

RECEPTION OF KAZIMIERZ PRZERWA-TETMAJER'S WORKS IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES: GERMANY, CZECH REPUBLIC, SLOVAKIA AND RUSSIA, ACCORDING TO CRITICS AT THE TURN OF THE 19th AND THE 20th CENTURIES

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Abstract:

The article focuses on the Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer as a poet and novelist, on the impact of his poetic prose such as "Na Skalnym Podhalu" on the national self-awareness of Highlanders, and in particular on the reception of his works in Germany, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Russia.

Key words: Reader, reception, literary criticism, poetry, prose

Recepcja zagraniczna – niemiecka, czeska, słowacka i rosyjska – dzieł Kazimierza Przerwy-Tetmajera w opinii krytyków z przełomu XIX i XX wieku

Abstrakt:

Artykuł skupia się na Kazimierzu Przerwie-Tetmajerze jako na poecie i pisarzu, na wpływie jego prozy poetyckiej tj. *Na Skalnym Podhalu* na świadomość narodową górali, jak i przede wszystkim na opisie recepcji dzieł Tetmajera w Niemczech, Czechach, Słowacji i Rosji.

Słowa kluczowe: Czytelnik, recepcja, krytyka literacka, poezja, proza

As it can be concluded from the Tetmajer's letters to Ferdynand Hoesick from 19th and 21st January 1899, Tetmajer paid much attention to reception of his works. In this letter, Tetmajer instructs his friend how a review about his poetry shall be written, what is more, an interesting poet's avowals can be found there: "One thing more – as I have a soft spot for that, almost childish and silly weakness – my works (some prose, some poems) are being translated: 'Wizja Okrętu' and 'Melancholia' two times separately into German, Czech, Old East Slavic, Russian, Swedish, French, Italian and (thanks to the permission given in Paris by Rydel on my behalf) English. These translations if collected together could be published as a small volume of poetry and, as I know, I am the only young poet who can see own works in these all eight languages."¹

¹ PRZERWA-TETMAJER, K.: The letter to Ferdynand from 19th and 21st January 1898 r., in: I used to have friends..., Memories about Kazimierz Tetmajer. Edited by K. Jab-

This fact was also presented by the Polish press, e.g. in 1903: “European Literature treats the poetry of our poet with the highest diligence. ‘*Otchłań*’ was translated by P. Maternowa into Czech language and published as an illustrated edition printed by Jos. R. Vilimka in Prague; ‘*Otchłań*’ will be also translated into German by I. v. Immendorf (Grafin Castel), and into Italian language translated by Marya Rygiérowna. ‘*Wrażenia*’ was translated plenty times into German and printed by German magazines in Vien, Berlin and Prague; ‘*Panna Mery*’ was translated by W. Ziffer from Vien, ‘*Melancholia*’ and ‘*Wrażenia*’ will be released together in one book by Munich publisher Marchlewski & Co. Additionally, a book edition of Tetmajer’s Highlander novels in German is being prepared (*Aus der Tatra*).”²

The fact that Polish literature, in general, at that times was translated frequently is really worth emphasizing, because that means that translated Tetmajer’s works were not an unusual literary phenomenon, but the number of languages into which his poetry was translated is definitely impressive (according to ‘*Nowy Korbut*’ until the year 1918 i.a. German, Czech, Slovak, Russian, French, English, Italian, Serbo-Croatian, Swedish, Hungarian, Bulgarian, Latvian³). As Juliusz Kaden-Bandrowski claims it was a time of “expansion of Polish book, i.e. between years 1900–1933, which was very characteristic period of time for Polish literature”.⁴ The biggest number of reviews about translations of Tetmajer’s works were connected with translations into German, subsequently into Czech and Slovak, finally into Russian. The same sequence is used for presentation of particular foreign receptions and popularity, which is strongly connected them in this article.

The German language reception

The German language reception of Tetmajer was significantly intensified by the release of collection of Highlander novels *Na Skalnym Podhalu*. In 1903 Lviv magazine ‘*Gazeta Lwowska*’ announced that: ‘*N. Wiener Tagblatt*’ provided the content of the reading about the Tetmajer’s work, which was presented in Vien by

łońska, Wyd. Literackie, Kraków 1972, s. 603. I mentioned i.a. the Tetmajer’s foreign reception in the book.: *W kręgu Kazimierza Przerwy-Tetmajera. Studia i szkice*. Wyd. ATUT, Wrocław 2009.

² No author (T. Grabowski?), Tetmajer u obcych. „*Tygodnik Ilustrowany*” 1903, No 1, p. 18.

³ Bibliografia literatury polskiej: *Nowy Korbut*. Vol. 16. Part One. *Literatura Pozytywizmu i Młodej Polski*. Warszawa 1980, Publ. PIW, keyword: Tetmajer Kazimierz Przerwa (1865–1940), p. 31 at al.

⁴ KADEN-BANDROWSKI, J.: *Przedmowa*, to: A. Guttry, J. Muszyński, *Książka polska zagranicą (w językach obcych). Literatura, plastyka, muzyka 1900–1933. Wystawa listopad/grudzień 1933*. Warsaw 1933, p. V.

M. Necker, who "characterised the totality of Tetmajer's work and expressed a lot of appreciation towards it, [...] he also commented its recent phase: Tetmajer's talent hits a pick in the Highlander stories, which became a kind of a frontier post for him and his literature. [...] M. Necker claimed that the Highlander novels will bring the fame and popularity to the author in foreign countries."⁵

The above-mentioned speaker appeared to be a good vaticinator, as a short time after his speech: "the publishing house J. Marchlewski & Co. released the recent collection of Tetmajer's stories *Na Skalnych Podhalu* entitled *Aus der Tatra*. This translation was published almost simultaneously with the original collection of stories and undoubtedly will reach numerous German-speaking readers."⁶ It definitely happened. The above-mentioned translation was believed to be creative in both Polish and German press, e.g. in 1904 in Warsaw magazine 'Słowo' and Vien magazine 'Wien. Zeit': "One of the most popular daily newspapers in Vien 'Wien. Zeit' printed an excellent article about Kazimierz Tetmajer and his recent book *Na Skalnych Podhale*. One of the main reasons of publishing this article was connected with the outstanding translation of this book into German provided by J. von Immendorf. This article, written by one of the most prominent Vien critics, is provided directly to our readers in order to allow them to notice easily how valued is this famous Polish poet abroad."⁷ The exact edition seems to be significant here, that is why, we provide full bibliographical description – *Aus der Tatra. Erzählungen von Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer. Autorisierte Uebersetzung von J. Immendorf. München 1904. publishing house Dr. J. Marchlewski & Co. Verlag Slavischer und Nordischer Literatur.*

As the political activity of Marchlewski will not be presented here intentionally, his publishing activity is worth mentioning. All the more reason, that his letters to Tetmajer from years 1902–1903 remained. These letters were fortunately released by Zbigniew Jabłoński.⁸ In the introduction to these letters Jabłoński claims that: "Marchlewski's intention was to support and popularize the most interesting and valuable achievements of contemporary literature created in Slavic and North-European countries, especially most significant works of Polish literature."⁹ That is why, the main Marchlewski's activity was focused on

⁵ No author, Kazimierz Tetmajer. N. Wiener Tagblatt. „Gazeta Lwowska” 1903, No 51.

⁶ No author, Notatki literackie. „Ogniwo” 1903, No 31, p. 738. Unattainable, for Tetmajer, popularity among German readers was possessed by Przybyszewski. See: MATUSZEK, G.: *Der geniale Pole? Niemcy o Stanisławie Przybyszewskim (1892–1992)*, Cracow 1996.

⁷ No author, Tetmajer w Niemczech. „Słowo” 1904, No 13.

⁸ JABŁOŃSKI, Z.: *Listy Juliana Marchlewskiego do Kazimierza Przerwy-Tetmajera. Przygotował do druku, wstępem i przypisami opatrzył... „Rocznik Biblioteki PAN w Krakowie”. Rok VI. 1960. Wrocław 1962, s. 267–278.*

⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 268.

“attempts of making Tetmajer’s works available to foreign readers by translating them into German.”¹⁰ In the letter from 24th November 1902 Marchlewski wrote about his conviction that translations of Tetmajer’s works would provide success: “That is obvious that when we release the first volumes of your work and they will become popular – I am confident that they will – translators will fight for your every single piece of work like bees around the honeypot [p. 271].” In order to confirm his words the publisher provides detailed, even technical background of edition of *Aus der Tatra* in the letter from 6th December 1902: “The novels printed will have circulation of 5000, but we still did not decide if we set the price 1.00 or 1.50 Mark. [...] Despite these above-mentioned, I truly believe that, additionally we will sell the right to reprint your works to various magazines [...]. I would like to emphasize the fact that the circulation of 5000 pieces is not a big circulation (including Austria, Switzerland or United States) as far as Germany is concerned. [...] What is more, the review copies will be sent to all influential and serious magazines. [...] Additionally, we will send to you as many copies as you would like to receive, in accordance with your demands. The preferable title shall be short but earthy: *Aus der Tatra*. Erzählungen von etc. Could you accept that please? [p. 275].” Tetmajer obviously agreed to that, as he expected to receive 20 % of the total revenue.

Finally, Marchlewski published translation of *Melancholie* entitled: *Melancholie*. Deustch von J. Immendorf, München 1904. The author of translations of two works of Tetmajer, who used a nickname ‘J. Immendorf’ was countess Castell, exactly Philippine Castell Ruedenhausen née Haas. She was strongly connected with Poland due to the marriage of her daughter, Désirée, with Stanisław Romer, it was one of the reasons why she was translating many Polish works into German.¹¹ Marchlewski was fascinated by the works of Tetmajer, especially by novels *Na Skalnym Podhalu*. He expressed that honestly in digression found in other letter from 27th January 1903: “I would like to thank you for delight I found while reading lyric about Jasiek Mosiężny. I was transported with joy how beautiful this poem is! I am constantly admiring this jewel and I almost know the whole story by heart. Even I am a tough man, I was touched during reading this poem to my lady [i.e. his wife, Marta Marchlewska, also a translator of Polish works into German] while she was weeping. All in all, without doubts it is as beautiful as the Polish poetry can be! You will definitely gain new admirers and give us, ‘everymen’, the moments of true pleasure and delight. Thank you! [p. 277].”

It is probable that Marchlewski was talking also about Tetmajer’s compatriots who lived in Germany, as the poet himself was eager to provide them

¹⁰ Ibidem.

¹¹ Ibidem, p. 270, footnote 3.

the readings of his works. Such reading, which took place in Vien, was described in 1905 by 'Gazeta Lwowska': "We have just received information from Vien that on Thursday evening, 11th this month, plenty of significant members of the local Polish colony gathered in order to listen to the works of Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer, presented in the interpretation of the author-poet. The considerable part of audience knew Przerw-Tetmajer previously from Poland, but for many spectators it was the first time they met and heard this poet, who is one of the most popular members of modern, Young Polish literature – the author, whose poems and novels are appreciated by both Polish and foreign readers."¹²

Another proof that Tetmajer's works were significant for German readers is an utterance of the German translator, Binjamina W. Segela, who released some Tetmajer's works in 1899 in the magazine 'Aus Fremden Zungen', and who wrote to the poet in the letter from 1st August 1900: "I am not a professional translator and I translate these texts which I admire only. I would like to tell you that translating *Książę Piotr* was not a duty, but a great pleasure and delight"¹³. Another comment provided by German critic Otton Hausner was included in 'Kurier Warszawski' in 1905: "As it was already mentioned by our correspondent from Vien, the new Otton Hausner's article, which was printed in 'Neue freie Presse' was mainly dealing with Tetmajer's *Melancholie*, as well as some other general comments about recent Polish belles-lettres were included in it. This is an extract from this article: "First of all, Tetmajer is an artist of the word, or, as it is widely, but often incorrectly understood, he is a lyrist in all his works. However, it cannot be concluded that his lyrical talent precludes his epic talent. [...] His lyrical works are full of outstanding richness and lavishness, therefore, he is undoubtedly perceived as the most prominent lyrist in the contemporary Polish literature. In his poetry we can easily find influence of the Western culture, but he is never an imitator or a mannered reproducer, [...]. Despite his German-sounding surname, Tetmajer reveals in his works that his spirit is Polish to the core, but he does not become blindingly obvious in that and do not affect the issue of races. He always speaks to us with straightforwardness of the real artist. But his soul is definitely Polish."¹⁴

As far as the German-sounding of the poet's name is concerned, as we know, it was a reason of the confusion described in i.a. 'Wędrowiec' in 1901: "In German magazine 'Magazin für die Literatur des Auslandes' the article about Polish young poets could be found. Referring to the German-sounding names of some of our Polish authors (Tetmajer, Oppman, Lange) hakatic press with their

¹² No author, Notatki literacko-artystyczne. Z Wiednia. „Gazeta Lwowska” 1905, No 10.

¹³ JABLONSKI, Z.: Op. cit., p. 273, footnote 3.

¹⁴ No author, Przegląd prasy zagranicznej. Niemcy o literaturze polskiej. „Kurier Warszawski” 1905, No 69.

pangermanisation officiousness claimed that they descend from Germans and that the German blood is the only thing, which provides strenght and intelligence to Polish people. Immediately after that event, a talented poet Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer, who felt aggrieved and resentful, sent a letter to ‘Kurier Warszawski’ with his detailed lineage of Polish noble, which was confirmed in Galicja in 1794. As the protest of Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer is obvious and easy to be understand, the hakatic’s willingness to absorb people who are not members of German nation is definitely unreasonable and childish. All in all, the sounding of the name is neither a proof nor a document of one’s nationality.”¹⁵

German reception of some Tetmajer’s works was definitely symphatetic. Such opinions of German critics were connected mainly with poetry and novels *Na Skalnym Podhalu*. Simultaneously with the critics’ acceptance of Tetmajer’s works, their popularity was also growing. It was documented by various translations, which reflected contemporary fashion and literal tastes, which were characteristic for German-speaking readers.

The Czech reception

The Czech reception – according to Józef Magnuszewski – “it is a period of time, in which Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer’s works were connected with Czech literature in years 1898–1916. This period started with print of Adolf Černý’s translations in ‘Slovanski Prehled’ and ended with the announcement of Czech Academy connected with the release of 2-volume Tetmajer’s selection of poems translated by Franciszek Kvapil, published by *The Collection of Word Poetry*. This choice was a some kind of summary and closing of the whole period. [...] Tetmajer was a writer who was eagerly translated, as a poet he received a mention by Czech Academy, which placed him in its publihing house together with the most prominent world writers. Unfortunately this success could be considered as an ‘academic’ achievement only, as Tetmajer did not play a significant role in the literary life of Czech Republic, especaly in comparison with another coetaneous poet, Przybyszewski.”¹⁶ This Tetmajer’s distinction was described in Polish press by A. B. Dostal in 1916: “Polish writing, which is unjustly misprized and generally not well-known in our country, is represented by outstanding works of Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer, whose 2-volume *Poetry* selected and translated by Kvapil, comprised two last volumes of Otton’s *Zbiornik poezji światowej* [Collection of World Poetry]. [...] The Kvapil’s choice reflects, as always, the perfect insights in works created by this outstanding genius”.¹⁷

¹⁵ No author, Światła i cienie. „Wędrowiec” 1901, No 23, p. 447.

¹⁶ MAGNUSZEWSKI, J.: Korespondencja Kazimierza Przerwy-Tetmajera z Franciszkiem Kwapilem. Wrocław 1951, s. 4–5.

¹⁷ DOSTAL, A. B.: Czesi o Tetmajerze. „Tygodnik Ilustrowany” 1916, No 37, p. 443.

Despite Magnuszewski's remarks about the minor influence of Tetmajer on Czech literary life, some other aspects, which had a real impact on reception and popularity are worth emphasizing. Jerzy Śliziński in the article *Kazimierz Przerwa Tetmajer w Czechosłowacji* [Kazimierz Przerwa Tetmajer in Czechoslovakia] – "Czech critics, especially at the turn of 19th and 20th century, prized the literary activity of Kazimierz Przerwa Tetmajer."¹⁸ What is more, according to above-mentioned speaker: "At the turn of centuries, especially during last years of the 19th century and first twenty years of the 20th century, Tetmajer's works was very popular and appraised among our South-West neighbours. In years 1989–1919, fourteen works of Tetmajer, were translated into Czech and were released as book editions."¹⁹

This state of affairs was confirmed by A. B. Dostal, who wrote about Czech translations of Tetmajer's works in 'Kurier Lwowski' in 1916: "We must admit that: Czechs are well-informed as far as Polish literature is concerned. Almost all outstanding Polish works have been translated and are available for Czech readers. Moreover, these translations are usually very good, often brilliant. [...] The fact that Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer is present and popular in Czech is obvious and easy to understand, he is well-known there as he is a one of the most outstanding contemporary Polish poets. He is also frequently mentioned and described in various Czech daily newspapers and magazines."²⁰ 'Tetmajer appeared mainly in 'Slovianski Přehled', who was started up in 1898 by Adolf Černý in order to popularize Slavic culture and literature.

The reviews about Tetmajer's works were published there by Paula Maternovo, Czech woman of letters, a publicist, an author or numerous translations of the Polish literature into Czech, e.g. she was a translator of *Otchłań*. According to Magnuszewski as well as Śliziński: "The popularity of Tetmajer's works in Czech at the turn of the 19th and the 20th century, was undoubtedly the result of the activity of Jarosław Vrchlicki, a main representant of so called cosmopolitan movement in Czech poetry, as well as of activity of other poets, who were members of this group. [...] Another Czech poet, who had an influence on Tetmajer's popularity in Czech Republic was Vrchlicki's epigone, a true Polonophile and translator of Polish poetry Francisek Kvapil, who was strongly connected with Polish literature and science. [...] Another person connected with the movement represented by Vrchlicki was Czech Slavist Adoft

¹⁸ ŚLIZIŃSKI, J.: Kazimierz Przerwa Tetmajer w Czechosłowacji. „Przegląd Humanistyczny” 1965, No 6., p. 169–171.

¹⁹ Ibidem, p. 169.

²⁰ DOSTAL, A. B.: Czeski przekład poezji K. Tetmajera. „Kurier Lwowski” 1916, No 523, p. 2–3.

Černý, a poet who used a nickname Jan Rokyta, a friend of Poland and a propagator of Polish culture in Czech.”²¹

In 1898 Tetmajer was appreciably astonished by the Czech interest in his works and he declared that himself in letter to Kvapil: “I was informed by Mr. Czerný, as well as by his ‘Słowiański Przegląd’ [Slavic Digest], that your intention is to popularize my writings among Czech audience; it is a great, unexpected, as well as unearned honour for me, for which I am extremely grateful. I am totally amazed and not sensible of the reason why you have paid attention to my works. Mr. Czerný mentioned also some translations, which were done by you in ‘Czeski Revue’.”²² Tetmajer was definitely delighted by these translations: “Your previous letter and books, together with translations, have been delivered to me recently, and I politely thank you for them! These translations are unusually beautiful and it is really difficult to find such brilliant translations as yours!”²³

All in all, the reception of Tetmajer’s works in Czech can be described as very good, but it did not visibly influence the literal life of this country at that time. The popularity and number of readers in Czech was also considerable, much bigger in comparison with e.g Germany, and it is proved by numerous translations and quoted opinions.

The Slovakian reception

The description of Slovakian reception of Tetmajer’s works shall be started with statement proposed by Danuta Abrahamowicz, the author of the article *Recepcja Kazimierza Przerwy Tetmajera w Słowacji* [The Reception of Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer’s works in Slovakia]. – that he was one of the most popular Polish writer in Slovakia.²⁴ Additionally, “his Highlander novels and stories [...] were favourite readings for both teenagers and adults, that is why there were published few times with large circulation.”²⁵ Tetmajer’s meteoric career was mainly connected with the huge popularity of novels *Na Skalnym Podhalu* among Slovaks, “whose deeply rooted tradition and customs were strongly connected with mountains, Tatras especially, which were considered to be their cradle, a free land of bold and rebellious people. [...] Precious brigand freedom caused many

²¹ ŚLIZIŃSKI, J.: Op. cit.

²² TETMAJER, K.: Letter to Franciszek Kvapil, from 15th November 1898. Cit.: MAGNUSZEWSKI, J.: Korespondencja..., op. cit., p. 7.

²³ TETMAJER, K.: Letter to Franciszek Kvapil, from 25th November 1898. Cit.: MAGNUSZEWSKI, J.: Korespondencja..., op. cit., p. 8.

²⁴ ABRAMOWICZ, D.: *Recepcja Kazimierza Przerwy Tetmajera w Słowacji*. „Slavia Occidentalis” 1967, Vol. 26., p. 3–16.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 6.

associations with the social and the national freedom. Highlanders, brigands especially, became heroes of the local folk poetry and the art. That was a reason, why mountains were understood in Slovakia as their pure homeland uncontaminated with the foreign influences. Therefore, it is not surprising that Tetmajer's stories about Podhale were appreciated by Slovaks and that they were almost incorporated into their national culture."²⁶ It was also confirmed by Elena Maróthy Šoltéssová in review published in 1912 in magazine 'Živena', that the main reason of this release was a book edition of translation of Tetmajer's work: "These stories are so Slovak, what is definitely stunning that they came to Slovakia as a translated work, not as a work of one of the Slovak artists. The explanation for this fact is only one: there are two sides of the Tatra Mountains. [...] Let's gratify and enjoy that Tetmajer's *Povesti z Tatier* became a part of our literature, as they belong to it in the same extent as to the Polish literature, what can be easily noticed and felt while reading."²⁷

Providing and analyzing the history of translation of the text *Na Skalnym Podhalu* we cannot omit František Votruba. His few translations – as Abrahamowicz points out – paid attention to Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer and were the earliest translations of this author, which were published in Slovakia. Another translator, who was considered to be a brilliant translator of Tetmajer's stories was secondary Slovakian poet, who came from Liptowo and lived in Budapest, Peter Bella, known as Horal [ang. Mountaineer]. Before the release of the book edition by publishing house, these translations were printed in – as Abrahamowicz claims – magazines, firstly in 'Dennica', subsequently in 'Slovenské pohľady' and 'Živena'. The translations did not significantly differ from the original text and was – according to critics – perfect."²⁸ These translations were also appreciated by above-mentioned Maróthy-Šoltéssová: "the Tatra Mountains [...] were transferred to us by Horal, who derives from the Tatra lineage from Liptowo. That is not a surprise that they fell to us as an avalanche of sappy, luscious resin smell of their alpine homeland, with its fresh invigorating cool breath of morning wind at sunrise. [...] That is why, we are grateful for them to fraternal poet and to our translator, who turned out to be the most capable to do this particular translation."²⁹ In his letter to translator from 1911, Tetmajer also confirmed with satisfaction that that this translation was 'very beautiful': "Thank you a lot for the volume of *Povesti z Tatier*, which was delivered to me recently,

²⁶ Ibidem, p. 12.

²⁷ MARÓTHY ŠOLTÉSOVÁ, E.: *Povesti z Tatier*. „Živena” III, 1912, No 4, 5, 6. Cit.: D. Abramowicz..., op. cit., p. 13–14.

²⁸ Ibidem, p. 13.

²⁹ Ibidem, p. 14.

I welcomed that work with huge satisfaction. Translation seems to me to be very beautiful.”³⁰

Translations of Tetmajer’s works were printed in 1903 in many magazines e.g. ‘Dennica’, ‘Živena’, ‘Slovenský Týždenník’ and ‘Ludové Noviny’, e.g. *Melancholia*, translated mainly by František Votruba.³¹ He also wrote articles discussing the works of Polish writers (Konopnicka, Tetmajer).³² “It is very characteristic – according to Abrahamowicz – that Votruba never forgets about the social role of the writer even he was strongly fascinated by their finesse and by the new literary movements. There are many facts, which pay attention to this issue, i.a. the circumstance that Tetmajer’s *Laureat* was perceived by him as his own program statement, which was published by him in his translations many times.”³³

Other Tetmajer’s works, which represented Young Poland movement could be also found as translations of Ján Uram and Milan Frič, who worked for ‘Dennica’ (he translated *Otchlaň*), however these two translators did not introduce any improvements or novelties in the selection of the works and they followed the way delineated by Votruba: a sociological one. The only one translator, who proposed translations of the other Tetmajer’s works were Juraj Slavík (nickname – Neresnický), a prominent Slovak politician, who participated vigorously in the literary life before the First World War. He translated few Tetmajer’s poems, a part of a series *Qui amant*, but despite of this – as Abrahamowicz concludes – Tetmajer as a poet remained still unknown in Slovakia.³⁴ Additionally, it is difficult to award a judgement, “which of his works: *Otchlaň*, *Melancholia* or Highlander novels were the most influential as far as development tendencies of Slovak literature are concerned. Tetmajer’s works due to the local folk subject and Podhale motifs became an integral part of Slovak literature and any other Polish writer cannot compete with him in this issue.”³⁵

Undoubtedly, the reception of Tetmajer’s works in Slovakia was enthusiastic and was mainly connected with *Na Skalnym Podhalu*, which became an integral part of Slovak literature and culture and played a significant unrivalled role in them. Therefore, this particular work was proved to be very popular among Slovaks and any other contemporary Polish writer could not pride on such achievement.

³⁰ ŚLIZIŃSKI, J.: *Listy Kazimierza Przerwy Tetmajera do Petra Belli-Horala*. „Przegląd Humanistyczny” 1963, No 3, p. 155–159.

³¹ ABRAMOWICZ, D.: *Op. cit.*, p. 7.

³² *Ibidem*, p. 9.

³³ *Ibidem*, p. 11.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 12.

³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 15.

The Russian reception

In the Russian reception the biggest role was played by the impressive, ten-volume translation of collection of Tetmajer's prose, from 1908–1912. This unusual (as far as Tejmajer's works are concerned) translation phenomenon, in which participated various translators, was described in 'Nowa Reforma' and provided hue amount of information to Polish readers in 1909, revealed the size and details of this endeavor i.a. the Tetmajer's accession to association of Russian writers in order to defend his copywrights: "W. M. Sablin, one of the biggest bookstore companies in Moscow, published translated Tetmajer's novels: *Aniol śmierci*, *Panna Mery*, *Zatracenie*, *Otchłań*, *Rewolucja*, *Melancholia* (second edition) and *Na Skalnych Podhalu*, two volumes in one. Concurrently, one of the magazines printed a translation of *Maryna z Hrubego*, a recent novel of our Polish author.

At this time, due to the lack of the appropriate literary convention, which regulated the rights of foreign authors to their works, Russian publishing houses did not pay a rightful honorarium to authors originating from other countries for translations of their works. This situation did not change even after the strong protests, which were published in Polish press i.a. in article entitled *Rabunek literacki* which was printed in 'Kurier Warszawski' from 1908. In this article an anonymous author emphasizes the economic side of this issue: "thanks to the Petersburg publishing house 'Eos' the volume entitled *Sbornik Molodoj Polshi*, edited by Eugeniusz Trapowski and translated mainly by him, was released. [The above-mentioned book consisted of various works of many Polish writers, i.a. Tetmajer's *Tryumf*]. This large volume costs one rouble. So cheap. Russia has many other serious publishing houses, which offer their products in really appealing prices, e.g. 'Znanie' and 'Szypownik', where biggest part of contemporary 'Young Russia's' works are being printed. [...]. But, let's go back to translations. Translations of Polish writers are still present in Russian magazines; translations – secured by authors rights in rare cases only and paid only occasionally, almost never. As a result of lack of rights securing the authors againts the depredation (even these authors were subjected to Russia as e.g. Poles were), the magazine 'Wiestnik inostrannoj literatury' was created, which provided translations only and did not even answer to authors' letters [...]. Authors, whose works were included in the volume *Sbornik Molodoj Polshi*, did not receive the honorarium, but also did not receive books, even the 'Sbornik' was in book trade for two months until that time. They loot us without an excuse. Writers would not set hard conditions while facing the lack of literary convention, Russian publishers cannot afford to pay as much money for the right to translation as they pay for the translators' work. [...] It would be fair and honest, without a huge difference in revenue, if there would be plenty of licence payers. Right now, the only one Russian magazine 'Sbornik' released by 'Eos' publishing house can be appraised by Polish authors: the Trapowskis' translations are better than correct,

these are definitely artistic.”³⁶ Therefore, there is nothing strange in Tetmajer’s willing for securing his profits.

The above-mentioned translation of his works was released at the time when Tetmajer was well known in Russia, thanks to e.g. works of K. Chraniewicz’s *Oczerka nowiejszej polskiej literatury*, Petersburg 1904 i A. Jacimirskiego *Nowiejszaja polskaja literatura*, Petersburg 1908. Tetmajer was quite satisfied with this recent presentation of his works. The popularity of Tetmajer’s works was reflected in multiplicity of translations, which was well known among Russian intelligentsia and it was presented in the following extract: [...] Izaak Babel’s *Dziennik 1920*. He described Polish-Soviet war operations in Brody 31st July 1920 and presented the robbery of famous Polish Fast’s bookstore at Złota Street, where i.a. Tetmajer’s works were present: “Tetmajer’s abridgments, new translations, lot of new Polish national literature.”³⁷ According to that, we can claim that Babel, knew them.³⁸

The Russian reception of Tetmajer’s works, as far as number of translations is concerned, is connected with spectacular popularity among the readers. It is also confirmed by the personal commitment of the poet aimed to security of fair participation in profits, which had to be huge in the considerable size of the Russian bookstore market.

Summarizing the analysis of the foreign reception and popularity of Tetmajer’s works (based on the most outstanding selected receptions), there must be stated that they were strongly diversified in particular countries. In most cases they were connected with translations of prose, especially the Highlander novels *Na Skalnych Podhalu*; some of the novels and outlines included in the collection *Melancholia* and romance novels. These latter were published in Russia almost as a whole and probably were the most popular works. On the other hand, the most popular Tetmajer’s work in Slovakia was *Na Skalnych Podhalu*, which became a part of their local literature. Czechs preferred poetry, as they awarded Tetmajer for release of two-volume selection of poetry, but they also translated many prose work. That is why, the popularity in Czech can be considered as slightly bigger in comparison with Germany or Austria, where the popularity of Tetmajer’s works was established by translations of *Na Skalnych Podhalu*. Finally, the reception and popularity of Tetmajer was very high in Slovakia, while it was the most outstanding and significant in Russia.

³⁶ No author, Z literatury. Rabunek literacki. „Kurier Warszawski” 1908, No 95.

³⁷ BABEL, I.: *Dziennik 1920*. Opowiadania. Zmierzch. Translated by Dziennika 1920 J. Pomianowski. Warsaw 2000, p. 192.

³⁸ According to J. Pomianowski. *Ibidem*, p. 192.