes getting sad. This was happening in spite of the fact that *I have been bowing my neck [...] of my soul for a long time [...] and it seems to me that I have already bowed it so low, broken oftentimes but learned a lot*<sup>27</sup>.

#### 4. Times of hatred

Relationships between brothers decayed again at the beginning of the 20th century when Augustine was diagnosed with chronic psychosis (paranoia). It was a direct result of a 2/3 September 1902 *brawl in his friend's apartment* that, in Augustyn's opinion, must have been *provoked by riff-raff* present there<sup>28</sup>. After this event, he wrote in one of his letters to his brother: *When you are reading this, I am gone. I was lost because I absolutely could not live and I did not know life [...]. Human malice has no limits! I could not be vile [...]*<sup>29</sup>.

At first, Augustyn was placed in St. Lazarus' hospital in Cracow, and then in the hospital in Tworki<sup>30</sup>. In his words addressed to Tadeusz, he reported: *Despair overtakes me. I am of good health, but I feel that if I stay longer in the hospital, I can really get sick. I will agree to all possible conditions to just abandon the walls of the hospital and devote myself to [...] useful work and activities*. He also added, as the doctors themselves suggested, that with Tadeusz's *guarantee* he could be taken home at any time<sup>31</sup>. However, this did not happen, despite the fact that his older brother visited him in Tworki. The meeting took place in a very cool atmosphere<sup>32</sup>. Tadeusz claimed

<sup>24</sup> A. Wróblewski, *Kochany Bracie!*, MS, dat., Kraków, 1 III 1897, LMAVB, ref. fond 75, folder 127/4, fol. 167.

<sup>25</sup> *Idem*, *Kochany Bracie!*, MS, dat., Kraków, 8 XI 1899, LMAVB, ref. fond 75, folder 127/4, fol. 231; *idem*, *Kochany Bracie!*, MS, dat., Kraków, 7 I 1900, LMAVB, ref. fond 75, folder 127/4, fol. 233; *idem*, *Kochany Bracie!*, MS, dat., Kraków, 20 IV 1900, LMAVB, ref. fond 75, folder 127/4, fol. 244.

<sup>26</sup> T. Wróblewski, *List do Augustyna Wróblewskiego*, MS, dat., Wilno, 23 XII 1899, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 2003, fol. 97.

<sup>27</sup> *Idem*, *List do Augustyna Wróblewskiego*, MS, dat., Wilno, 3 IV 1898, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 2003, fol. 70v.

<sup>28</sup> See more: J. Franke, *op. cit.*, pp. 31–40; *Protokół z posiedzenia zastępców w sprawie honorowej pomiędzy A. Wróblewskim i L. Marchlewskim*, MS, LMAVB, ref. fond 75, folder 111, fol. 80–81; A. Wróblewski, *Do Adwokata Tadeusza Wróblewskiego w Wilnie*, MS, dat., Warszawa, 27 VII 1908, LMAVB, ref. fond 75, folder 127/4, fol. 250, 251.

<sup>29</sup> A. Wróblewski, *Kochany mój i najdroższy Bracie!*, MS, dat., 19 V 1902, LMAVB, ref. fond 75, folder 127/4, fol. 238.

<sup>30</sup> See: M. Godlewski, *List do Tadeusza Wróblewskiego*, MS, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 1082, fol. 1–2.

<sup>31</sup> A. Wróblewski, *Bracie!*, MS, LMAVB, ref. fond 75, folder 127/4, fol. 247v; see too: H. Bielińska, *List do Tadeusza Wróblewskiego*, MS, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 995b, fol. 1–1v.

<sup>32</sup> A. Wróblewski, *Do Adwokata Tadeusza Wróblewskiego w Wilnie*, MS, dat., Warszawa, 27 VII 1908, LMAVB, ref. fond 75, folder 127/4, fol. 251.

that only the appropriate medical committee, convened at the initiative of the hospital management or the curator, could decide about Augustyn's release<sup>33</sup>. The latter did not agree with this argumentation. In a letter addressed to his older brother, he wrote: *I do not think that neither someone nor the guardian would have that disastrous influence on you that would compel you to obstruct my efforts to be released from the hospital and to actively contribute to oppressing me in hospital. That would not be human on your part*<sup>34</sup>. Tadeusz, in turn, informed his brother in one of his letters that it was the court that decided to place him in hospital in connection with attempted murder<sup>35</sup>. Also this time, Augustyn retorted: *Either you knew this was not true and consciously threatened me [...] or you yourself were deranged*<sup>36</sup>. Tadeusz considered his younger brother to be insane<sup>37</sup>.

In the end, Augustyn managed to *clear himself* of all allegations of the illness<sup>38</sup>. This situation, however, resulted in the brothers no longer maintaining any contact<sup>39</sup>,

<sup>33</sup> *Idem, Szanowny Panie Doktorze!*, MS, dat., [Kraków], 19 VI 1902, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 995b, fol. 2; see too: J. Bieliński, *List do Tadeusza Wróblewskiego*, MS, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 9095a, fol. 54v.

<sup>34</sup> A. Wróblewski, *Bracie!*, MS, dat., Tworki, 30 IX 1903, LMAVB, ref. fond 75, folder 127/4, fol. 246v.

<sup>35</sup> *Idem, Do Adwokata Tadeusza Wróblewskiego w Wilnie*, MS, dat., Warszawa, 27 VII 1908, LMAVB, ref. fond 75, folder 127/4, fol. 251.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibidem*, fol. 251–252.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem*, fol. 252; see too: J. Bieliński, *List do Tadeusza Wróblewskiego*, MS, dat., 12 (25) VI 1902, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 995a, fol. 56, 56v; *idem, List do Tadeusza Wróblewskiego*, MS, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 995a, fol. 78; *idem, List do Tadeusza Wróblewskiego*, MS, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 995a, fol. 62; *idem, List do Tadeusza Wróblewskiego*, MS, dat., 9 VII [1902], LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 995a, fol. 63; *idem, List do Tadeusza Wróblewskiego*, MS, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 995a, fol. 74; *idem, List do Tadeusza Wróblewskiego*, MS, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 995a, fol. 102–103v; *idem, List do Tadeusza Wróblewskiego*, MS, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 995a, fol. 105v; *idem, List do Tadeusza Wróblewskiego*, MS, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 995a, fol. 108–108v; T. Gluziński, *List do Tadeusza Wróblewskiego*, MS, dat., Kraków, 4 VI 1902, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 1080, fol. 1, 1v; Z. Marek, *List do Tadeusza Wróblewskiego*, MS, dat., Kraków, 16 I 1905, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 1209, fol. 8–9v; *idem, List do Józefa Bielińskiego*, TS, dat., Kraków, 12 XII 1901, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 430, fol. 1, 1v; N. Cybulski, *List do Józefa Bielińskiego*, MS, dat., Kraków, 6 IV 1903, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 353, fol. 5. When Augustyn was undergoing treatment, Tadeusz's agent was doctor Józef Bieliński. He took his passport and kept it at his home. Thanks to Tadeusz's efforts, Augustyn was moved from Kraków to Tworki. After all, Augustine found out about this fact and received his brother's intervention positively. However, he was irritated by the thought that he might ever be cared for by his older brother. The latter financed Augustyn's treatment, which the younger Wróblewski did not know about. Dr. Cybulski became the curator of Augustyn, which took place after the lawyer Tadeusz Gluziński submitted an application to the court on the basis of Tadeusz's power of attorney. Augustyn did not behave normally in the Institution in Tworki, he even had to beat one of the sick once. Thus, Bieliński repeatedly and categorically advised Tadeusz against visiting his brother, because Augustyn would find it indifferent and depressing for Tadeusz. Nevertheless, this is proof that he wanted to see him and talk to him. This lack of contact made Tadeusz "let go" of his brother's realization. Dr. Bieliński admonished him, who wrote: [...] *You remove too much of an active role into the background, what is already superfluous; special in Krakow relations, you should give your opinion firmly or wrong — but it should always come directly from you.* After Augustyn left the medical facility, Tadeusz did not even want to send his personal items to Krakow.

<sup>38</sup> See more: Z. Marek, *List do Tadeusza Wróblewskiego*, MS, dat., Kraków, 21 XI 1904, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 1209, fol. 3.

<sup>39</sup> See: S. Bojarska, *List do Tadeusza Wróblewskiego w Wilnie*, MS, dat., Warszawa, 19 XII 1909, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 1006, fol. 1, 1v; Z. Marek, *Niniejszym poświadczam...*, MS, dat., Kraków, 28 [XII]

even though Tadeusz still had interest in Augustyn's fate<sup>40</sup>. Tadeusz's behaviour is not clear — once more he decided not to help his younger brother and did not try to get him out of a mental asylum. Perhaps it was a result of a conviction that one has to bear responsibility for all their mistakes? Perhaps he also decided that helping his brother, whose views have been gradually becoming more and more radical, would harm his developing career as a lawyer?

Six years after these events, in July 1908, Augustine wrote a letter to his brother in which he emphasized his wish to give a *reckoning of his life*<sup>41</sup>. At the very start, he appealed to Tadeusz: *Recognize your mistake, your guilt, join for good this bright and true way of life. If we agree on ideals and conduct, on condemnation of evil and of our mistakes, then our life paths will meet, merge and harmonise. That is the only, simple and natural path to consent*<sup>42</sup>. Augustine also emphasised that he was *a man of the innocent spirit*, becoming a *victim* of his sick *environment*. He continued to accuse his brother of not offering him any help. Following Tadeusz's *will*, he was incarcerated in the hospital, stripped of his readership, his work and *civil rights*. He was humiliated and legally incapacitated<sup>43</sup>. He called Tadeusz a *tormetor*. He kept reminding Tadeusz that upon leaving the hospital, he did not want to return his personal belongings<sup>44</sup>. Augustyn wrote: *You did all this out of fear for your own career, afraid to help your brother who fell off the wagon, to make sure you don't fall off the wagon yourself*<sup>45</sup> and then he added: *My words are harsh, but remember that your crimes against me are a hundred times more harrowing and cry out loud for vengeance from future generations! Recognise your mistakes, cleanse yourself and come with me, come to rescue our poor homeland, for there is only one way to save it, the way I am showing*<sup>46</sup>.

## References

### Archival sources

- Lietuvos Mokslų Akademijos Vrublevskių Biblioteka, Rankraščių Skyrius (LMAVB), ref. fond 7, folder 1006  
 LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 1080  
 LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 1082  
 LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 1209  
 LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 1480a  
 LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 1481  
 LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 2002  
 LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 2003  
 LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 2041a

---

1904, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 1209, fol. 7.

<sup>40</sup> S. Sadkowski, *List do Tadeusza Wróblewskiego*, MS, dat., Petersburg, 17 XI 1907, LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 1339a, fol. 27.

<sup>41</sup> See: A. Wróblewski, *Krzywda. Szkice psychologiczne*, Kraków 1913, p. 116.

<sup>42</sup> *Idem*, *Do Adwokata Tadeusza Wróblewskiego w Wilnie*, MS, dat., Warszawa, 27 VII 1908, LMAVB, ref. fond 75, folder 127/4, fol. 248–249.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibidem*, fol. 250.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibidem*, fol. 252.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibidem*, fol. 252–253.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibidem*, fol. 254.

LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 2045b  
LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 225  
LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 353  
LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 430  
LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 9095a  
LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 995a  
LMAVB, ref. fond 7, folder 995b  
LMAVB, ref. fond 75, folder 111  
LMAVB, ref. fond 75, folder 127/4

### Literature

Dąbrowski P., *Tradycja Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego a rzeczywistość. Myśl polityczno-prawna i działalność Tadeusza Wróblewskiego (1858–1925)*, Gdańsk 2018.  
Franke J., *„Czystość” (1905–1909) Augustyna Wróblewskiego albo iluzja etycznej krucjaty*, Warsaw 2013.  
Wróblewski A., *Krzywda. Szkice psychologiczne*, Kraków 1913.

