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# Texts by Alhierd Abuchovič Through the Eyes of a Historian of Literature

*Teksty Olgierda Obuchowicza oczyma historyka literatury*

*Тэксты Альгерда Абуховіча вачыма гісторыка літаратуры*

**Abstract**

The article examines available today manuscripts and first editions by Alhierd Abuchovič, the Belarusian writer of the second half of the 19th century. Despite the fact that the Belarusian literary critics of the Soviet and post-Soviet periods have done a lot in the study of the writer's legacy, it is necessary, considering recently discovered materials, to look once again at the history of the publication of his texts (paying attention to the accuracy of their reconstitution), as well as their interpretation, which once was determined by Soviet ideology. Comparison of the manuscripts and first editions by A. Abuchovič with later publications of memories, fables and poetry (as well as new materials) allowed to make a conclusion not only on adaptation of the text by editors-publishers, but also on V. Lastouski's (?) translation of the memoirs from Polish into Belarusian. Using the methods of literary-historical and textual analysis allowed usto state that the fable *Staršyna*, first published in 'the period of *Naša Niva*', was edited by Janka Kupala, at that time executive secretary of 'Belarusian publishing society in Vilnius' and compiler (?) of the *Belarusian calendar for 1915*. There is also doubt as to the traditional assertion that the Belarusian-language works were signed by Abuchovič with the pseudonym 'Count Bandinelli': the manuscripts testify to the fact that the Polish-language works of the poet were signed with this pseudonym, and the Belarusian-language works were signed with his own name. Into scientific circulation were introduced obscure fragments of memories, a letter from A. Abuchovič to A. Valicki etc. Also, a new interpretation of the poem *Duma a Karólu XII* is proposed.

**Key words:** memoires, fables, poems, manuscripts, first editions

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**Abstrakt**

Artykuł został poświęcony rękopisom i pierwodrukom prac Olgierda Obuchowicza, białoruskiego literata z II poł. XIX w. Mimo że w okresach radzieckim i postradzieckim literaturoznawcy białoruscy wnieśli istotny wkład w badania jego dorobku, warto ponownie – przy uwzględnieniu odkrytych niedawno materiałów – przeanalizować zarówno historię publikacji jego tekstów (zwracając uwagę na zgodność reedycji z oryginałami), jak również ich interpretację w duchu ideologii radzieckiej. Porównanie rękopisów i pierwodruków Obuchowicza z późniejszymi wydaniami jego wspomnień, bajek i wierszy (jak również nowymi materiałami) pozwala postawić tezę, że często redaktorzy i wydawcy dokonywali adaptacji, zaś W. Łastouskiego (?) przełożył jego pamiętniki z języka polskiego na białoruski. Dzięki metodzie analizy synchronicznej i diachronicznej utworu literackiego udowodniono, że bajkę *Starszyna*, opublikowaną po raz pierwszy w tzw. okresie *Naszej Niwy*, redagował Janko Kupała, ówczesny sekretarz „Białoruskiego Towarzystwa Wydawniczego w Wilnie" i redaktor (?) *Kalendarza Białoruskiego na 1915 rok*. Wątpliwości budzi także utrwalone w literaturoznawstwie przekonanie, że utwory białoruskojęzyczne Obuchowicz podpisywał pseudonimem „Hraf Bandinelli": rękopisy świadczą o tym, że tak były sygnowane utwory w języku polskim, podczas gdy teksty białoruskie autor podpisywał własnym nazwiskiem. W artykule prezentowane są mało znane fragmenty wspomnień, listy Obuchowicza do A. Walickiego i innych adresatów, a także nowa interpretacja wiersza *Duma a Karólu XII*.

**Słowa kluczowe:** wspomnienia, bajki, wiersze, rękopisy, pierwodruki

**Анатацыя**

У артыкуле даследуюцца даступныя сёння рукапісы і першавыданні Альгерда Абуховіча, беларускага літаратара другой паловы XIX стагоддзя. Нягледзячы на тое, што беларускія літаратуразнаўцы савецкага і постсавецкага перыяду зрабілі нямала ў вывучэнні спадчыны пісьменніка, варта яшчэ раз з улікам выяўленых у апошні час матэрыялаў разгледзець як гісторыю публікацый ягоных тэкстаў (звяртаючы ўвагу на дакладнасць іх узнаўлення), так і іх інтэрпрэтацыю, якая колісь была абумоўлена савецкай ідэалогіяй. Супастаўленне рукапісаў і першапублікацый А. Абуховіча з пазнейшымі выданнямі ўспамінаў, баек і вершаў (а таксама новыя матэрыялы) дазволіла зрабіць выснову не толькі пра адаптацыю тэкстаў рэдактарамі-выдаўцамі, але і пра пераклад В. Ластоўскім (?) мемуараў з польскай мовы на беларускую. Выкарыстанне метадаў гісторыка-літаратурнага і тэксталагічнага аналізу дазволіла выказаць меркаванне, што байку *Starszyna*, упершыню надрукаваную ў „нашаніўскі перыяд", рэдагаваў Янка Купала, на той час адказны сакратар „Biełaruskaha wydawieckaha tawarystwa u Wilni" і ўкладальнік (?) *Biełaruskaha kalendara na 1915 hod*. Сумненні выклікае і традыцыйнае сцверджанне, што беларускамоўныя творы А. Абуховіч падпісваў псеўданімам „Hraf Bandinelli": рукапісы сведчаць, што так аўтар падпісваў польскамоўныя творы, а беларускамоўныя – уласным прозвішчам. У навуковы ўжытак уводзяцца малавядомыя фрагменты ўспамінаў, цыдулка А. Абуховіча да А. Валіцкага і інш. Прапануецца таксама новая інтэрпрэтацыя верша *Duma a Karólu XII*.

**Ключавыя словы:** успаміны, байкі, вершы, рукапісы, першавыданні

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## 1. Introduction

How and who gave the papers of Alhierd Abuchovič to the editorial office of *Naša Niva* is still unknown. However, this happened before September 1912[1]. It was possible to admit that Kazimir Akolaŭ-Padhorski[2] going from Sluck to his son in Warsaw, sent to Vilnia '10 notebooks [...] diaries' of his friend. Ryhor Rodčanka, thanks to Sluck 'old-inhabitants', found out that Akolaŭ really lived on Jur'jeŭskaja street (Rodčanka, 1984, p. 70), in whose house, as the daughter of Kazimir reported in 1921 to Iosif Dyla, Abuchovič died (Dyla, 1981, p. 273). However, analysis of the available literature (the notes and letters of Dyla) does not allow us to state undoubtedly that the archive and library of Abuchovič were in the hands of Akolaŭ[3]. Moreover, according to Dyla, 'only the Polish patriot' Akolaŭ was keenly interested in the Belarusian revival movement and knew about the existence of *Naša Niva*. It seems that Abuchovič passed his handwritten memoirs before his death to his sister[4] or to one of his young Sluck friends.

In our opinion, in 1912 Abuchovič's papers got to one of the correspondents (or readers) of *Naša Niva* who sent or transferred them to the editorial office. According to the calculations of Jadvihin Š., in 1911 the newspaper published 39 reports from the Sluck district (see Bul'ba, 1912). Even more of them appeared on the pages of the weekly in 1912. It is necessary to mention some of the Sluck correspondents: Mikita Abramčyk from the township of Ramanaŭ, Adzinoki from the village Piaščeviči, K. P. from the village Bokšycy, V. Hrušeŭski from the village of Bieliči, Lyavon Lobik from the village of Kukaviči, T-aje from Sluck, Trojčanin from Sluck, A. Kalpak from the village of Staryca, H. Hapanovič from the village of Sieradniki, Vokabačny from the village of Padkaloŭščyna, M. Buračeŭski from the village of Malaševiči. I would like to pay special attention to two reports, as in them you can feel a certain awareness and interest in literary life, the desire to participate in the literary process. First of all – the answer of the editors to I. K. in Sluck: "Бирюка" варта перэтлумачыць, а калі выйдзе добра, то пастараемося надрукаваць у тым часі, як будзе цішэй с „палітыкай"

[1] In our opinion, in summer 1912, that is, at a time when Romuald Ziamkievič had already left the editorial office,and he, of course, would not have lost such a valuable item from his hands.

[2] According to Iosif Dyla, Abuchovič and Akolaŭ took part in the uprising of 1863. In the known lists of participants of the uprising, neither is mentioned. At the same time, it is known that the noble Akolaŭs were expelled from Miensk province to Tara, Omsk province: Aleksandar, Ivan (quite likely the father of Lieanard Akolaŭ-Padhorski), Vosip and Pavial, along with their families.

[3] It can be confirmed by the research of Rodčanka, who learned from the Bartaševičes, who purchased in 1928 the house of the Chviedaroviches (former Ivanaŭskaja street, today R. Luxemburg street, 25), where Abuchovič had quartered: in the attic of the house, the books and papers were stored, but demolished by the representatives of Soviet power in 1930s.

[4] The name of Abuchovič's sister was Karalina Aniela. She was 19 years younger than her brother (Abuhovič, 1991, p. 59). After family conflict and Abuchovič's departure from home, they did not meet for 18 years. It was only when the writer fell ill that his sister visited him. She probably put a monument on her brother's grave (Kìsâlëŭ, 1977, p. 449).

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Data: 23/11/2026 04:44:54



і больш мейсца астанецца пад бэльлетрыстыку. „Аброк" тлумачыце правільна'[5] (Pačtovaâ skrynka, 1911).

What an interesting coincidence: the Russian *biriuk* is a lone wolf; a loner, but it is to a certain extent a Belarusian werewolf! However, we have no arguments to suggest that this correspondence has at least some relation to the fable by A. Abuchovič *Ваўкалак* (The Werewolf). If Janka Salamievič correctly deciphered the cryptonym I. K. (as I. Kulikoŭski)[6], then the source submitted by him (CSALA, the BSSR, f. 3. [Today – BSALA]) can give additional information (Salamevič, 1983, p. 62).

The second correspondence in *Naša Niva* concerns a short satirical story by 'Kruk from Mlynki, Sluck district.' under the title *Kalatnia* (Squabble). The author sent it as a 'Belarusian fairy tale', which he allegedly re-told (Kruk z Mlynkoŭ, 1913).

The correspondents and the readers of *Naša Niva* in 1912 could be people who personally knew Abuchovič, and some of them could have got the poet's manuscripts.

There is no doubt that the manuscripts of the poet from Sluck were in the hands of Vaclaŭ Lastoŭski. Moreover, it is possible that no one else saw them. And for the first time Vlast used the papers of Abuchovič in an article dedicated to the 50th anniversary of the death of Uladzislaŭ Syrakomlia. It is interesting to note that the Secretary of *Naša Niva* focuses here on the statement of the Belarusianness of the Polish-language works of Adam Mickiewicz, V. Syrakomlia and others:

> Кондратовіч пісаў па польску, але дух яго твораў чыста мейсцовых, беларускі. У паднявольных народаў часам бываюць дзіўные момэнты ў жыцьці, калі найлепшые сілы, найлепшые сыны ідуць скародзіць чужые нівы, чужые засекі багаціць. Ці мала наша Беларусь дала здольных людзей Польшчы на полі літэратуры затым толькі, што нас злучыла с Польшчай гістарычная доля? Але ўсе гэтые творы, хоць верхнюю адзежку – мову маюць польскую, адначэ сваей душой яны беларускіе. Кажу беларускіе, – бо зацьвілі яны з народу беларускаго, з яго душы і думак[7] (Vlast, 1912).

As an argument, Lastoŭski gives an example from Finnish literature: Johan Ludvig Runeberg (1804–1877), in spite of the fact that he wrote in Swedish, is considered

[5] '"Biriuk" should be translated, and if it will be good, we will try to print it when it will be quieter with "policy" and there will be more more space under fiction. You translate "Obrok" correctly'.

[6] It is necessary to note that in the time of *Naša Niva* the codename I.K. was also used by Janka Kupala.

[7] 'Kandratovič wrote in Polish, but the spirit of his purely local works is Belarusian. The servile peoples sometimes have wonderful moments in life, when the best forces, the best sons go to harrow other people's fields, enrich other people's coffers. Is it not enough that our Belarus gave capable people to Poland in the field of literature only because we were connected with Poland by historical fate? But all these works, although the outer clothing, the language is Polish, at the same time they are Belarusian in their soul. I say Belarusian – because they flourished from the people of Belarus, from their souls and thoughts'.

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Data: 23/11/2026 04:44:54



a Finnish poet: 'the Finns translated the works of Runeberg into their own language and consider him their national poet' (Vlast, 1912). And that is why,

> і мы, беларусы, саўсім справядліва можэм шукаць адбіцьця сваей народнай душы у творах шмат якіх польскіх пісьменьнікоў, што былі родам з Беларусі, а ў першым чародзе у творах Міцкевіча і Кондратовіча. Гэта будзе ешчэ ясьней, калі мы зьвернем увагу, як беларуская душа, адбітая у творах Кондратовіча у *Гутарках* (*Gawędach*) і лірыцы, не пасуе да душы польскага народу, і як палякі яе не разумелі[8] (Vlast, 1912).

Lastoŭski reinforces his concept by the fact that Syrakomlia wrote in Belarusian. First, Mr Karatynski in Warsaw has got a part of the manuscripts of the Belarusian works of the poet, 'and they say that one of the Warsaw publishing houses wants to publish these poems' (Vlast, 1912), and secondly, the publicist himself has got some evidence that the Lithuanian lyre player wrote in Belarusian:

> З папероў, астаўшыхся па Обуховічу (гэтак сама ніколі не друкаваўшым сваіх твороў, беларускім паэце с пад Слуцка), мы ведаем, што Кондратовіч много пісаў па беларуску і пісаў хораша. Обуховіч пасылаў свае беларускіе вершы Кондратовічу і сам прагледаў беларускіе вершы Кондратовіча; ў пісьме да Кондратовіча ён пісаў:
>
> У гаворцы ёсць ружніца
> Між маею і тваей:
> Маей – пушчы, Птыч граніца;
> Ты – Панарскі салавей[9] (Vlast, 1912).

In the memoirs of Abuchovič published later there was nothing about the Belarusian-language poems of Syrakomlia, and that the poet from Sluck sent his Belarusian-language poems to a Lithuanian lyre player. Why in Vlast's article of 1912 does Syrakomlia appear? There can be only one answer: this was demanded by the concept expressed by Lastoŭski, which can be conditionally called 'Polish-language Belarusian literature' or 'Belarusian literature in Polish'. It is more difficult to answer

[8] 'we, Belarusians, quite rightly can look for reflection of our national soul in the works of many Polish writers who were originally from Belarus, and first of all in the works of Mickiewicz and Kandratovič. This will be even clearer when we pay attention to how the Belarusian soul, reflected in Kandratovič's works in *Hutarki* (Gawędy / *Chatters*) and lyrics, does not fit the soul of the Polish people, and how the Poles did not understand it'.

[9] 'From the papers left after Abuchovič (athe works of the Belarusian poet from Sluck were also never published), we know that Kandratovič wrote a lot in Belarusian and wrote beautifully. Abuchovič sent his Belarusian poems to Kandratovič and reviewed Kandratovič's Belarusian poems himself; in a letter to Kandratovič, he wrote:
There is a difference in speech
Between mine and yours:
To mine – forests, Ptyč the border;
You are – the nightingale of Panarsk'.

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Data: 23/11/2026 04:44:54



the question of why the publisher did not leave 'Kandratovič' in 1916, preparing the papers Abuchovič for printing? Had he forgotten what he wrote in 1912 or is there some other mystery?

Lastoŭski was in the editorial office of *Naša Niva* one of those who were extremely attentive to old Belarusian literature, and took certain steps to update it. Perhaps he was influenced by Romuaĺd Ziamkievič with his thirst for collecting handwritten and printed memoirs of Belarusian literature. However, Ziamkievič had not intended to write a history of Belarusian literature. The answer of *Naša Niva* (it is very likely that it was written by the Secretary of the newspaper Lastoŭski) to I. Chadzianok[10] may be in this connection very interesting:

> Апрацаваць біографіі беларускіх пісьменьнікоў справа вельмі важная, але пакуль што німа каму гэтым заняцца, прынамсі у нас у Вільні, ды і матэрьялы ешчэ ня ўсе сабраны. Дакумэнты беларускіе, што маеце – гэта копіі, вартасьці вялікай не маюць, але заўсёды могуць мець сваё мейсцэ у музэі, бо пісаны па беларуску, дзеля гэтаго трэба іх прыберагчы[11] (Pačtovaâ skrynka: Ì. Ho–nku., 1912).

The article by Lastoŭski *Памажыця!* (Help!) in two newspaper issues of 12 and 19 September 1913 is filled with concern about the gathering of the materials that has already been collected by *Naša Niva*. The author asks readers to identify and send to the editorial office manuscripts, as well as other materials related to the life and work of Belarusian writers. It is significant that among the seventeen of these writers, Vlast mentions the poet from Sluck:

> Ольгерд Обуховіч. Родам з Бабруйскаго павету, жыў у Слуцку. Пісаў многа вершоў па беларуску, перэкладаў Міцкевіча, Кондратовіча і Лермонтава. Рэдакція „Н. Н." мае 10 сшыткоў яго памятнікоў у каторых там і сям ёсць чэрнавікі вершоў. Патрэбна яго жыцьцёапісаньне, партрэт і болей рукапісоў[12] (Vlast, 1913).

We have not got any information, whether the readers sent any other papers of Abuchovič. So, obviously, it should be considered that everything published from the

[10] The surname was established, thanks to another message in the mailbox (Pačtovaâ skrynka: Hodzânku, 1913).

[11] 'It is very important to work with the biographies of Belarusian writers, but there is no one to do it yet, at least in Vilnia, and the materials have not yet been collected. Documents are Belarusian, all you have are copies, they have no great value, but they can always have their place in a museum, as they are written in Belarusian, for this you need to save them'.

[12] 'Olgerd Obukhovich. Originally from Bobrujsk district, he lived in Sluck. He wrote many poems in Belarusian, translated Mickiewicz, Kandratovič and Lermontov. The editorial office of 'NN' has got 10 notebooks of his diaries, in which here and there are drafts of poems. His biography, portrait and more manuscripts are needed'.

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Data: 23/11/2026 04:44:54



heritage of the Sluck poet comes from those '10 notebooks [...] diaries', which the editors, and that is Lastoŭski[13], received no later than September 1912.

We must admit that Lastoŭski had not got any special opportunities to publish the works of Abuchovič. There was – in the full sense of the word – a struggle for space in *Naša Niva*. Let us remember the memories of Lastoŭski about Maksim Bahdanovič: 'Вуснамі супраціўнікаў Багдановіча гаварыла іх абражаная аўтарская амбіцыя, што ў нашай мініяцюрнай часопісі замест іх твораў займаецца мейсца пад вершы Багдановіча'[14] (Lastoŭskì, 1997, p. 193).

For this obvious reason the owner of Abuchovič's papers was able to offer two poems of the Sluck poet, one to the literary part of *Biełaruski kalendar na 1915 hod* (Vilnia 1914) (Belarusian Calendar for 1915). (The fact that the problem of space was extremely relevant is evidenced by the fact that the calendar was actually released in two editions with different texts in each). The editor (we assume that it was Janka Kupala) of *Biełaruskaha kalendara na 1915 hod* received, obviously, not the originals of the poems, but copies. We believe so, for the reason that the nature of Abuchovič's writing was extremely unreadable, so that the owner of the papers had to practically decipher what the poet wrote. However, this is only in the case if in the papers of Abuchovič there were, as it was claimed by Lastoŭski, only drafts of poems. It is impossible, however, to exclude that the fables *Vaŭkałak* (The Werewolf) and *Staršyna* (Headman) in the papers were saved in the form of cards copied by one of the author's friends.

*Biełaruski kalendar na 1915 hod* was published at the end of October 1914, but due to the War and a small, perhaps, edition it was little known to literary researchers. Even Efim Karskii used only the first edition of the *History of Belarusian Literature* by Maksim Harecki to write a section about Abuchovič in the third issue of the third volume of his *Belarusians.* However, in a kind of Appendix to the publication *(Materials for the Dictionary of the Rest of the Belarusian Writers of Recent Times),* he mentions the fable of *Sud* (The Court) from the primer *Native land (1919),* as well as the fables *Vaŭkałak* and *Staršyna* from the *Declamatar* (Reciter) (1921) by Harecki (Karskij, 1922, pp. 76–77, 376, 446). Having borrowed the basic information from Harecki, Karskii, however, gave in addition the years of Abuchovič's life as 1840–1898. The interpretation of this riddle can be only one: the information comes from Iosif Dyla, who in 1920 '…знайшоў на каталіцкіх могілках Слуцка магілу А. Абуховіча з невысокім каменным помнікам, на якім быў просты надпіс з імем і прозвішчам пісьменніка і датамі нараджэння і смерці'[15] (Dyla, 1981, p. 274).

[13] Even Anton Luckievič with whom Lastoŭski worked together both in *Naša Niva*, and in *Homan*, probably knew nothing about the destiny of the papers of Abuchovič. According to Anatoĺ Sidarevič, Luckievič in 1928 tried to find Abuchovič's memoirs (from Kìsâlĕŭ, 2003, p. 70).

[14] 'In the words of Bahdanovič's opponents could be heard their offended authorial ambition saying that in our miniature journal, instead of their works, there is a room for Bahdanovič's poems'.

[15] '...found in the Catholic cemetery of Sluck the grave of Abuchovič with a low stone monument, on which there was a simple inscription with the name and surname of the writer and the dates of birth and death'.

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Data: 23/11/2026 04:44:54



These fables by Abuchovič became known thanks to Harecki, who had reprinted them three times in 1921–1922 from *Biełaruski kalendar na 1915 hod*, as well as from Lieanila Hareckaja's primer *Rodnaja ziamlia* (Native Land).

A significant event in the process of returning the legacy of Abuchovič was the publication of his memoirs and of the poem *Duma a Karólu XII* (Charles the Twelfth) in the newspaper *Homan*. Unfortunately, the publisher has not left any comments (except that 'Č is read as CZ; Š – as SZ)[16]. As it is known, the manuscript of the memoirs has not been preserved (?), and we can only guess the principles of publication. It seems that Abuchovič's memoirs have not been the subject of linguistic studies. First of all, in the encyclopedia *The Belarusian Language* we find only general arguments about the language of writers' works: 'На асаблівасці гаворак паўднёва-заходняга дыялекту абапіраліся ў сваёй беларускамоўнай літаратурнай творчасці Я. Чачот (Навагрудчына), А. Абуховіч (Случчына), Цётка (Гродзеншчына) і іншыя беларускія пісьменнікі 19 ст.'[17] (Kryvìckì, 1994, p. 417).

We cannot agree with Hienadź Kisialioŭ's statement that the language of the memoirs '…самая натуральная, арганічна спалучаецца з беларускай мовай вершаваных радкоў, якія ўжо несумненна належаць Абуховічу'[18] (Kìsâlëŭ, 2003, p. 336). In our opinion, the language of the writer's memoirs is not much different from the largely unified language of the newspaper *Homan*, primarily in the first year of its existence. Moreover, we dare to say that the language of Abuchovič's memoirs is the language of Lastoŭski, thus recognizing that the editor of the newspaper at least corrected the 19th century text in accordance with the requirements of the language policy of *Homan*.

We cannot but pay attention to one more circumstance. The fact is that in the middle of the 20th century Vladas Abramavičius, without reference to any sources, called the publication of *Homan* a translation from the Polish language:

> 207. АБУХОВІЧ, АЛЬГЕРД. С папераў Ольгера Обуховіча (Успаміны з другой палавіны XIX в. гістарычна-публіцыстычнага характару). Гоман, Вільня 1916, № 33–40, латиница. Первая публикация в переводе с польского на белорусский яз. Воспоминания касаются положения белорусского селянства и политическо-народной деятельности некоторых белор. интиллигентов (sic!). Извлечения в хрестомат. Гарецкого[19] (Abramavičûs, 1949, p. 57).

[16] So in *Homan* only literary works were usually printed. The grapheme ž was used in all the texts of the newspaper.

[17] 'Ja. Čačot (Navahrudčyna), A. Abuchovič (Sluččyna), Ciotka (Hrodna Region) and other Belarusian writers of the 19th century based in their Belarusian-language literary works on the features of the idioms of the South-Western dialect'.

[18] '...is the most natural, organically combining with the Belarusian language of poetic lines, which already undoubtedly belong to Abuchovič'.

[19] '207. OBUKHOVICH, OLGERD. From the papers of Olgerd Obukhovich (Memoirs from the second half of the XIX century. Historical and journalistic character). Homan, Vilnius 1916, No.

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 23/11/2026 04:44:54



Kisialioŭ denied the statement of Abramavičius, saying 'there are no indications of this (a translation from Polish. – M. H.) in the publication itself ' (Kìsâlëŭ, 2003, p. 336). And for the sake of confirmation, referred to the Belarusian literary critics who '...мабыць, слушна лічаць, што мемуары Абуховіча напісаны па-беларуску і стаяць ля вытокаў не толькі нацыянальнай мемуарыстыкі новага час, але і мастацкай прозы'[20] (Kìsâlëŭ, 2003, p. 336).

Indeed, no Belarusian scholar has ever expressed any doubts about the Belarusian language Abuchovič's memoirs. Regarding the main argument of Kisialioŭ, it should be said that in *Homan* during the editorship of Lastoŭski, it may not have been accepted to indicate that a particular work was printed in translation. For example, starting from the second issue, *Homan* printed in translation separate stories by Jan Barščeŭski *Žabier trawa* (Toad Grass) [No. 2, 4], *Vaūkałak* [No. 5–7], *Biełaja Saroka* (The White Magpie) [No. 8–9], *Kryčačyje vałasy na hałavie* (Screaming Hair on the Head) [No. 10–13], *Vužava karona* (The Snake's Crown) [No. 15]), but nowhere was it indicated that this was a translation from the Polish language and who the translator[21] was. As well as according to the publication in *Homan*, you might think that the novel *Da swajho Boha* (To my God) [No. 14] in Belarusian was written by some M. Zych[22], and the novel *Viedźma* (The Witch) [No. 41–45] was by Janka Svajak[23].

However, the popular story by Henryk Sienkievicz *Janka-Muzyka* (Janka the Musician) [No. 16–17] was published differently: in a short foreword it was indicated that the work was translated by Janka Svajak in 1904. The same was the case with the popular fable by Artur Bartels (1818–1885) *Śvińni j barany* (Pigs and Sheep*)* [No. 54]: 'the editors filed that it was "translated" by [...] Franc Boh.'[24].

In general, there were few employees in the editorial office of *Homan*, most of the materials were written and prepared by Luckievič (on socio-political topics) and

33–40, Roman. The first publication in the translation from Polish into Russian. The memoirs concern the situation of the Belarusian peasantry and the political and national activities of some Belarusian intellectuals (sic!). Extracts are published in Harecki's anthology'.

[20] '...perhaps reasonably consider that Abuchovič's memoirs are written in Belarusian and stand at the origins not only of national memoiristics of new times, but also of artistic prose'.

[21] It is generally believed that the above stories were translated by Janka Stankievič. However, this is not so: the future linguist only in the late autumn of 1917 returned through Russia from Austrian captivity. (In No. 79 of for 1917 we find news that he is still in captivity: 'In Vilnius and the Surrounding Area. News from Captivity'. The news came to the editorial office of *Homan*, that a Belarusian cultural worker, Janka Stankievič, known in the Belarusian press as 'Janučonka', was captured in Austria in the middle of this month. For a time he worked for *Naša Niva* and for the Belarusian Catholic newspaper *Belarus* in Vilnia. Before the war on account of his Belarusian propaganda he was removed from the Seminary, and after that he was taken as a soldier). In our opinion, these stories by Ja. Barščeŭski were translated by Lastoŭski.

[22] Maurycy Zych – is one of the pseudonyms of a famous writer Stefan Żeromski (1864–1925).

[23] Marian Falski (1881–1974) printed his translations from the Polish language under the pseudonym Janka Svajak in the early 20th century.

[24] We are talking about Francišak Bahuševič.

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 23/11/2026 04:44:54



Lastoŭski (literature, history, culture of Belarus). Both of them often used several pseudonyms, apparently to prevent one author from signing two or more articles in the same issue. In our opinion, 'Jazep Hulievič' is a pseudonym of Lastoŭski. He appeared in the newspaper just a few times: first in the category *Z budnaho žyćcia* (From Everyday Life), and then under articles about language, independence and the battle of Poltava. It was the historical theme of the last article that inclined us to attribute another pseudonym to Lastoŭski. Without mentioning the year 1709 in his *Brief History of Belarus* (1910), Vlast in other socio-political conditions was able to characterize precisely the role and significance of the victory of Peter I in the fate of the East Slavic peoples in the introduction to the poem by Abuchovič *Duma o Karólu XVII*. It may be noted that it is called remarkably: *1709–1916*, entirely in the style Lastoŭski the historian[25]. It is necessary to remember that the editor of the newspaper would be unlikely to give to a little-known employee the valuable papers of Abuchovič, assuming that Jazep Hulievič was a real person. By the way, Jazep Hulievič disappeared from the pages of *Homan*, having published his last feuilleton in No. 23. In fact, at the same time as the departure of Lastoŭski from the newspaper, whose editorship ended with 32 issues of *Homan* for 1917[26].

We do not know which part of those '10 notebooks […] diaries' Lastoŭski published in *Homan*: did the promise 'to be continued' in number 40 of the newspaper declare only the appearance of the poem *Duma a Karólu XII* or did he plan a continuation of the memoirs of Abuchovič? From the article *Pamažycia!* we know that the poet from Sluck translated Mickiewicz, Kandratovič and Lermontov. However, for some reason the fragments about Kandratovič-Syrakomlia and Lermontov were not printed in *Homan*, and about Abuchovič's translations of the works of Mickiewicz there would be only fleeting mention in the article about Michaĺ Mikiešyn in the magazine *Kryvich* (1927, No. 12). Did Lastoŭski consider the fragment of memoirs, for example, about the Daškievičes more important than the relationship of Abuchovič to the creative heritage of famous writers?

The question of the language of the memoirs by the writer from Sluck is worth considering from the point of view of the language of the fragment from his papers, which Lastoŭskì submitted in his *Russian-Kryvsk [Belarusian] Dictionary*:

> У паперах нябошчыка Ольгерда (Аляксандра) Обуховіча (родам са Случчыны), маецца запісанае слова **спакмень**: „W czasie pobytu u p. Czarnockich zrobiłem ciekawe spostrzeżenie

[25] See, for example, W. L., *1491–1916*, *Homan*, 1916, No. 1 (15 February), and also some articles in *Naša Niva*.

[26] Rodčanka, for some reason considering that Lastoŭski left *Homan*, having signed for print No. 32 for 1916 tried even to deduce a certain theory: 'The issue with the publication of the first fragments from memoirs was signed by the new editor of *Homan* (in 1917 the newspaper was published both in Cyrillic and Roman script) a certain Salaviej (Nightingale). The bearer of this surname, apparently, was a native of Sluck, for today there are many people with such surnames in the villages near Sluck' (Rodčanka, 1984, p. 10).

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 23/11/2026 04:44:54



do słownictwa ludu naszego, mianowicie: znalazłem, zdajemi się, zupełne ekwiwalent słowu „objekt", w naszem – *spakmień*; jakie słyszałem w żartobliwej piosence, która widocznie, posłużyła Odyńcowi do słynnego jego wierszyka *Czy to czart, czy to chart*.

Ni|to czort, ni|to chort,
Ci to cień, ci spakmień.

Hładka Marcysia, pokojowa, po długich ceregielach wypytywań w czeladnej, zgłosiła: Zdajetsa to budzie usio szto możno zdumaci, czy pobaczyci; reszto już ja sam downioskowałem"[27] (Lastoŭskì, 1924, p. 533–534).

The Polish-language fragment in Abuchovič's memoirs can testify that they were either bilingual, or predominantly Polish with Belarusian-language inserts – poems, folk songs and distinctive Belarusian words.

It is likely that there were few poems in the memoirs. Bookmarks-translations, which Ja. Dyla writes about, could not necessarily get 'into Abuchovič's papers'. After all, it is very doubtful that Lastoŭski for a decade and a half would not have found the opportunity to print in Belarusian fragments from *Faust* by Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *The Robbers* by Friedrich Schiller, poems by Victor Hugo, Lord Byron, Dante Alighieri, Adam Mickiewicz, Maria Konopnitska, Uladzislaŭ Syrakomlia, Aleksandr Pushkin, Mikhail Lermontov[28].

As an exception, it seems necessary to consider the fact that the fables *Sud* and *Voŭk I lisica*'(The Wolf and the Fox) saved in Abuchovič's papers were published in the 'Book for Reading for Belarusian Primary Schools for the 2nd and 3rd Year of Study', named by Lastoŭski *Rodnyje Zierniaty* (Native Grains) (1916).

According to the note to the article about Mikiejšyn, in 1926-1927 the memoirs of Abuchovič were stored 'in the collections Lastoŭski'. Moving in March 1927 from Koŭna to Miensk, the publisher of *Kryvich* could not but take away these collections. This means that the Abuchovič papers were in the capital of Soviet Belarus. Perhaps they were given by the owner to the Belarusian State Museum, where Lastoŭski worked as Director in 1927–1929, or to the Institute of Belarusian Culture or seized by the GPU when he was arrested in July 1930.

[27] 'In the papers of the deceased Olgerd (Alexander) Obukhovich (originally from Sluck), there is a recorded word спакмень / *spakmeń*: 'during his stay with the lords Czarnocky he made an interesting observation regarding the vocabulary of our people, namely: he found, as it seems to me, the full equivalent of the word "object", in our – *spakmień*; which I heard in a comic song, which, obviously, helped Odintsov to create his famous rhyme: *Czy to czart, czy to chart*.
Ni to czort, ni to chort,
Ci to cień, ci spakmień.
The beautiful maid Marcysia, after much questioning of the servants announced: it seems it will be all that you can think of or see; the remaining conclusions I have already made myself'.

[28] These authors are mentioned by Ja. Dyla. It should be noted that he has also mentioned particular works of Russian literature: *I shkuchno i grustno* by Lermontov, and *Derevnia* and *Arion* by. Pushkin (Dyla, 1981, p. 272).

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 23/11/2026 04:44:54



## 2. Translations into Polish

Abuchovič's translations of two fables by Ivan Krylov into Polish have been saved among the correspondence and various papers of Aleksander Walicki (1826–1893), which the National Library in Warsaw acquired in 1949 from Maria Karpovičava. In 1955 they were described in volume IV of the *Catalogue of Manuscripts of the National Library* as follows:

> 2981. *Pol., ros. XIX w. K. 219*. Papiery różne ze zbiorów Aleksandra Walickiego z lat 1869–1892. 1. Autografy wierszy następujących autorów: Bandinelli Olgierd[29]: *Małpa i zwierciadło*, *Wielmoża* (tłum. z ros. bajek Iwana Kryłowa) 1885 k. 1, przy tym na k. 1 v list tegoż do NN w sprawie przesłania wierszy A. Walickiemu[30] (Horodyski, 1955, p. 178).

In the 1960s, Adam Maĺdzis, apparently unaware of this description of the works of Abuchovič, found the fables in the Manuscript Department of the National Library in Warsaw and briefly mentioned them in the preface to the publication of nine letters of Janka Lučyna to the poet and literary critic Zenon Przesmycki (1861–1944): 'Polish translations of the fables *The Nobleman* and *The Monkey and a Mirror* are signed "Olgerd Earl Bandinelli. Mozyr"' (Mal′dzìs, 1969, p. 153).

The scholar, obviously, could not fully read the manuscript, and – thus – could not take into account an important detail: the year of the re-creation of fables by Krylov. And this would have added a significant feature to the biography of Abuchovič: in January 1885, the writer lived in Mozyr. [Under the translation of the fable of *Vieĺmoža* (Abuchovič gives the title of the work in Russian) we read: 'Translated in Mozyr in the first days of January 1885. Olg hr Bandinelli']. If we recall that after the notification of the Vilnia Land Bank in December 1883, the estate of Abuchovič Kalacičy was put up for auction, it becomes clear that the writer moved to Sluck not in 1883–1884, as Rodčanka believed, but a little later[31].

No less important, I think, for the biography of the writer is his short letter to an unknown person with a request to send to A. Walicki the fables *The Monkey and a Mirror* and *Vieĺmoža*: 'Шаноўная Пані-Дабрадзейка! Хоць бездапаможнымі пададуцца, але май ласку Пані пераслаць мае пераклады Пану Аляксандру: Ён

[29] Polish scholars have not deciphered the pseudonym of Abuchovič. Maĺdzis was the first to do this.

[30] '2981. *Pol., rus. XIX c. C. 219*. Different papers from the collection of Aleksander Walicki in the years 1869–1892. 1. Autographs of poems by the following authors: Bandinelli Olgierd: *The Monkey and the Mirror*, *The Nobleman* (transl. from rus. of the fables by Ivan Krylov) 1885 c. 1, at the same time on c. 1 v the letter of the same to 'NN' on the matter of sending verses to A. Walicki'.

[31] A. Abuchovič in 1883 owned the estates of Kalacičy and Zapol'je in Bobrujsk district (1362 acres). They were valued at 24,294 roubles and pledged to the Vilnia Land Bank for a loan, which (with interest) was 13,825 roubles (Kahanoŭskì, 1986; Abuhovìč, 1991, p. 6; Kìsâlëŭ, 1992, pp. 12–13).

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 23/11/2026 04:44:54



мяне заахвоціў, дык – рады ці нярады – няхай чытае і прымае рашэнне. Альгерд. Мазыр, 17 студз. 1885 г.'[32] (BN, Rkps 2981, p. 1).

Of course, we are talking here about Aleksander Walicki, a well-known publisher and music critic, who at that time was the administrator of the bookstore-publishing house of Gebethner and Wolff in Warsaw. The letter can testify to close relations of the former pupils of the Sluck gymnasium. However, because of the age difference, they could hardly meet when at school; most likely their acquaintance occurred in Miensk or Vilnia[33] after the return of Abuchovič from Western Europe to his homeland. It is not possible to eliminate the fact that the first contacts between them began during the uprising or in exile. It is known that Walicki served his sentence in Tambov. Abuchovič could also have been sent there.

Perhaps the publishing house of Gebethner and Wolff was preparing a collection of fables of European poets, and Walicki, knowing about the satirical talent of his compatriot, suggested that he too participate in such a project. (Unfortunately, this type of publication of the mid-1880s has not yet been found).

The translations (more precisely, imitations) of Abuchovič continued to be not in demand. Perhaps the decision of Walicki was negative, or someone else (or something else) prevented Krylov's fables from seeing the printing press in Polish clothing. Incidentally, you cannot say that the translations are distinguished by perfection. *Vieĺmoža* by Abuchovič, however, quite well conveys the content of the fable of Krylov, although it cannot boast of equilinearity (25 lines of the Russian poet was made into only 22 lines), not to mention equimetricity. But *Małpa i Zwierciadło* can only be called a brief retelling of the fable *A Mirror and a Monkey* (in the original version *The Marmoset and a Mirror*): from 20 lines of Krylov, Abuchovič has made only 12 (there is no final six-line stanza).

The fables are written on a sheet of a good A4 notepaper (27, 0x20, 8). On p. 1v is *Vieĺmoža*, with a sign at the bottom about the time of translation of the work. On 1v (by library numbering), in the bottom half of the page is *Małpa i Zwierciadło*. Here, on the top, there is a letter to the 'Lady – benefactress'. The poetic text is written in beautiful, calligraphic handwriting. Perhaps the person who did this rarely used Polish in writing (spelling mistakes, non-standard spelling of nasal vowels). Evidently, in sending the works intended for printing, Abuchovič made sure that they were written legibly. Which can not be said about the letter and the postscript to one of the fables. But we have a sample of the handwriting of Abuchovič.

[32] 'Dear Lady – benefactress! Though it seems hopeless, but I would like to ask You, Madam, to send my translations to Mr Alexander: He has encouraged me, then – whether he is glad or not – let him read and take a decision. Aĺhierd. Mozyr, 17 Jan. 1885'.

[33] Uladzimir Markchieĺ found in the newspaper *Kurier Wileński* information that Abuchovič visited Vilnia three times in 1862, including on the day of V. Syrakomlia's funeral (Marhel′, 1990, p. 97).

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 23/11/2026 04:44:54



## 3. *Staršyna* (Headman)

The fable was first published by the Belarusian Publishing Association in Vilnia in *Biełaruski kalendar na 1915 hod* (Obuchowic, 1914, pp. 36–37). Unfortunately, exact information about who prepared this calendar for printing has not been preserved. We may think that the text of the work comes from those '10 notebooks […] diaries', which Lastoŭski wrote about in the 38th issue of the newspaper *Naša Niva* in 1913 (Vlast, 1913).

The fable by Abuchovič is written on the plot of *Mirskaja schodka* (A Worldly Gathering) (1816) by I. Krylov. However, this is largely an independent work both in the plan of content (Abuchovič's text has clear features of satire on post-reform Russia) and form (the volume has been increased almost twice).

In 1921 Harecki reprinted from *Biełaruski kalendar na 1915 hod* the work of Abuchovič *Staršyna* with minor changes (bratko – bratka, brother; najlepše – najlipepša, best; u biezładzie – u nialadzii, in disarray; Škodziuć – Škodziać, harm; nie znajuć – nia znajuć, do not know ; Chodziuć – Chodziać, walk; zjedajuć – z'jadajuć, eat; zwiaryny – źviaryny, animal; zwierat – źviarjat, animals; nie čutno – niačutna, not heard, susim – zusim, quite; nie zvali – nia zvali, they do not call; ū pratakoli – u pratakoli, in a protocol) He transliterated the text into the Cyrillic alphabet, in the newspaper *Bielaruskija viedamaści* (Belarusian News) (1921, No. 9), then included it in an edition prepared by him of *Declamatar* (Abuhovìč, 1921a, pp. 29–30) ('poems and short stories that could be used for recitation at concerts, folk performances, evenings' (Abuhovìč, 1921b), and later – in *Chrestamayja* (A Reader) (Abuhovìč, 1922a, p. 216).

In the same year, 1921, Lieanila Haretskaja (Čarniaŭščynka), a teacher at the 1st Vilnia Belarusian gymnasium, included (according to *Biełaruskaha kalendara na 1915 hod*), but without the initial quatrain, this fable in the IV edition of the primer *Rodny Kraj* (Abuhovič, 1921c, p. 42). 'Olgierd Obuchowič' by U. Lastoski became her 'A. Abuchowič', and *Staršyna* was submitted as *Staršynia*. In 1923 and 1929, Hareckaja's primer was published in Cyrillic type face (Abuhovič, 1923, p. 42; Abuhovič, 1929, pp. 45–46), and in 1931 and 1936. – again in Roman (Abuhovič, 1931, p. 42; Abuhovič, 1936, p. 42); the book was used in schools in Western Belarus.

In Soviet Belarus, the work of Abuchovič became known only in 1956, when a compilation of *Belarusian Writers of the Second Half of the XIX Century* was published. The compiler Vasìl′ Barysenka, obviously, used the 'hint' of V. Abramovičus, who in the section *Manuscripts of Different Character* wrote down the typescript of his famous bibliography:

> 428. OBUKHOVICH, OLGERD. 'Старшына' (Headman) and 'Ваўкалак' (The Werewolf). Autographs of poems [sic!] corrected by pencil by hand [sic!] of the author, without date

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 23/11/2026 04:44:54



(19th century), but signed and with a note – Sluck. Stored in VBF–431, l. 1–2, Latin 28x21 cm[34] (Abramavičûs, 1949, p. 92).

As the compiler testified, 'the fables *Staršyna* and *Vaŭkalak* are printed from manuscripts stored in the Manuscript Department of the library of the Academy of Sciences of the Lithuanian SSR' (Barysenka, 1956, p. 344). This publication, however, is quite peculiar: the compiler chose according to his own taste, the text of the fable from manuscript: in some cases he took corrections in pencil, in others – left them without attention, using the primary note (e.g instead of lines in ink like 'Starszynoju kab jon byŭ' (He will be a mayor), and 'I lisica paprasila' (And the fox asked) their pencil analogues are taken: 'Каб вайтом яго зрабіў' (So he will be made a mayor) and 'І ліса за ім праcіла' (And the fox pleaded for him). At the same time, the line in ink 'Dyk medaĺ pan woŭk nadzieŭ' (So Mr wolf wore a medal) is 'modernized' to 'Дык медаль пан войт надзеў' (So Mr Mayor wore a medal) – here there is an arbitrary connection of the two variants, since the pencil version is: 'Dyk medaĺ wajta nadzieŭ' (So he wore the medal of the Mayor). The same can be said about the 7th line of the fable: the primary 'Szto awieczki skroź biez ładu' (After all the sheep are in a mess) and the pencil version of 'Bo awieczki u biezładzie' are combined in 'Бо авечкі скрозь ў бязладдзі' (The sheep are in a mess everywhere). But the last stanza has been borrowed practically without change by the compiler from the pencil version of the text. In addition, the publication has a number of editorial elaborations. The most important are the following: 'ŭsiej' ('all'), 'voĺny schod' ('free assembly') and 'Paspytać usich zviarat' (to ask all the animals) instead of 'ŭsio', 'walny schod' i 'Raspytać usich zwierat' (Abuchowicz, 1956, p. 258–259). We pay attention to this, as these errors will be repeated more than once in later editions.

Another approach to the renewal of Abuchovič's fable was taken by the compilers of the *Reader on the History of the Belarusian Language*: in their edition the 'ink' text of the work is presented. And, almost perfectly (Abuhovìč, 1962, pp. 171–172). Why did they consider it unnecessary to take into account pencil edits? This is not mentioned in the preface to the verse.

The most important thing, however, is that the manuscript of the fable has been preserved. It is located in the Wroblewski Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences in fond 21, signature 431. There is every reason to believe that it was on the basis of this manuscript that the publication of the fable was prepared for the *Biełaruski kalendar na 1915 hod*: with the exception of the replacement in the first line of the word *paradak* (order) by *kirunak* (direction), in the printed version there are all, fixed on a sheet of A4 paper, lexemes with the signature *Olgierd Obuchowicz* inclusive. It is

[34] '428. OBUKHOVICH, OLGERD. *Старшына* (Headman) and *Ваўкалак* (The Werewolf). Autographs of poems [sic!] corrected by pencil by hand [sic!] of the author, without date (19th century), but signed and with a note – Sluck. Stored in VBF–431, l. 1–2, Latin 28x21 cm'.

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Data: 23/11/2026 04:44:54



interesting, that the manuscript of the tale *Vaŭkałak* in addition to such a signature has got a characteristic mark: *Słuck*.

In Belarusian literary scholarship, this manuscript is considered an autograph. For example, Kisialioŭ wrote:

> Цяпер вядомы толькі два лісткі з аўтографамі Абуховіча […]. Гэта тэксты баек *Старшына* і *Ваўкалак*, напісаныя рукой паэта чарнілам, з алоўкавымі праўкамі. […] Ды яшчэ ў Нацыянальнай бібліятэцы ў Варшаве, у папцы пад назвай *Розныя паперы са збораў А. Валіцкага*, ёсць пераклады на польскую мову баек *Вяльможа* і *Малпа і люстэрка* за подпісам: Альгерд гр. Бандынэлі. Мазыр[35] (Kìsâlëŭ, 2003, p. 70).

It is not known on what basis the famous scholar identifies these manuscripts as autographs of Abuchovič. It seems that a graphic examination was not carried out. However, even the unaided eye can see that the 'Vilnia' manuscripts are written in a completely different handwriting than the 'Warsaw' ones. With certainty we can say that on all these cards only one short note is written by Abuchovič's hand on a sheet of the translation of the fable *Vialḿoža* (the title is given in Russian) signed by '*Olg Count Bandinelli*', as well as a brief note by the poet to 'Dear Lady – benefactress' signed by '*Olgierd*' on a sheet of the translated fable *Małpa i Zwierciadło*. The comparison of Abuchovič's own handwritten notes with the pencil edits of the fable *Staršyna* does not allow us to confirm unambiguously the authorship of the poet to these edits.

Unfortunately, a textual and graphic study of the fable 'Staršyna' has not yet been made. Only one thing was mentioned: that there were edits by pencil. But attention was not paid to the fact that the edits belonged to different persons. First, the edits of the copyist (toj-jon, etc.), secondly, – some third person (Starszynoju kab jon byŭ – Kab wajtom jaho zrabiu, etc.), and thirdly, – we will observe that the editor of *Naša Nivas'* hand is recognized where there are the graphemes ***č*** (bač –trojčy, awiečy, awiečki, awiečkam), ***š*** (Što, štož) і ***ž*** (štož).

The copyist's edits are identified quite simply: they are made by the same hand and in the same ink. It is more difficult with the person, who 'improved' the text and even changed partially the meaning of the utterance: replaced staršyna (headman) by 'vojt' (mayor). However, only in the text: he did not touch the title of the fable, although it would be logical to call the corrected work *Vojt*. Was it the author? I do not think so. First of all, Abuchovič had not made corrections on manuscripts of the three other texts that have survived. Or, maybe, should one connect the edits of the 'second' and 'third' persons? The handwriting is similar, the one thing that supposedly

[35] 'Now only two sheets with Abuchovič's autographs are known [..] These are the texts of the fables of the *Staršyna* and *Vaŭkalak*, written by the hand of the poet in ink, with pencil edits. [...] Yes, even in the National Library in Warsaw, in a folder under the title *Various Papers from the Collections of A. Walicki*, there are translations into Polish of the fables of *Vialḿoža* and *Malpa i liusterka* signed: Olgerd Count Bandinelli. Mozyr'.

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 23/11/2026 04:44:54



separates them is the use of graphemes *č*, *š* і *ž*[36]. *Probably, the work was edited in the era of Naša Niva*, because it is very doubtful that in the 19th century the letters of the Czech alphabet were used in Belarusian texts. For this reason, it is necessary to cast aside Frańcišak Bahuševič as a possible editor of Abuchovič's fable. But perhaps Janka Kupala had a hand in editing the work? From October 1913 to 1915 he was the Executive Secretary of the *Belarusian Publishing Association* in Vilnia! As confirmation of this hypothesis will be the word *bač* used in the pencil version: in a number of works by Janka Kupala, this word was also used several times. Of course, without careful study of this issue, it is impossible to assert categorically that he edited the fables of Abuchovič. However, it is necessary to specify the problem, which – there is a probability – will be solved one day.

It is necessary to note, that the last stanza was edited several times: first, individual edits were made to the 'ink' version (which was crossed out), later this stanza was written in pencil below (which was not very carefully erased with an eraser) and finally, the final version was written even lower.

## 4. *Vaŭkalak*

Like the fable *Staršyna*, *Vaŭkalak* was first published in *Biełaruski kalendar na 1915 hod* and apparently from a manuscript, which was preserved in the Wroblewski Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences. The publishers have treated the author's (?) text quite carefully, they have just replaced the Polish digraphs ***cz***, ***sz*** and graphemes ***ż*** by Czech ***č***, ***š***, ***ž***. We once again allow ourselves to doubt that the manuscripts from the Wroblewski Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences are autographs of Abuchovič: the nature of the writing of these documents is very different from Abuchovič's own notes. Due to the absence of any evidence, it remains only to hypothesize: did the manuscripts of Abuchovič's fables originate from the time of the author himself and were published at his request, or did Lastoŭski allowed someone to copy the works from Abuchovič's papers, which he had in his hands.

We also draw attention to the fact that in the manuscripts the translations of Krylov's fables into Polish are signed with the pseudonym *Olg hr Bandinelli*, and the Belarusian-language tales – *Olgierd Obuchowicz*. And this is in a certain contradiction (of course, only if the manuscripts from the Wroblewski Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences come from the Abuchovič's papers, and are not later copies) with the statement in the memoirs: 'Ja padpiswajusia na maich biełaruskich tworach "Hraf Bandinelli"' (I signed my Belarusian works 'Count Bandinelli'). There are two possibilities: was Abuchovič inaccurate himself, or did Lastoŭski at the request of the national movement make certain adjustments to the statements of the writer from

[36] More precisely: the absence of the sounds [ч] /[ʧ], [ш] /[ʃ] and [ж] /[ʒ] in the words-edits of the second person.

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 23/11/2026 04:44:54



Sluck. Let us recall: Lastoŭski was quite often guided by pressing needs, and not by the principles of historical objectivity; for example, in his article *Pamiaci Spraviadlivaha* (In Memory of What Is Fair) Lastoŭski (under the pseudonym Svajak) gives fragments of the last appeals, *Listy z-pad šybienicy* (Letters from Under the Gallows) of Kastuś Kalinoŭski in, I think, a modified form[37]: 'Biełarusy (sic!), braty maje rodnyje! s pad šybienicy maskoŭskaj prychodzicca mnie da vas pisaci…' (Belarusians, my brothers! From under the Moscow gallows I have to write to you...) or 'Biełaruska (sic!) ziamieĺka, hałubka maja // Hdzie ž sia padzieło ščaście i jasna dolia Tvaja?' (Belarusian land, my dove / / where is happiness and Your bright fate?) (Swajak, 1916).

Lastoŭski, we believe, used the publication of Agathon Giler, *Historja powstania narodu polskiego w 1861–1864* (The History of the Uprising of the Polish People in 1861–1864 ), v. I; Paris 1867, p. 327 CHECK), and not the '...odpisami [...] adozwaŭ [...] katoryje ja doŭhije hady chawaŭ u skrytkach-ad ruplivaho žandarskaho voka, kab, kali pryjdzie čas, padzialicca imi sa svaim narodam' (notes [...] addressed [...] which I hid for many years in hiding places – from the keen eyes of the gendarmes, so that when the time comes, I will share them with my people) (Swajak 1916).

In 1921–1922, Harecki reprinted with minor changes from *Biełaruskaha kalendara na 1915 hod* the fable *Vaŭkałak*, transliterating the text into the Cyrillic alphabet, in the newspaper *Belaruskija Viedomosti* (1921, No. 9), then included it in his edition of *Declamatar* (Abuhovìč, 1921d, p. 27–28), as well as in his *Reader* (Abuhovìč, 1922b, p. 215). Unlike other fables, Abuchovič's *Vaŭkałak* did not get into the West Belarusian school primers.

Obviously, on the model of publications by Harecki, in Soviet Belarus its own 'red *Declamatar*' appeared, in which the fable *Vaŭkalak* was included in 1924.

And only thirty years later this work will appear again in the context of Belarusian literature: the compiler of the book *Belarusian Writers of the Second Half of the 19th Century* VasiĹ Barysienka published it from the manuscript in the 'library of the Academy of Sciences of the Lithuanian SSR' (Barysenka, 1956, p. 344). The text is quite correct (adapted only to the norms of the then spelling), although not without curiosities: the handwritten 's twaim panam i s siełom' (with your lord and with the village) somehow turned into 'З сваім панам і сялом' (With his lord and the village) (Abuchowicz, 1956, p. 257). This publication served as the basis for almost all subsequent versions of the fable *Vaŭkalak* in collections, anthologies and readers[38].

As in the case of other stories by Abuchovič, the ideological content of *Vaŭkalak* is based on a plot known since the days of Aesop and Phaedrus. It is very likely that the poet was familiar with Jean de La Fontaine's fable *Le Loup et le Chien* (The Wolf

[37] Kisialioŭ admits that in parallel with the publication of the texts published by Agathon Giler, there were some variants of individual parts of the cycle. Copies could have been taken from the originals in Vilnia before being sent abroad: see Kalinoŭski 1999, p. 302).

[38] In the anthology of K. Ćvirka, the title of the tale is changed into *Vaŭkalak* (The Werewolf), and the work itself, not known on what basis, dates from 1860–1861 (See Abuhovìč, 2013, pp. 737–738).

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 23/11/2026 04:44:54



and the Dog), as well as with its translation by Adam Mickiewicz: *Pies i wilk* (The Dog and the Wolf), but, as Kisialioŭ notes, '...the introduction of a specific and ambiguous image of a Werewolf, taken from Belarusian demonology, instead of the traditional Wolf significantly enriches the plot, radically turns it towards Belarusian folk culture' (see Marhel′, Čamâryckì (eds), 2007, p. 409).

## 5. Fragments of Memoirs

In his first mention of the poet from Sluck in September 1912, Lastoŭski speaks only of his papers. One might even think that the Secretary of the editorial office of *Naša Niva* had received the manuscript archive of Abuchovič. However, a year later in the note *Pamažycia!*, he probably, has already thoroughly got acquainted with the papers, Vlast claims to have '10 notebooks of his diaries' (that is Memoirs) with drafts of poems.

The texts of Abuchovič published in *Homan* partially confirmed the correctness of Lastoŭski's definition: the papers are largely of a memoir nature, although sometimes they resemble prose miniatures. A total of twelve fragments[39] were printed in 1916, each with a title and three with a date. Careful reading of the text of the memoirs allowed Rodčanka to claim that they were written in 1894 in Sluck, and partially (the section *Spas*) in the estate Zarečča near Hlusk. More than once there arose questions about the dates that were recorded in the publication of 1916, namely – '4/IV 1904', '3 maja 1894 h.' (3 May 1894) '20/VII 1904'. Believing that Lastoŭski published fragments sequentially, one after another, as they were in the manuscript, Rodčanka drew attention to the fact that the year 1904 appeared in *Homan* by mistake as 'a printing error caused by illegibility of the writer's handwriting, or editorial carelessness' (Rodčanka, 1984, p. 17). The question seems to be solved, Rodčanka's argument has been accepted by Belarusian literary critics (Marhel′, Čamâryckì (eds), 2007, p. 410); but for some reason the researchers did not notice another date: in the introduction by Jazep Hulievič to the publication of the poem *Duma a Karólu XII* we read: 'Nižej my drukujemo wierš niaboščyka Olhierda Obuchowiča, pisanyj u 1900 (sic!) hadu ŭ dzień pałtaŭskaj hadaŭščyny' (Below we publish a poem by the deceased Olhierda Obuchowiča, written in 1900 (sic!) on the day of the Poltava anniversary (Hułewič 1916)).

We are not going to dispute the date of the writer's death: '10 August 1898', which is clearly visible on the monument in the Sluck cemetery. However, are there not too many of these incredible dates? Will it be enough to explain everything by the unclear nature of Abuchovič's writing? And if the poet died in 1898, what Poltava anniversary did he 'honour' with his work? Maybe 180-iu, which means that the verse was created in 1889?

[39] The thirteenth fragment would be printed in the 12th book of the magazine *Kryvič* (1927).

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 23/11/2026 04:44:54



On the manuscripts, which indisputably belong to Abuchovič, dates (twice of the year 1885) are read without any difficulties. It remains to assume that either Lastoŭski, who prepared the text for publication, or the typesetter at Martin Kuhta's printing house, was mistaken.

We have already touched upon the question of the language of Abuchovič's memoirs earlier. Here it should be noted that this problem will be solved only when there will be scholarly works dedicated to the language of Lastoŭski, the language of *Homan* and the language of Abuchovič. And, of course, it is extremely necessary to research the *Homan* period of the life and creativity of Lastoŭski.

Abuchovič's memoirs are published as something holistic and ordered. That is the impression on account of the numbered sections and the dating brought by Rodčanka. However, we must remember that Lastoŭski had '10 books[40]'; we must remember that two fragments of the memoirs of the writer from Sluck have been saved: a short text about the Belarusian word 'spakmień', located in the corresponding dictionary entry for *The Handy Russian-Kryvsk (Belarusian) Dictionary* (1924), as well as the note about the 'Belarusianness' of Michal Mikiešyn[41], printed in the latest issue of the journal *Kryvich*. Here we will give from this note only what concerns Abuchovič. In the beginning, the publisher Karčak (probably a pseudonym of Lastoŭski) retells what he read in the 'papers' of Abuchovič, and then quotes (perhaps in translation) the manuscript:

> Ня менш цікавае здарэньне аб Мікешыне апавядае ў сваіх *Успамінах* беларускі пісьменнік (родам з пад Слуцка) Альгерд Абуховіч[42]. Па дарозе з Масквы ў Менск Абуховіч купіў на аднэй са станцій нумар журналу „Нива" [1992 г. (sic!), № 201] і зайшоўшы ў купэ II-й клясы разгарнуў куплены журнал і натрапіў на 9-й балоне[43] на рысунак з беларускага быту, работы Мікешына[44]. Рысунак выабражаў сцэну на задворках сялянскай смаленскай сялібы. Пры студні стаіць, кроў з малаком маладзіца, а перад ей дзяцюк-падростак, роўны з ей узростам. Пад рысункам подпіс:
>
> „А й вяликій же-жъ ты дурень, як погляжу: ничоганьки ты такого ня смыслишь!

[40] It is very likely that only a small part of what Lastoŭski had got into print.

[41] Michail Mikiešyn (1835–1896), Russian-born Belarusian sculptor, artist, illustrator.

[42] From the manuscript memoirs of Abuchovič in the collections of Lastoŭski (remark of the publisher of *Kryvič*).

[43] 'Balona' in the meaning of "page" is ardently defended by Lastoŭski (1927, p. 198), referring to the 'inventory of the Turov-Pinsk Archdiocese, already written on paper in the18th century.' See also Lastoŭski (comp.), 1924, p. 687). The use of this word may be evidence that the text of Abuchovič was corrected or translated from the Polish language.

[44] M. Mikiejšyn's drawing *Belarusian scene* is placed in No. 9 for 1892 (February 29) of the weekly *Niva* on page 204 (annual numbering), or on page 12 of the newspaper. The year of publication is given wrongly because of an omission of the typesetter, but the confusion with the publication number and page comes from Lastoŭski. In our opinion, Abuchovič made his note immediately after the meeting with Mikiejšyn, because he correctly recorded the output information of the newspaper: year 1892, No.9, p. 204.

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 23/11/2026 04:44:54



– Не – йща нясмыслю...

Я прачытаў, усьміхнуўся і пачаў, відаць лішне ўважна і лішне доўга ўглядацца ў рысунак. На супроць мяне сядзеў пажылы чалавек, які ўрэшце заўважыў мой захват рысункам і спытаў па расійску.

– Вам падабаецца гэты рысунак?

– Больш рысунка мне падабаецца подпіс, адказаў я.

Мала памалу паміж мной і маім спадарожнікам завязалася гутарка, галоўнай тэмай якой была Беларусь. Зацікаўленьне Беларусьсю і знаньнем беларускай мовы ў расійцу мяне нямала зьдзівіла, але літэрацкая жылка папісацца перад слухачом мяне падбіла, што я прадэклямаваў яму некалькі сваіх вершыкаў і пераклад мой з Міцкевіча: „Ужо разагнаны маўроў слабоды, мір іх ў няволі бядуе..."[45]. Гэты апошні верш, мой прыгодны слухач сквапна запісаў сабе ў нотэс. Кончыўшы пісаньне сказаў: „якая шкада, што Міцкевіч пісаў не па беларуску". У Смаленску спадарожнік мой высядаў, і, на прашчаньне, зарэкамандаваўся: „Міхайла Мікешын, з роду племені і з пераконаньня – Беларус, заўсёды гатовы да вашых паслуг".

Я астаўся, як той казаў, з развінутай губай"[46] (Karčak, 1927, pp. 104–105).

[45] In Mickiewicz's poem *Konrad Wallenrod*, the main character sings the *Alpuhara ballad* (Ballada Alpuhara), which tells about the leader of the Moors Almanzor, who, having earned the trust of the Spanish knights, took revenge on them for his land by infecting them with misfortune. Obviously, the opening lines of the ballad are given here in translation: 'Już w gruzach leżą Maurów posady, // Narod ich dźwiga żelaza'.

[46] 'The Belarusian writer (originally from Sluck) AĺhierdAbuchovič tells in his *Memoirs* a not less interesting incident about Mikiešyn. Coming from Moscow to Minsk Abuchovič bought on one of the stations an issue of the magazine *Niva* [1992 (sic!), No. 201] and going into the compartment of the II-nd class opened the purchased magazine, and came across on the 9th balona (page) a drawing from Belarusian life, the work of Mikiešyn... The picture showed a scene in the back-yard of a peasant hut in Smaliensk. Near the well there was a milk girl, like a mixture of blood and milk, and a teenage boy equal to her age. Under the picture there is the caption:
'And you're a big fool, I see: you don't know anything about it!'.
'No, I don't.'…
I read it, smiled, and began to stare at it, apparently too closely and for too long. An elderly man sat opposite me, who finally noticed my admiration for the drawing and asked in Russian.
'Do you like this drawing?'
'More than a drawing, I like the signature,' I said.
Little by little a conversation began between me and my companion, the main topic of which was Belarus. The interest in Belarus and the knowledge of the Belarusian language in the Russian surprised me a lot, but the literary vein and the desire to show off in front of the listener encouraged me to recite to him some of my poems and my translation from Mickiewicz: 'already dispersed the settlements of Moors, their world in captivity is poor...'. This last verse, my diligent listener eagerly wrote down in his notebook. When he had finished writing, he said: 'what a pity that Mickiewicz did not write in Belarusian.' In Smaliensk my companion got off the train, and, at parting, introduced himself: 'Mikhaila Mikiejšyn, from the tribe and beliefs – Belarusian, always at your service.'
I was left, as they say, with my mouth open'.

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 23/11/2026 04:44:54



## 6. The Verse about the Significance of the Battle of Poltava for Belarusians

For the first time the poem *Duma a Karólu XII* was printed as a continuation of the publication of the memoirs from *S papieroŭ Olhierda Obuchowiča* in No. 49 (1 August) of the newspaper *Homan* in 1916. Perhaps he thought it fitted in with a kind of celebration of the second anniversary of the war: this is evidenced by the materials of the newspaper, and the note by Hulievič.

Indeed, we should agree with the author of the Preface: the victory in the battle of Poltava turned Russia from a kingdom with regional ambitions into a superpower with claims to world domination. The Belarusian publicist (most probably Hulievič was another pseudonym of Lastoŭski) evaluated the historical events of the bicentennial past from the Belarusian national point of view and had great hopes for the revival of the Fatherland on the victory in the war with Germany. It is noteworthy that he correctly understood the main idea of the poem by Abuchovič: the victory at Poltava opened the way for Russia to the West, first through the so-called protection over the East Slavic population of the Rzeczpospolita, and then its annexation and assimilation. The poet simply expressed the hope that only the Poltava revenge, which could be carried out by someone like Charles XII, would allow his people, as well as other oppressed peoples to be freed from the Russian yoke; the publisher wanted the German Emperor Wilhelm II or, above all, Paul von Hindenburg, commander-in-chief of the Eastern front, to be the successor of Charles XII.

The work published in *Homan* has not been seen by Belarusian researchers for a long time. It was missed by both Harecki, and Karskii. It was only in the 1970s that Adam Maĺdzis noticed that ‘змешчаны вельмі цікавы, хоць і супярэчлівы верш Абуховіча’[47] (Mal′dzìs, 1974, p. 27). Scholars saw inconsistency in the ‘anti-historical approach to the evaluation of the battle of Poltava and the activities of Peter I’, as well as in the fact that ‘з імем Карла XII беспадстаўна звязваецца думка аб вызваленні народаў былой Расійскай імперыі з-пад улады самадзяржаўя’[48] (Lojka, Ragojša (comps), 1988, p. 473). This is not the place to debate this statement by Rahojša, it is only necessary to note the factual error: Charles XII had no need to liberate the peoples of the Russian Empire – obviously, Belarusians and Ukrainians – from autocracy, since at the beginning of the 18th century they had not yet been enslaved by their Eastern neighbour.

In the adapted form (the omitted stanza with curses against the battle of Poltava and Peter I) the work was reprinted in the second edition of the *Anthology of Belarusian Literature of the 19th Century* (Lojka, Ragojša (comps), 1988, p. 336), and completely and with a smaller number of edits – in the volume of selected works by Abuchovič

[47] ‘a very interesting, though controversial poem by Abuchovič was placed next to the memoirs’.

[48] ‘the name of Charles XII is unreasonably associated with the idea of the liberation of the peoples of the former Russian Empire from the power of autocracy’.

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 23/11/2026 04:44:54



(Abuhovič, 1991, pp. 20–21). And the most exact publication, only transliterated from Roman into the Cyrillic font, is in the fifth volume of the *Zalataja kaliekcyja bielaruskaj litaratury* (Kìsâlëva, Sânkevič (comps), 2013, p. 239–40) compiled by Lija Kisialiova and Nina Siankievič.

A separate issue is the content of Abuchovič's poem. First of all, what 'troch małojcaŭ' (three good fellows) are we talking about in the work? Two of them are recognized quite easily: the titular hero of Charles XII is named openly, Peter – for obvious reasons – through the use of the method of description. But not quite so clear a definition of the third has led to erroneous perceptions. Rahojša decided that it was Ivan Mazepa (1739–1809) who 'karaleŭskaj žadaŭ karony' (desired the royal crown). However, at the same time the scholar conveyed his doubts with the word 'probably'. Subsequent researchers have undoubtedly regarded the Ukrainian Hetman as an accomplice of Peter I (above all, the second negative character of the poem), though, as is known, during the battle of Poltava he was in the camp of Charles XII, and in fact did not claim the crown and did not throw 'na Polšču. […] całuny' (on Poland […] any shroud)[49].

Who is he, the third hero of the poem by Abuchovič? None other than Augustus II the Strong (1670–1733), King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania (1697–1704, 1709–1733). This interpretation of a deliberately unnamed hero allows us to suggest not only a negative interpretation by Abuchovič of the figure of the Russian Tsar Peter I, and other representatives of the Romanov dynasty, but also of Polish kings, first of all, the Sas dynasty, which actually weakened the Republic of Poland and allowed Russia to strengthen its influence in the region[50].

More than once, researchers have expressed opinions about the dependence of the poem *Duma a Karólu XII* on Pushkin's poem *Poltava* (1828). In our opinion, there is no reason to talk about dependence, and even about the polemic with the Russian poet. Abuchovič, probably, has found his point of view, disagreeing with the official patriotic pathos of the next celebration of the anniversary of the victory in the Russian press. Unfortunately, whether a typo in the newspaper, or an illegibly written date in the manuscript does not allow us today to determine the time of the creation of the poem. And it was, perhaps, in 1889 at the time of the anniversary, or some other year, when the

[49] Kisialioŭ in his extremely interesting analysis of this poem by Abuchovič also considers Ivan Mazepa to be his hero, although he wonders why the Ukrainian Hetman was involved in the tragedy of Poland? In the end, he puts everything on the original 'interpretation of the poet ' (Marhel′, Čamâryckì (eds), 2007, p. 406).

[50] In works known to us by Lastoŭski the theme of the Poltava battlefield, and more precisely the historical figures of the time, was mentioned perhaps only once and indirectly: 'У 1705 годзе, пасьля угоды Пятра I з каралём Аўгустам другім, заключанай супроць швэдзкага караля Карла XII, цар Пётр, увайшоўшы ў граніцы Літвы, разпачаў фармальны тэрор супраць уніятаў' (In the year 1705, after the deal of Peter I with King August II concluded against Swedish King Charles XII, Tsar Peter, crossing the Lithuania border, began an organized campaign of terror against Uniates) (Last., 1926, p. 96).

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 23/11/2026 04:44:54



eye of the poet caught more material about the great and glorious victory. For Abuchovič and those who considered themselves part of Ruś that 'u niawoli marnieje' (in captivity withers), the Poltava victory of Peter I was an event that led to a national tragedy.

## 7. Fables from the School Book for Reading

Also in 1916, Lastoŭski published two more works by Abuchovič. In the book *Rodnyje Zierniaty*, compiled and published by him, which was very necessary for Belarusian schooling (the German occupation authorities for the first time in the history of the Belarusian people gave permission to open schools with the Belarusian language of study), he included the fables *Voŭk i lisica* and *Sud* by the poet from Sluck.

Unfortunately, only a few copies of this edition have survived. We know of two copies stored in the Library of the Free University of Berlin and the Library of the Humboldt University also in Berlin, and perhaps there is a copy of the book in Francis Skaryna Belarusian Library in London? We believe that it may have been used by Arnold McMillin to work on his article *A Conspectus and Bibliography of Byelorussian Literature in the Nineteenth Century* (McMillin, 1971, pp. 271–288).

Due to the unavailability of this publication for Belarusian researchers, we consider it necessary to provide a brief description of it, as expressed in the newspaper *Homan*. First in issue 87 (12 December) for 1916 appeared a short message ('Knižki dlia bielaruskich škol. Hetymi dniami vyjdzie ŭ śviet knižka dla dziaciej na 2 i 3 školny hod pad nazvańniem *Rodnyje Zierniaty*' (Books for Belarusian schools. One day soon there will appear a book for children of the 2nd and 3rd school year entitled *Rodnyje Zierniaty*)), and after a week – a review (we suppose, that this is self-censorship: Lastoŭski was writing about own publication):

> *Rodnyje Zierniaty*. Pad takim zahałoŭkam vyjšła z druku knižka da czytańnia dlia bielaruskich pačatkovych škoł na 2 i 3 hod navuki, złoženaja V. Łastoŭskim. Knižka na 240 stranicach daje bahata rožnarodnaho materjału da čytańnia. U jej jość hetkije addzieły: I – *u siamji, ŭ školi i miž liudźmi*; II – *čatyry pory hodu, ziemlia, raśliny, źviery i ptuški*; III – *pa rodnym kraju*; IV – *z našaj minuščyny*. Materjal padobran z najlepšych biełaruskich i inšych aŭtaroŭ, dy mnoha rečaj oryhinaĺnych – piora V. Łastoŭskaha, asabliva ŭ dwoch apošnich addziełach. Knižka nadrukovana lacinskim šryftam, u katorym, jak i ŭ-va ŭsich bielaruskich školnych padručnikach zamiest sz i cz užyvajecca znak š i č. Cena knižki – 1 m. 70 f., u aprawie – 2 m. *Rodnyje Zierniaty* – heta cenny dabytak dlia bielaruskaj školnaj litaratury, naohul niebahataj. Knižka zusim adpaviedaje vymoham pačatkowaj školy i pavinna znajści dlia siabie naležnaje miejsca ŭ-va ŭsich bielaruskich školach. Cennuju asablivaść *Rodnych Zierniat* stanović toje, što ŭ addzieli dla 2 hodu kožnaja staciejka maje ŭ kancy nievialiki slavaryk i pytańnia dla hutarak i piśmiennych rabot. Apošnije značna abliehčajuć rabotu

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Data: 23/11/2026 04:44:54



vučyciela dyj dajuć vuczniam mahčymaść samym – biaz ničyjej pomačy – liohka razabracca ŭ pračytanym adryŭku[51] [(a)., 1916].

The compiler placed the fables by Abuchovič in the second section: *the four seasons, earth, plants, animals and birds*:

- *Voŭk i lisica* [in:] *Rodnyje zierniaty: Knižyca dla školnaho čytańnia*, comp. V. Łastoŭski, Vilnia: *Homan*, 1916, p. 123.
- *Sud* [in:] *Rodnyje zierniaty: Knižyca dla školnaho čytańnia*, comp. V. Łastoŭski, Vilnia: *Homan*, 1916, p. 125[52].

According to the book for reading *Rodnyje Zierniaty*, these fables were printed in books for schools, which were prepared by Lieanila Čarniaŭščynka (Harecki's wife).

We will now give all editions known to us where Abuchovič's fables were reprinted:

- *Voŭk i lisica*, [in:] *Rodny kraj. Druhaja paślia liemantara kniha da* čytańnia, comp. L. Čarniaŭščynka, under the editorship of School Comission of the Belarusian Scholarly Society, Vilnia, 1919, pp. 27–28[53].
- *Sud* [in:] *Rodny kraj. Druhaja paślia liemantara kniha da* čytańnia, comp. L. Čarniaŭščynka, under the editorship of School Comission of the Belarusian Scholarly Society, Vilnia, 1919, pp. 35–36.
- *Voŭk i lisica*, [in:] *Rodny kraj*, comp. L. Hareckaja, a teacher at the First Vilnia Belarusian Gymnasium, 4th edition, Vilnia, 1921, p. 33[54].

[51] '*Rodnyje Zierniaty*. Under this title, a reading book for Belarusian primary schools of their 2nd and 3rd years of study, compiled by V. Lastoŭski, has been published. The 200–page book provides a lot of diverse reading material. In it there are the following sections: I – *in the family, in school and among people*; II – *the four seasons, earth, plants, animals and birds*; III – *our native land*; IV – *from of our past*. The material is selected from the best Belarusian and other authors, there are many original works – from the pen of V. Lastoŭski, especially in the last two sections. The book was printed in Roman script, which, as in all Belarusian books, uses the signs š and č instead of sz and cz. The book price – 1 m. 10 f., hardback – 2 m. The book *Rodnyje Zierniaty* is a valuable acquisition for Belarusian school literature, which is generally modest. The book fully meets the requirements of primary schools and should find its proper place in all Belarusian schools. The most valuable feature of *Rodnyje Zierniaty* is that in the section for the 2nd year of study, at the end of each article there is a small vocabulary and questions for conversation and written works. The latter greatly facilitates the work of the teacher, and makes it possible for the students themselves – without anyone's help – to easily understand the passage read'.

[52] Bibliographic materials are submitted on the publication of A. McMillin.

[53] The fable *Voŭk i lisica* is given without identifying the author. In the same year an identical edition in Roman script was published

[54] Unfortunately, we do not know why this edition is designated as the 4th. And was an edition in the Cyrillic font published in Vilnia in the same year? And why was the textbook of Čarniaŭščynka *Native Land*: the second book after the primer to read, printed under the stamp 'Commissariat of public education of Belarus' in 1921 in Minsk, given as 'the 2nd edition, corrected'?

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 23/11/2026 04:44:54



- *Sud*, [in:] *Rodny kraj*, comp. L. Hareckaja, a teacher at the First Vilnia Belarusian Gymnasium, 4th edition, Vilnia, 1921, p 37.
- *Voŭk i lisica*, [in:] *Rodny kraj: Druhaja paślia liemantara kniha dlia čytańnia*, comp. L. Hareckaja, a teacher at the Vilnia Belarusian Gymnasium, under the editorship of the School Comission of the Belarusian Scholarly Society, a corrected and expanded edition, Vilnia, 1923, pp. 38–39.
- *Sud* [in:] *Rodny kraj.: Druhaja paślia liemantara kniha dlia čytańnia*, comp. L. Hareckaja, a teacher at the Vilnia Belarusian Gymnasium, under the editorship of the School Comission of the Belarusian Scholarly Society, a corrected and expanded edition, Vilnia, 1923, pp. 43–44[55].
- *Voŭk i lisica*, [in:] *Rodny kraj: Druhaja paślia liemantara kniha dlia čytańnia*, comp. L. Hareckaja, a teacher at the Vilnia Belarusian Gymnasium, under the editorship of the School Comission of the Belarusian Scholarly Society, a corrected and expanded edition, Vilnia,1929, pp. 38–39.
- *Sud*, [in:] *Rodny kraj: Druhaja paślia liemantara kniha dlia čytańnia*, comp. L. Hareckaja, a teacher at the Vilnia Belarusian Gymnasium, Vilnia, 1929, pp. 43–44.
- *Voŭk i lisica*, [in:] *Rodny kraj*, comp. L. Hareckaja, a teacher at the First Vilnia Belarusian Gymnasium, 6th edition, Vilnia, 1931, p. 33.
- *Sud*, [in:] *Rodny kraj*, comp. L. Hareckaja, a teacher at the First Vilnia Belarusian Gymnasium, 6th edition, Vilnia, 1931, p. 37.
- *Voŭk i lisica*, [in:] *Rodny kraj*, comp. L. Hareckaja, a teacjer at the First Vilnia Belarusian Gymnasium, 6th edition, Vilnia, 1936, p. 33.
- *Sud*, [in:] *Rodny kraj*, comp. L. Hareckaja, a teacher at the First Vilnia Belarusian Gymnasium, 6th edition, Vilnia, 1936, p. 37.

Despite the large number of publications in which Abuchovič's fables *Voŭk i lisica* and *Sud* were printed, as well as the fact that in the 1920s they were printed in Miensk and studied in the schools of Soviet Belarus[56] (see for example: *Rodny kraj: druhaja paślia liemantara kniha dlia čytańnia*, 2nd, corrected edition, Miensk, Dziaržaŭnaje vydaviectva Bielarusi, 1921, 98 pages Belarusian historians of literature only in 1988 collected them in a textbook and thus into scholarly discourse.

[55] It is not known whether this, as well as the following editions, were published in two versions – Cyrillic font and Roman.

[56] Rodčanka in the mid-1970s. was able to find Abuchovič's fables *Voŭk i lisica* and *Sud* in a completely unexpected way: a member of the Literary Association of the Sluck district newspaper Piotr Šuliak remembered them from memory as he had studied them from a school textbook in the 1920s (Rodčanka, 1984, p. 78).

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 23/11/2026 04:44:54



## 8. Poems Attributed to Aĺhierd Abuchovič

The verses *Шовъ я вчора вночи съ Глуска* (I came last night from Hlusk) and *Взбійся въ гору, мой соколе!* (Fly up, my falcon!) are kept in the Belarusian State Archive-Museum of Literature and Art among the collection of the documents on the history of culture, collected by Jadviha Ramanoŭskaja (1920–2001), the niece of Janka Kupala. According to unreliable information, they were once in the Vilna Belarusian Museum named after Ivan Luckievič, and after the liquidation of the Museum by the Soviet authorities in 1944–1945, they passed into private hands[57]: an unknown Minsk collector kept them from 1946 until the mid-1990s, to finally give or sell them to the collection of the documents on the history of culture of Jadviha Ramanoŭskaja.

The poems are written on an elegant card of notepaper with the monogram ML[58] embossed in the upper lefthand corner. Immediately below the text of the work, in the same handwriting, some 'M'. adds a few words in provincial Polish. From them we learn that the Belarusian-language poems are being sent at the request of the addressee; it is also reported that the verse (verses[59]) about Zarzečča he has already taken and that after the holidays (Christmas, Easter?) he, the addressee, will be able to bring to a certain gentleman a poem by Janka Lučyna *Stary Liaśnik*[60] (The Old Woodman), if he has not got this poem.

A little below by the same handwriting (that is, that of M.), the note of 'kochającej matki' (loving mother) Stanislava is written. It follows that the addressee is called Stanislaŭ; he has not written to her for a long time, but this time she forgives him and hopes to meet him in Miensk.

For the first time this document was introduced into scholarly use and these Belarusian-language poems were published by Zapartyka and Januškievič in 1997. They analysed the facts that followed from the document, and attributed these works being by Abuchovič:

[57] They supposedly came from Vilnia to Miensk through the mediation of Uladzislava Lucevič, who in 1944–1960 was the Director of the Literary Museum of Janka Kupala.

[58] So argue Zapartyka and Januškievič. We read the monogram as MŁ.

[59] M. applies the word 'wiersze' (verses) (plural of the word 'wiersz' (verse) not only in relation to *Шовъ я вчора вночи съ Глуска* (I came last night from Hlusk) and *Взбійся въ гору, мой соколе!* (Fly up, my falcon!) to the texts (text) about Zarečča, but also concerning the verse by Janka Lučyna *Stary liaśnik* (The Old Forester).

[60] Based on the reference to this work, Zapartyka and Januškievič date this document to the mid-1890s. However, it is known that the Polish version of the poem *Paliaŭničyja zamalioŭki* (Hunting Watercolours) appeared in the mid-1880s (printed in 1887). It was precisely in those days that Lučyna had begun to write in Belarusian. It can be assumed that the Belarusian-language version was also written in the second half of the 1880s and distributed in manuscripts. We believe so because a fairly large edition of the *Severo Zapadnyi kalendar'* 1893 (The North-Western Calendar for 1893) could be available to lovers of Belarusian writing, including 'that gentleman' who apparently lived in Minsk.

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 23/11/2026 04:44:54



> Супастаўляючы геаграфічныя назовы (Глуск, Зарэчча), імёны аўтараў прыпіскі з імёнамі герояў *Мемуараў* Абуховіча, беручы пад увагу манаграму з літарамі ML – можна смела сцвярджаць: карэспандэнтамі былі паненка Марыля Легатовіч і яе маці Станіслава. Вершы Марыля перапісвала для свайго брата Станіслава[61] (Zapartyka, Ânuškevìč, 1997, p. 199).

Indeed, it is well known that the poet was born in Kalacičy near Hlusk, and the village of Zarečča in his memoirs he mentions as his old property, which later passed to Karal Nereziuš and was inherited by Stanislava Liehatovič, apparently, the granddaughter of a friend of Iosaf Abuchovič, the poet's grandfather.

On this basis, the archives of the poems *Шовъ я вчора вночи съ Глуска* (I came last night from Hlusk) and *Взбійся въ гору, мой соколе!* (Fly up, my falcon!). Poems. At the end there is the note [of Maryia to Stanislaŭ Liehatovič]. Manuscript. [1890s].

The attribution of Zapartyka and Januškievič is recognized by modern historians of literature: in the fifth volume of the *Golden Collection of the Belarusian Literature* the verses *Шовъ я вчора вночи съ Глуска* ( I came last night from Hlusk) and *Взбійся въ гору, мой соколе!* (Fly up, my falcon!) are printed as the works of A. Abuchovič without any doubts (Kìsâlëva, Sânkevìč, 2013, pp. 240–242, 792). However, if we compare the language of these verses and the language of A. Abuchovič's works, certain questions arise.

Obviously, the verses, which M. (Mania Liehatavičanka?) sends to her brother, are characterized by the same spelling and graphics, as were written in her, for example, personal album. She had no need to make any changes[62]. So, if we assume that the author of the poetry *Шовъ я вчора вночи съ Глуска/ I came last night from Glusk and Взбійся въ гору, мой соколе!Fly up, my falcon!* was Abuchovič, does not this mean that the writer from Sluččyna used, when writing Belarusian-language works, not Roman script but Cyrillic font[63]?

The second question, which requires an answer, concerns the author's pronouns *щось* and *що (ščoś and ščo)*. Of course, this is not the influence of the Ukrainian

[61] 'Comparing the geographical names (Hlusk, Zarečča), the names of the authors of correspondence with the names of the heroes of Abuchovič's memoirs, taking into account the monogram with the letters ML – we can safely say: the correspondents were the young lady Marylia Liehatovič and her mother Stanislava. Marylia copied poems for her brother Stanislav.

[62] However, '*Стары Лясникъ* '(The Old Forester) by Lučyna M. wrote as *Старый Лясникъ*, 'russifying' the adjective. However, it can be assumed that M. had a different text from the one in *the Almanach of the North-Western Region* (1893, pp.12–14): a manuscript of the poem or just made a mistake, writing from memory.

[63] For the sake of *Biełaruski kalendar na 1915 hod*, which was printed in Roman script, Lastoŭski had to submit the fables of Abuchovič in the appropriate font. Another thing is that in parallel it was prepared (by whom?) for *Беларускі каляндар на 1915 год* also in the Cyrillic alphabet. Why were not the fables 'given' in this edition? As for the publication of fables in the primer *Rodnyje zierniaty*, it took place at a time when the German occupation authorities had not yet given permission to print in Belarusian Cyrillic.

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 23/11/2026 04:44:54



language, but the West Polesian dialects of Belarusian. It is noteworthy that we do not observe such pronouns in the five poetic works of Abuchovič. However, we do not exclude that the original manuscripts of the poet could contain this dialect feature of his language. A feature, for which, (calling it 'unusual Belarusian language accents'), Abuchovič was criticized by Bahuševič.

*Translated into English by Marharyta Svirydava*

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