

THE OLDEST IMAGES OF THE TATRAS

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The notion of culture is generally understood as the accumulated material and mental goods which people create and transmit from generation to generation. Natural phenomena, including elements of the landscape, are understood to exist independently of people, beyond the realm of culture. It is we who interfere in the natural environment and reshape it to fit our needs, or as is so often now the case, destroy it. Over the course of centuries we have created thousands of terms regarding our natural surroundings in the mountains. Some of them are prosaic, such as “nice weather”, “beautiful”, “dangerous”, or “forbidding”. Poets have often expressed their fascination with the mountains, and painters have depicted their majesty and beauty on canvas.

From where I live, on the southern slopes of the Gorce mountains just above Nowy Targ, there is a beautiful panoramic view of the Tatras. It is the same view that charmed the first explorers and travelers who came this way. In favorable autumn weather you can see the mountains which have been at times called the Śnieżne, the Sarmackie, the Krępak, or simply the Carpathians in all their glory. From early childhood I was fascinated to find out how the mountains look close up and what lies beyond them, on the Slovakian side. When my curiosity was finally satisfied years later, I realized that this fascination with the mountains, with mountaineering, and the fashion for spending free time in the mountains, winter sports and alpinism, and above all literature and art devoted to the topic of the mountains, is a relatively new phenomenon. Since the dawn of human civilization mountains have been reviled as something inaccessible and dangerous. Their wildness and the threat they posed were for a long time a barrier to the creation of a positive image. Mountains were described as „horrid’ by Jakub Sobieski [1590-1646], the father of the king John III Sobieski, while he was travelling through the Pyrenees on pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela in 1611, who also said of them that they were „so stony that one wants to spit”. Jan Kochanowski in the verse „To Piotr Kłoczowski” wrote:

“What irks one, till the lazy years pass
Is to see the wide Danube, and the crooked Alps.”¹

Jakub Kazimierz Haur noted of them that they were haughty, severe, remote and dull². It is difficult to say precisely when the first mountain lovers appeared. In 1557, the Swiss

¹ J. Kochanowski, *Do Piotra Kłoczowskiego*, [in:] *Sobie śpiewam a Muzom. Antologia*, Warszawa 1971, p. 32.

² Góry wyniosłe, bliskością znajome,
Które opodał powieścią wiadome,
Tatry są srogie z Węgrami granicą.
Dla wysokości do wierzchu ruśnicą
Ani dostrzeli okiem: skała trudni
W cel na wierzch szczyt, niedostępny, nudny. (...)

J. K. Haur, *O górach wielkich wyniosłych* [in:] *Tatry i górale w literaturze polskiej. Antologia*, ed. J. Kolbuszewski, Wrocław 1992, p. 3.

Benedict Matti expressed his delight with the Alps, calling them „God’s theater”³, perhaps understandably taking into account his mountainous homeland.

The situation was similar with the Tatras. Before they were objects of adoration, they were treated primarily as sources of exploitable resources. Valuable minerals were sought here, from gold and precious stones to iron ore. The prospectors who searched for them were the authors of the first “*spiski*”, or guidebooks which, in addition to providing descriptions of precious metals, secret paths, and other remarkable natural features, were compendiums of information about local superstitions and charms. One of the most interesting works of the genre is the *spisek* of Michał Chrościński alias Hrosieński from the 17th century entitled „A Curious Description of the Tatra Mountains Beyond Nowy Targ”. The mining of ore in the Tatras and Gorces in fact goes back to the 16th century. In 1619 a formal legal entity was created, which received the privilege of seeking, extracting and processing iron ore from king Sigismund III. In the footsteps of the prospectors, in the 18th century, came explorers, researchers and scientists, geologists, geographers, surveyors, and naturalists. Some of the first explorers were also shepherds and hunters, and in later years, Tatra highwaymen. The precursor of recreational mountaineering is widely held to be Beata Łaska of the Kościelski family [1515-1576], based on historical records and legends. This remarkable woman, raised at the court of Sigismund I the Old, married Olbracht Łaski, the owner of the castle of Kežmarok. Having fallen under the spell of the nearby Tatras in 1565, she made expeditions into the mountains in the company of local burghers and schoolteachers, among others to the Zelené Pleso Kežmarské lake. Kežmarok itself has been home to many outstanding explorers and experts on the Tatras, including David Frölich [1595-1648], who reached the summit of Kežmarský Štít in 1615 with colleagues, and Daniel Speer [1636-1707], who gained fame as Simplicissimus the Dacian and wrote about his ascents onto Kežmarský štít. At that time, there was still little consciousness of the Tatras as an object of the artistic imagination as the boundless, accidental and varied scenery did not fit the prevailing classical and harmonious esthetic. It was not until the 19th century that Romanticism began to react to mountain scenery, and romanticized representations of the mountains became the fashion among the educated elite.

In the title of this work I intentionally used the somewhat old-fashioned word „image” as I feel it better conveys the character of the oldest pictures, views and likenesses of the mountains, seen through the imagination of their authors. These images, often imaginative, deformed or seen as if from afar, together constitute a unique work of art, as well as being a valuable source of historical material. In the following publication I will briefly discuss the oldest images of the Tatras in engravings, woodcuts, metal plate prints and lithography in the categories of paintings, maps, panoramas of the Tatras and views and *vedute* (schematic architectural panoramic paintings) of cities and towns with the Tatras in the background.

Paintings

The first images of the Tatras which have survived to our times are in churches in Spiš, in the towns of Levoča and Trybsz. In Levoča, a town full of historic remains attesting to its former glory, there are outstanding works of art, including massive gothic altars which are the

³ cf. J. Kolbuszewski, *Tatry w literaturze polskiej*, Kraków 1982, J. Kolbuszewski, *Krajobraz i kultura. Sudety w literaturze i kulturze polskiej*, Katowice 1985.

product of the workshop of Master Paul of Levoča. The tallest gothic altar in the world, completed in 1517, can be admired in the Church of St. James in Levoča. On its closed right wing Master Paul placed scenes of the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Christ. In the background of these scenes can be seen a landscape which clearly represents the Tatras. Dr. Ivan Chalupecký, noted expert on the history of Spiš, claims that the landscape represents the view which can be seen from the area of Mlynica⁴.

The wooden church of St. Elizabeth the Hungarian was erected in Trybsz most probably in 1567. Its interior is adorned by an early baroque polychrome from 1647. The initiator and creator of these paintings was the priest Jan Ratułowski, then the provost of the parish in Frydman. On the ceiling of the church a scene of the Ascension of the Virgin Mary was painted as well as a scene of the Last Judgment, from behind which three mountain peaks emerge, closely resembling the Plačлива Skala, Havran and Ľadový peaks⁵.

With just a bit of imagination, we can see another image of the Tatras in a faraway location. In the Red Chamber of the City Hall of Gdańsk, in the centrally located ceiling painting entitled "The Apotheosis of Gdańsk" (1606-1608), we see in the background the Tatras, from the feet of which flows the Vistula. The painting is the work of the Dutch painter Izaak van den Blocke (1572-1626).

The Tatras can also be found on old coats-of-arms. The emblem of the Berzeviczy family from 1475 is interesting. On the shield a goat is shown rampant against a crown and ascending Tatra peaks. It's worth noting in passing that many emblems of towns and cities of the Slovakian Tatras, for example Gerlachov or Poprád, also depict mountain peaks.

In the national archive in Poprád there is a document from 1655 in which the emperor Ferdinand III confirms the city status of Kežmarok. On it there is a very realistic, hand-painted panorama of the city with the Tatras in the background. This could well be the oldest surviving image of the city.

Maps of the 16th to 18th Centuries

The Tatras are also depicted in maps of Poland and Hungary of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, or perhaps more precisely the Carpathians [*Montes Karpathes*], in perspective drawings representing the mountains with slightly darkened idealized hills and mounds. These drawings share the common feature that they show only the most basic outlines of the Tatras, some rivers and a few localities tucked in among the mountain valleys. Examples of this are the map of Hungary known as *Tabula Hungariae* from 1528 drawn by Lazarus, and the colored map of Poland drawn by Wacław Grodecki in around 1562, on which the name *Tatri Montes* appears, probably for the first time.

It is only at the beginning of the 18th century that we begin to find maps which reflect a firm knowledge of the topography of the Tatras, especially those drawn by Hungarians, who gained expertise in the area relatively early. One of the most historically important cartographic works of this period is a map of the Spiš *comitates* from 1715 drawn by Pavol Kray, which is considered to be the oldest known detailed map of Spiš which includes the Tatras. The Spiš area is well-drawn and the names of localities are correct, although things

⁴ I. Chalupecký, *Kto bol Master Pavol z Levoče?*, „Pohľady do minulosti“ Levoča 2001, p. 83-90.

⁵ cf. R. Monita, A. Skorupa, *Trybsz. Kościół drewniany*, Kraków 2010.

are a little worse with neighboring areas such as Podhale. One interesting thing about the map is that the cardinal points are reversed, as can be seen on the compass rose which is located somewhere near the area of Nowy Targ.

Poles entered the field of Tatra cartography fairly late. It was only in the reign of Stanisław August in 1762 that Florian Czaki drew a beautiful map of Spiš. His map is the last work of this earliest phase in the development of Tatra cartography.

Views and Panoramas of the Tatras

At the beginning of the 18th century, when Kray's map was published, there was a noticeable interest in the Tatras. Those days saw the emergence of a characteristic type of painting, the Tatra panorama. The authors of these works were primarily residents of Spiš. The first such panorama including all of the „Spiš Tatras” as seen from the summit of Veľká Lomnica was painted in 1717 by Georg Buchholtz (1688-1737)⁶, a well-educated burgher of Kežmarok, who was also a teacher, expert on the Tatras and literary figure. A copperplate engraving of Buchholtz's painting was published in 1783, after the death of its author⁷. Buchholtz also completed another panoramic sketch of the High Tatras from Veľká Lomnica entitled „Delinatio & Nomenclatura Montium Carpathicorum, qualiter sese Lomnitzae conspiciendi sistunt [The Outline and Naming of the Carpathian Mountains, as One Sees from Lomnica]”.

An interesting and more accurate and precise panorama, which represented the respective heights of the peaks well, was drawn in greenish-blue tint in 1719 by István Berzeviczy, co-owner of Veľká Lomnica Huncovce and Stará Lesná, and mountaineer who was the first to reach some Tatra peaks, including Muráň. This panorama, measuring 140 x 21 cm was for years the model on which other panoramas of the Tatras were based. It was long believed lost but in 1934 was discovered in the Albertina Library in Vienna by professor Józef Szaflarski⁸. At the beginning of the 18th century a watercolor panorama was painted by Antoni Schweitzer imitating Buchholtz's work.

Baltazar Hacquet (1739-1815), a professor at John Casimir University in Lviv, naturalist and expert in natural history, included two imaginative panoramas of the Tatras in his four-volume work entitled “Neueste physikalisch-politische Reisen durch die Dacischen und Sarmatischen oder Nördlichen Karpathen [Latest Political and Physical Expeditions through the Dacian, Sarmatian or Northern Carpathians]” of 1796. One is a view of the northern side of the Tatras from Nowy Targ, and the other of the southern side, from Slavkov.

At the end of the 18th century, the English traveler, botanist, mineralogist and doctor, Robert Townson (1762-1827) made his way into the Tatras. He published the results of his research in English in the work “Travels in Hungary” in 1797. The work includes interesting copper plate engravings, among others “A View of the Tatras from the Area of Kežmarok”, “A View of the Tatras Around Zelené Pleso Kežmarské lake” and “A View of Jatky from Zelené Pleso Kežmarské lake”.

⁶ His father, Georg Buchholtz the Elder (1643-1724), an expert on the „snowy Spiš mountains”, was the author of the first geographical description of the area, and his brother Jakub (1696-1754) wrote a description of the Tatra peaks and their natural resources.

⁷ His brother Jakub included it in his work entitled *Reise auf die Karpathischen Gebirge*, “Ungrisches Magazin” 1783, p.4.

⁸ J. Szaflarski, *Poznanie Tatr. Szkic o rozwoju wiedzy o Tatrach do połowy XIX wieku*, Warszawa 1972.

Stanisław Staszic (1755-1826) also presented a panorama of the Tatras, made from the perspective of Dział near Nowy Targ and based on a drawing by Zygmunt Vogel from 1804, in his work „O ziemioródtwie Karpatów i innych gór i równin Polski [On the Origins of the Carpathians and Other Mountains and Plains of Poland]” published in 1815. The copperplate for this print was made by French architect and painter Louis-Pierre Baltard (1764-1846).

At the beginning of the 19th century there was a noticeable growth in interest in the Tatras at the Austro-Hungarian court, not only because of their political, economic and resource significance, but also for reasons of tourism. In August of 1823 the Archduke Franz Karl, father of the Emperor Franz Joseph, came to Nowy Targ and stayed in the Herz hotel⁹ as a base for expeditions to Bukowina, Morskie Oko, Kościelisko Valley and Zakopane¹⁰. Around this same time the regional administrative commissar of Nowy Sącz was the Czech-born philosopher, lawyer and painter Emanuel Kratochwil Kronbach (1778-1861), widely-educated at prestigious universities in Prague and Vienna. Though little-known, his descriptions of Galicia included in his 1821 work entitled „Darstellungen aus dem Königreiche Galizien, insbesondere der Karpathen in Sandecer Kreise [Descriptions from Imperial Galicia, in Particular the Carpathians in the Sącz District]” are very interesting. Kronbach included lithographs by his own hand in folio showing Podhale and the Sącz area. In nine of them we can find views of the Tatras, from the Polish and Hungarian sides, including *vedute* of Nowy Targ, Szaflary and Važec. As knowledge about the Tatras grew over time, ways of seeing them and conventions of representing them in realistic or conventional ways changed as well.

Today, as we look at the oldest panoramas of the Tatras, we get the feeling that their authors – Georg Buchholtz, Baltazar Hacquet, Ignatz Frank Gärtler de Blumenfeld, Zygmunt Vogel and Emanuel Kronbach – visualized the mountains as a series of „pillars of salt” arranged in a line or as some sort of bunches of little mounds. Such imaginative representation of the mountains was the norm at the time and was universally practiced. It was only in the 1830s that artists began to explore the Tatras more carefully, reaching the more inaccessible places and the summits of some of them, and learning to appreciate their majesty and represent them in a natural way. It’s worth mentioning the contribution of the poet and draftsman Bogusz Zygmunt Stęczyński (1814-1890) to the popularization of Tatra scenes. He, as one of few artists, visited difficult-to-reach summits and places little known to tourists of his era. His most important work was a long poem entitled „The Tatras in 24 Pictures, Drawn with Pen and Burin”, published in Kraków in 1860, in which he included 80 drawings.

It was at this same time that photography began to make its appearance in the Tatras, allowing artists to represent the mountains more precisely and accurately. It would be impossible to list all the individuals who played a part in the early days of Tatra photography, but mention must be made of the creative work of Karol Divald (1830-1897), Melecjusz Dutkiewicz (1836-1897), Walery Rzewuski (1837-1888), Alfred Schouppé (1812-1899) and Awit Szubert (1837-1919). On the basis of these early photographs, drawings were made which were later printed in such publications as „Kłosa [Sheaves of Grain]”, „Wędrowiec [The Traveler]”, „Przyjaciel Ludu [The People’s Friend]”, „Opiekun Domowy

⁹ Today the Center for Polish-Slovakian Cooperation, the headquarters of the Euroregion Tatry, is located in the former Herz hotel.

¹⁰ cf. *Pobyty w Karpatach*, „Rozmaitości”, nr 61, 20 Oct 1823.

[Housekeeper]”, „Pamiętnik Towarzystwa Tatrzańskiego [Memoirs of the Tatra Society]”, „Zipser Bote [The Spiš Messenger]”, „Tátra-Vidék [Tatra View]”, „A Magyarországi Kárpátgyesület Évkönyve [Annual of the Hungarian Carpathian Society, also published in German as „Jahrbuch des Ungarischen Karpathen Vereins”]”, and others. One of the first photographic panoramas of the Tatras, entitled „A View of the Tatras from the Białka Valley”, was made in 1879 by the French doctor, anthropologist and sociologist, Gustave Le Bon (1841-1931). On the basis of this photograph, a drawing was made by Gaston Charles Vuillier (1847-1915), which was then reproduced in woodblock and published in Paris in 1881 in the *Geographic Society Bulletin*¹¹. During his expedition Le Bon was accompanied by the nationally and internationally known Cracovian photographer Awit Szubert, who documented the trip with photographs.

The next group of Tatra panoramas comes from the second half of the 19th century. The „Panorama of the Tatras near Nowy Targ as seen from Zakopane”, painted in 1860 by the priest Eugeniusz Janota (1823-1878), a university professor from Lviv, is a relatively precise depiction of the Tatras. It was printed in his „Guidebook to the Babia Góra, Tatra and Pieniny Mountains”. At around the same time, Karel Kořistka (1825-1906), the Czech geographer, surveyor and cartographer, painted panoramas of the Tatras from the Polish side from the area of Szaflary near Nowy Targ, and from the Slovakian side from Važec. They were published in 1864 in his work entitled „Die Hohe Tatra in den Central-Karpaten [The High Tatras in the Central Carpathians]”¹². A very broad panorama of the Tatras as seen from Poronin was drawn by Gustav Lettner (1819-1890). A lithograph of it was made by the engraver Józef Swoboda in Lviv at the atelier of Kornel Piller around the year 1880.

An interesting panorama of the Tatras as seen from Poprad was published by Karol Kolbenheyer (1841-1905), the outstanding German topographer well-remembered for his achievements in the field of altitude measurements in the Tatras, in his guidebook entitled „Die Hohe Tatra [The High Tatras]”¹³.

One of the great popularizers of the Tatras and Zakopane was Walery Eljasz-Radzikowski (1841-1901), a painter, mountaineer, photographer, expert in Tatra culture and publisher of dozens of guidebooks to the Tatras and Podhale. A discussion of his complete works is worthy of a separate publication of its own. Here we present only his „View of the Tatras from the North, as seen from Głodówka Meadow near the Village of Bukowina” and „The Bielanske Tatras as seen from Filipski Peak”.

Three more panoramas complete this section, all published in 19th century magazines showing the most popular places in the Polish Tatras. They are „Morskie Oko in the Tatras, in the Sącz District”, drawn by Adam Gorczyński for „Przyjaciół Ludu” in 1839, „Gewont Rocks in the Strążyska Valley in the Tatras”, a woodblock by Jan Styfi based on a drawing done by Alfred Schouppé for „Kłosa” in 1866, and finally „Pięciu Stawów Valley in the Tatras”, drawn by Feliks Brzozowski for „Tygodnik Ilustrowany [Illustrated Weekly]” in 1887.

A few final words about a lost gigantic panorama of the Tatras deserve mention. A certain doctor Henryk Lgocki of Kraków had the idea of making an enormous panorama while hiking in the Kościelisko valley in the company of the painters Włodzimierz Tetmajer and Wincenty

¹¹ *Gustav Le Bon. Francuz w Tatrach*, with introduction and notes by W. Siarzewski, TPN, Zakopane 2009.

¹² The geographical description of the Tatras was presented in 1864 in “Ergänzungsheft No. 12 zu Petermann’s Geographischen Mittheilungen”.

¹³ This panorama was included in the fifth edition of the guidebook from 1882.

Wodzinowski in June of 1894. Walery Eljasz-Radzikowski recommended that it be painted from the summit of Miedziany. Work on the project continued for two summers, as the large group of artists taking part in the project made sketches in the open air. Foremost among this group were Stanisław Janowski and Ludwik Boller. The actual painting work was carried out in a huge workshop in Munich. The panorama was finished in 1896 and measured an impressive 115 meters long by 16 meters wide, giving a total of 1840 m² of surface area. In comparison, the well-known Raclawice Panorama measured only 1710 m². After being exhibited in Munich, it was put on display in November 1896 in Warsaw, in a specially built pavilion in the Dynasy district. The accompanying guidebook, in Polish and Russian, was written by Kazimierz Tetmajer. This enormous project cost more than 100,000 silver rubles, but unfortunately, the public were not interested and the painting was put up for auction. The asking price was 90,000 rubles but there were no takers until in the middle of June in 1899 when it was sold for 1461 rubles to Leopold Engman. Next, half of the canvas was bought from him by Jan Styka, who painted his own large work, „The Martyrdom of the Early Christians”, over it. Styka was condemned by the art world, and in 1900 there was an article in „Strumień [The Stream]” entitled „Artistic Murder”. And that was the end of one of the greatest Tatra panoramas. Today we can only imagine its size by looking at „The View from Miedziany Southwards” by Walery Eljasz-Radzikowski¹⁴.

***Vedute* of Cities with the Tatras in the Background**

Besides panoramas, images of the Tatras can also be found on *vedute* [stylized panoramic cityscapes popular in the 16-19th centuries, trans. note]. One of the earliest is in the world's oldest printed chronicle, „The Nuremberg Chronicle”, made by Hartmann Schedl in 1493. In it there is an imaginative print of Kraków, with mountains to the south which can be assumed to be the Tatras.

Another example comes from 1676, at which the dynamically developing Spiš city of Levoča was painted by an unknown artist with city walls and church towers, and the Levočka Peaks and High Tatras in the background.

Vedute of towns around the Tatras became very fashionable at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries, probably under the influence of Swiss and German painters who began to create souvenirs of their tours throughout the continent en masse. Such landscapes spread widely in Poland and Hungary as well. They were mainly reproduced in books and magazines, but also appeared on various kinds of printed matter including Tatra Society and Tatra Museum membership cards, on letterhead paper and so on.

Vedute including the Tatras most often show Kežmarok, which at that time was one of the most important commercial and cultural centers in the area south of the Tatras. Its location at the foot of the monumental High Tatras and its impressive architecture, with castle, churches and historic Town Hall, High School and townhouses, made it excellent subject matter for painters of *vedute*. The city was immortalized in various media by outstanding artists such as Johann Georg Lumnitzer (a copper plate engraving from 1814), Jakob Alt and Josef Zahradniczek (a drawing and lithograph dated to between 1840 and 1860), Jozef

¹⁴ cf. A. Chowański, *Panorama Tatr*, „Taternik” nr 2/1968 as well as in J. Fedirko, *Nawiększy polski obraz*, „Alma Mater” May 2010, nr 125.

Molnár (a lithograph from between 1830 and 1870), and Ludwig Rohbock and Franz Hablitschek (a steel engraving from 1860). The largest number of *vedute* of Kežmarok can be found in the collections of the City Museum. It's worth noting that interesting views of Kežmarok were included in their earlier works by previously mentioned artists such as Robert Townson and Emanuel Kratochwil Kronbach. Other less known artists also created interesting views of the city which were published in the magazines „Die Erde [The Earth]” and „Przyjacieli Ludu”. A view of the Kežmarok castle with the Tatras in the background was also included by Bogusz Zygmunt Stęczyński in his book entitled „The Tatras in 24 Pictures, Drawn with Pen and Burin” from 1860.

Other Slovakian localities were also immortalized in interesting *vedute*, among others Levoča (in an etching from between 1800 and 1850 by Luiza Kotz), Strážky (in a gouache by Jan Jakub Müller from 1820), Važec (in a lithograph by Emanuel Kronbach from 1821) Slavkov (in a steel engraving by Ludwig Rohbock and Franz Hablitschek from 1860), Lomnica (in a print by S. Müller from 1825) and finally Smokovec (in a lithograph by Gustav Heckenast and Alojzy Rohn from 1855).

The majority of *vedute* from the Polish side of the Tatras show Nowy Targ, which at that time was just a small town, although there are also *vedute* of Szaflary and Zakopane. The southern area of the Tatras, especially Spiš with its numerous cities, were better developed economically and culturally at that time than Podhale in the north. At the beginning of the 19th century Nowy Targ was an insignificant town, and Zakopane was just a small village. The first tourists of the Tatras, both Poles and foreigners, travelled from Kraków to the mountains on highlanders' sleighs via Nowy Targ, where they typically stayed overnight. Many descriptions of Nowy Targ, published in magazines and books, have survived from that period. Furthermore, many artists and amateurs made images of the town, including Tatra panoramas. Several little-known works were done in pen and ink around 1809 by Ignatz Frank Gärtler de Blumenfeld, who was the first forester appointed by the new Austrian Imperial administration¹⁵. In one of them architectural details and buildings of Nowy Targ from the beginning of the 19th century, including the Churches of Saint Anne and Catherine, the Town Hall, the manor house and school, can be seen. In the background there is a naive and imaginative panorama of the Tatras.

A few years later, Emanuel Kratochwil Kronbach, at that time commissar of the Sącz region, visited Nowy Targ, Podhale and the Tatras. He documented the trip in several lithographs with views of Nowy Targ, Szaflary, Zakopane and the Tatras, which he published in 1821. About Nowy Targ, he wrote:

„Every traveler will be pleasantly surprised by the sight of the Nowy Targ basin, as he will only catch sight of it after a long and tiresome journey through narrow trails along rushing rivers and streams, across swaying bridges, high cliffs and spruce forests, heavy with scent. How beautiful is this elongated valley, which presents the traveler with such a marvelous panorama! In the distance, there is the sparkle of water; it is the Dunajec river, travelled by raft, enclosing in its embrace the town of Nowy Targ, from behind whose back shoot up the mighty Carpathians.”¹⁶

¹⁵ After the occupation of the Nowy Targ area by Austria in 1774, the previous county administration was reorganized.

¹⁶ E. Kronbach, *Darstellungen aus dem Königreich Galizien, insbesondere der Karpathen im Sandeicer Kreise*, Vienna 1823.

In 1837, Adam Gorczyński (1805-1876), the painter, made a drawing of a panorama of Nowy Targ which was made into a lithograph by Karol Auer, and prints were subsequently made in the atelier of Kornel Piller in Lviv. The Podhalański Museum also has in its collections a very similar oil painting done by Gorczyński.

An interesting view of Nowy Targ was drawn by Rudolf Alt (1812-1905) in 1842, and a lithograph was made of it by Josef Zahradniczek. It was published in Vienna in the work entitled „Königreich Galizien nach original Handzeichnungen von Jakob und Rudolf Alt, Sandecer Kreise [Galicia in Original Drawings by Jakob and Rudolf Alt, Sącz District]”.

From the hills above Nowy Targ, on the southern slopes of the Gorce mountains, in 1851 Bogusz Zygmunt Stęczyński drew a view of Nowy Targ, whose description he included in his poem:

„...Nowy Targ, seen from afar;
Whose church tower looks down
Upon the Tatras, like a queen in a crown
In full health reigning over the city
Where lay scattered many houses small and pretty.
Let us go down by the Dunajec, up the hill,
To where the little church, once glorious, stands still...
Within which the modest paintings and altar
Will stand for many years more!
From here the eye's sight reaches the Tatras unchecked,
It idles long, and on the long plain rests.”¹⁷

In this publication I have intentionally omitted the work of some outstanding 19th century painters of the Tatras, including Jan Nepomucen Głowacki (1802-1847), Aleksander Kotsis (1836-1877), Wojciech Gerson (1831-1901), Alfred Schouppé (1812-1899), Peter Michal Bohúň (1822-1878), Ferdinand Katona (1864-1932), Ladislav Mednyánszky (1852-1919) and others, who gained fame as landscape artists and discoverers of Tatra scenery. Their work is well-known and well-documented, and as such falls outside the scope of this publication. My main aim has been to take a comprehensive look at the oldest images of the Tatras, and to categorize and compare, perhaps for the first time, graphic images of the Tatras as seen from both the southern and northern sides. I am aware that this is only an introduction a fascinating and wide-ranging topic. I am convinced, however, that Polish and Slovak experts will come forward who will be able to carry out extensive, interdisciplinary research and publication on this topic as part of a cooperative cross-border project.

Translation: Matthew Dundon

¹⁷ B. Z. Stęczyński, *Tatry w dwudziestu czterech obrazach skreślone piórem i rylcem*, Kraków 1860.