

## RECEPTION OF CHINESE FICTION LITERATURE IN BULGARIA DURING THE PERIOD OF THE MIDDLE XVIII CENTURY UNTIL THE BEGINNING OF THE XX CENTURY

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*Polina Tsoncheva*

The purpose of the present paper is the introduction to a part of the entire topic elaborated by me “Chinese fiction literature in Bulgaria. Problems of reception” the aim of which is doing a thorough research on and generalization of the available translated in Bulgaria materials (mainly concerning the Chinese fiction literature) during a larger period of time, starting from the beginning of XVIII c. until nowadays, and meaning to reveal the very start, the origin of the interest in Bulgaria towards China and the process of its developing, translators and their choice of translating particular writings during different historic times etc. The present paper draws focuses on the period of the middle XIX until the beginning of the XX century. Its topic is determined by the necessity of rationalization of a over century long cultural tradition, retrospection of the achievements in the sphere of translated literary works in Bulgaria during the mentioned period of time, the outline of the tendencies and trends of the penetration of Chinese literature in Bulgaria not only as a specific for our culture phenomenon, but also as a reception of a foreign literature in the Bulgarian literary environment.

Cultural connections between Bulgaria and China in the middle of the XVIII c. – the Bulgarian Revival period, find the expression of natural development of the reception of foreign cultural values. “The necessity of establishing one’s identity, a “rational” one, according to the classification of Max Weber,” – writes Aretov in his research “Bulgarian Revival and Europe” – “is two times stronger when the tradition of state organization is broken off, as it is with the Bulgarians. That is why, back in time, as well as in different geographical points, that is to say in latitude, there is a feverish search for the arguments for establishing of such an identity. They have to prove not only the remote past of their nation, but also their territorial extent (nowadays and in the past), the possession of equal rights with the other, already established their identity, historical groups. By this

means, the reflective structures originated by the will of establishing an identity and by the feeling of some kind of lack that has to be compensated for by the rational explications of the desired object, appear.” (Aretov 2001).

The cultures of folklore type, which lead a reticent life surrounded by stable values, are constantly re-creating one and the same model of ‘Native’, and the ‘Alien’ is understood as threatening and negative.

In the actual elapsing of the historical processes the absolute reticence of a nation and the total rejection of the ‘alien’ are impossible, the boundaries between closed and opened communities are neither opaque, nor the passages between them which are possible for a short period of time<sup>1</sup>. An example of this fact is the historical fate of the Bulgarians – in the beginning of the second millennium Bulgaria is in the centre of a language-religious community Slavia Orthodoxa<sup>2</sup>. The Turkish invasion leads to closing, isolating and withdrawal around a stable identification model (Picchio 1981).

On its turn, the XVIII c. marks the beginning of Bulgarian Revival that was followed by renewal of economic relations, spiritual and national growth of the Bulgarians. During this process, the concept of the “alien” widens as well in the content of the concepts of *good* and *bad*, *threatening* and *friendly*, *attractive* and *repellent*. During the course of this differentiation among the Bulgarians, and in general on the Balkans, arises the opposition Europe – Orient<sup>3</sup> based upon the marked values.

From the end of the XVIII c. in Bulgaria the interest towards the historiographic, pedagogical and certain moralizing essays, which point to the problems of the present days of the national development, grows (the literary activity of Sofroniy Vrachansky, Peter Beron, Vasil Aprilov etc.). Writings as the Old-Bulgarian short novels “Varlaam and Joasaph”,

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<sup>1</sup> The terms “opened society” and “closed society” are used for the first time by Henry Bergson in “The two sources of morality and religion” (1932), and are later developed by the Austrian philosopher Karl Popper in his book “The opened society and its enemies” (1942–1943).

<sup>2</sup> According to R. Picchio.

<sup>3</sup> Among the Bulgarian research workers of more recent period, the transition from the former cultural type to the new one is explored theoretically by B. Bogdanov. “The literature, the fiction text and the literary work”, “Literary thought”, 1990, № 1.

“Stephanitos and Ikhnilatos”, and the later ones “Mythology of philosopher Syntip” have didactical functions and practically are connected to the basic norms of the Enlightenment in the Bulgarian society. Significant place in the culture of Bulgarian Revival has the collection “1001 nights”, known in Europe from the first translation in French (1704 – 1717) done by Antoine Galland, and in Bulgaria the translation is done from Greek by Sophroniy Vrachansky. The collection shows as an example of imitation not characters from the Holy Bible, but representatives of non-Christian civilizations. The short novel is the first significant translated fictional work at the period of the Revival. Through its medium, a number of productive narrative structures, typical for the Revival recount, penetrate into Bulgarian literature. Apart from the funny descriptions of different types of social behavior, the short novel broadens the spiritual horizons of Bulgarian reader by adding to it the concept of the exotic world of the East. For the knowledge level of the readers’ audience at that time, the image of it is still homogeneous and is identical to some extent with the image of India.

Proof of this is the curious fact that the first known ‘translation’ of a Chinese literary work in Bulgaria was made as a result of a mistake – “Aladzhan – the life of a young sorcerer” (1896). The book was published in the printing house of L. Gerstein in Rousse and the translator’s initials are A.G.S. there is no information about the source of the translation or about the language from which it was made. The work is practically a rendition of the popular story of Aladin and the Magic lamp from “A thousand and one nights”. The translation has the specific Arabic coloring and the Chinese elements are related to the names of the places where the action takes place. According to the translator, however, the book is ‘a nice old Chinese novelette’.

The Chinese culture reminds us of its existence for the first time in Atanas Granitski’s book “Drinks or fortune-telling” (1849). It describes ‘the extremely curious fortune-telling operations we can have an undoubted indirect connection with the famous ancient Chinese “Book of changes” (“易经”) (Aretov 2001). The book is intended for the mass reading public and is evidence for the penetration of Eastern images in the lower strata of the Revival culture. During the Revival period there is a surge in the appreciation of the civilizations of the ancient and the eastern peoples as

a source of wisdom, which is a very significant moment for the formation of the modern worldview of the Bulgarians.

This change is demonstrated in the readiness to accept the new worlds with which the Bulgarians have established an interaction. A similar tendency can be seen in the Revival press since it is mainly the periodical media that is subjected to the pragmatic side of life. From the beginning of the 1850s to the Liberation in 1878 in the Ottoman Empire are published about 30 newspapers and magazines in Bulgarian language, and in Romania, Russia, Serbia, Austria — more than 60. During this period there are new forms of communication and reception in regards to the Eastern cultures. During the 60s in one of the most important Revival magazines – “Bulgarian books” (1858 – 1862) appeared the translated travel account “Something about China”, an excerpt from G. Mingle’s work (Mingle 1960). The travel account is translated by the writer of the Bulgarian national revival Ivan Naidenov, a representative of the Bulgarian exarchate for the Turkish government and a member of the Bulgarian literary society (today BAS). It appears that his interest in China was lasting, since in his newspaper “Advancement”<sup>4</sup> there can be found later information notes related to life in China.

A longer travel account – “Customs of the Tibetans. (Traveling in Tibet)” – came out in several successive issues of “Library” magazine [“Customs of the Tibetans. (Traveling in Tibet)” in “Library” magazine, 1882]. The translator is not named but he was probably Naidenov, considering his interest in eastern cultures. The travel accounts, translated by I. Naidenov, are a part of the larger tendency of striving towards knowledge, towards widening of the spiritual horizon of the Bulgarians with the exploration of a curious world – the East, China, and Tibet. Since the age of the romanticism the image of the Orient had been marked by the depth and the symbolic inexhaustibility of the idea of freedom from the norms of society, from the shackles of the pragmatic mind, from all the rules fettering the spirit. The artists and the philosophers of romanticism go on geographical and metaphysical travels to the East, in order to find the exoticism of the unknown and free existence, and virtues unspoiled by the bourgeois pragmatism, such as nobility, honesty and humaneness.

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<sup>4</sup> The author has in mind the following copies of the newspaper “Advancement”: p. 6, 16, 34, 1874; p. 49, 1975.

It is well known that during the national Revival there was a tendency of a very free attitude towards the concept of someone else's authorship and towards making certain translated works 'Bulgarian'. During the revival when the concept of modern literature was still in the process of formation, it was a common phenomenon for the plots of the translated works to be altered in a way suitable for the changing mentality of society. The mass reading public, with its patriarchal and folklore-tinged worldview sets the parameters of the translation discourse. It readily accepts the translated text if it is in accordance with its system of values and corresponds to its 'horizon of expectations'. Ivan Naidenov's translations take this tendency into account: to a large degree, they 'appropriate' the foreign text making it more Bulgarian. In this respect, there is no information about the source, and the author of the second travel account in "Library" – "Customs of the Tibetans" (Library 1882), is not mentioned at all. The translator to a large degree identifies with the creator of the original and appropriates its authorship, for which we can judge by the changes in the style of the travel account, so as to make it "more Bulgarian". The same applies to the meaning. These travel accounts are evidence for the change in the attitudes of the society from the revival period towards travel and towards the encounters with new worlds and people. The narrators in the travel accounts are guided by curiosity and the wish to get to know the different.

The willingness of perception the *new* in all spheres, provokes the publishing of such articles as, for example, "Gunpowder and bookprinting" in the periodical "Joint labour" – a public lecture of the common history teacher Nikola Kazanakli (Kazanakli 1868). The theme of the lecture is chosen for a particular kind of anteroom to the modern times, to "the period of discoveries and inventions", in which the author marks the contribution of the Chinese – "one of the most ancient people in the world".

The interest for Eastern civilizations in the Bulgarian periodicals grows during the 70s of the XIX century – the periodical "Knowledge", the newspaper "Progress" which editor is Ivan Naydenov, publish on their pages information, concerning Chinese culture and journalism, politics – "Progress" (p. 6, 16, 1874; p. 34, 1875) reports about the strained relations between China and Japan<sup>5</sup>, about the large encyclopedic Chinese editions

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<sup>5</sup> Already in 1859 the periodical "Bulgarian books" draws attention to China, with a view to analyze the political relations between the Great Powers – p. 19, part III.

and the “Collection of the old and the new literatures”, started respectively in the middle of XVIII c. by the emperor Qianlong and during the reign of the emperor and Kang He (1662 – 1722).

The copy 8 of the periodical “Knowledge” from 1875 in its science rubric publishes the thorough translated article “Tea” written by L. Rudolph (Rudolph 1875: in: “Knowledge”) that focuses on China as a motherland of tea plant and its main producer and consumer. The article reveals the botanical characteristics of the tea bush, the technology of its producing and spreading, providing to the readers useful scientific information.

The interest about China and general to the East in Bulgaria during the period of Bulgarian Revival finds expression mainly in the form of external contacts – announcements, notes, references, translations published in periodical press which function is to introduce the Bulgarian readers’ audience to the social life, political organization in China. Such contacts are ones of popular character and create the necessary informational background for the following perception of Chinese civilization on the territory of Bulgaria. They are result of centuries-long tradition in intercourse between the Byzantine – Orthodox culture and the East, and are still fragmentary and inconsistent.

Tendencies of the process continue during the period after the Liberation of Bulgaria (1878). The stable trends, succeeded from the period of Revival continue their development, but apart from them new dynamic processes are observed in which not only national, but considerable characteristic features of the European culture are outlined as well. The “Ethnocentrism” of the Bulgarian Revival falls into the background and its place is taken by the “Anthropocentrism” (Igov 1992).

The time since the end of the 90s of XIX and the beginning of XX c. is associated with the changes, referring to the transition from collective to individualistic consciousness in social aspect, with the setting up of the new Bulgarian state in political and economical aspect. The integration of the Bulgarian in the global spiritual and material space is one realized necessity in the new Bulgarian society, which raises broad social discussion on the national present.

On the one hand, the necessity of knowledge and self-knowledge through discovering the broad horizons of the world is no more only connected with the vision of Europe, preliminary shaped as a cultural sign of the Revival. I would point at one significant for the changes in the

public attitudes itinerary “To Chicago and Backwards” by Aleko Konstantinov, where the Bulgarian writer and public figure breaks the boundaries of Eurocentrism and in one modern way introduces the image of the foreign in the Bulgarian literature.

On the other hand, at the end of XIX c. it can be observed in Europe a disappointment in the West utilitarianism, a pursuit of unknowable and infinity, of the sacraments of Being, which are inaccessible to mind. They urge philosophers like Nietzsche, Carlyle, Emerson and Bergson to search a synthesis between western and eastern philosophy, in the person of Indian and Chinese philosophy. In this spirit, “The call for Europeanisation” (Igov 1992) which by this moment has been characterized with the accumulating assimilation of the European classics and appears as a basic program incitement of the “modern”, in one following historical stage requires the synchronization of the Bulgarian art movements with the modern European ones. Philosophers like Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and the modern European poets are the new role models (Igov 1992).

Along with the changed social and cultural relations in the Bulgarian society, one historical event provokes the interest in the east culture – the political tension in the Far East at the end of XIX and the beginning of XX century and the Russian – Japanese war (1904 – 1905). The war conflicts between Russia and China and the Russian-Japanese military operations resonate deeply in Bulgaria. The research traces the news, the informational notes and comments in the periodic issues, most active amongst which are “Bulgarian gatherings” (1894 – 1915) and “Travel notes” (1899 – 1905) periodicals.

On the pages of “Bulgarian gatherings” magazine had been published the article of Stefan Bobchev “Bulgaria in the Far East” which documents the first Bulgarian contacts with China at the time of Russian – Japanese war 1904 – 1905 (Bobchev 1904). The article analyzes the attitudes in the Bulgarian society and clarifies the contribution of the Bulgarians to the Russian-Japanese war. Actions for the collecting of funds, voluntary donations, balls and concerts had been organized. The Bulgarian Musicians’ Association organizes symphonic concert in favour of the hurt Russians; Sultana Petrova – the wife of the minister of war general Racho Petrov is the chairman of the Lady’s Committee, whose purpose is the collecting of financial aids for the equipment of a military hospital in Mandzhuria. There also take part other ladies from the high

society, the wives of famous Bulgarian politicians. At the end of June 1904 Bulgarian doctors and nurses arrive in the town of Gunzhulin, east from Harbin, where they establish a hospital that functions until 10.11.1905. Dr. Dimitar Kiranov is the leader of the sanitary mission.

Of interest are Dr. Kiranov's impressions on the war in the East, which he represents at two public lectures delivered on 13.11.1905 and on 2.02.1906 and published in 1906 in the periodical "Bulgarian physician" under the article "Over my mission in the Far East" (Kiranov 1906; Kiranov 1908; Brankova 2004). Although this is not their basic thematic, Dr. Kiranov's memories are essentially the first real contact of the Bulgarians with China.

In this spirit are most of the publicistic and fiction materials in the Bulgarian periodical press. The periodical "Chronicles" traces out in details the chronology of the events around the Civil War in China, the Boxer Rebellion, and the interference of Russia, United Kingdom and Japan in the internal affairs of China until the Russian – Japanese conflict had come to a head ("Chronicles" 1900, pp. 6, 14–18, 20, 23, 24).

These extracts of the chronology of the civil conflict in China show that the media as a barometer of the public opinion is strongly influenced of the Europe's participation (incl. Russia) in it, and of the perception of Europe as a symbol of civilization, dominating over "the Barbarian status" which the Far East has. The Chinese boxers are identified only with violence and brutality oriented towards all that Europe represents. The internal civil conflict is reduced to the level of opposing the traditional European. In the outcome of the military operation the mission of the Allied forces, essentially the aggressors' one, identifies nearly with salvation of the civilization and humanism. In this situation Bulgaria on its part self-identifies as a part of the cultural European world, and the colonialism appears to be an adequate matrix for fixing the relations between nations in the world. Such a position connects to the concept of progress and modernization that spread among the Bulgarian society after the Liberation – economic and cultural upward trend in the country demands mastering of new products, ideas, technologies – process, which is associated with the image of the advanced European countries and is understood as a positivism and enthusiasm.

The rest of the publications, concerning life in China – travel notes, journalistic and scientific articles also follow similar tendency. The strategy

of its selection (since the predominant part of them are translations) – reveals striving for self-identification in front of other societies. The relations East / West are reduced to modernity, supremacy and even power. The elements of this opposition may change in the direction of individuality and creativeness (West) against the retrogression and primitiveness (East), but they may as well reveal as mechanicalness, coldness (West) against the traditional character and the authenticity (of the East).

Although most of the published texts pretend to be documentary and objective, I would like to say, that they still have the character of travel notes, popular article or use epistolary elements, and they frankly expose tendentiousness (“Enlightenment” 1904).

In the end of XIX and the beginning of XX c. the Bulgarians build their country, following the models and standards created in another place, and the Russian culture and philosophy are one of them.

The disputes about the way of re-creating these models on the local basis continue to be a question of day. The Bulgarian politicians, public and cultural figures can either identify their point of view with some of the variants of the West or Russia, or to keep a certain distance and be liminary. The western discourse is not always apologetic. Travel notes and scientific articles in the Bulgarian periodicals – result of the growing interest for the East, follow their own “moral geography”, based upon the principle of the opposition East / West. Thus, the travel notes “The education in China (Notes of a traveller)” (Blossom 1897) the Chinese education is appraised as a moral one, in spite of its differences in the opinion of the Europeans.

The analysis of the Chinese criminal law – “In the Far East. The Chinese criminal law“ (Chronicles 1900) done by an unknown author over the Kozlov’s “China. Civil and criminal law”, reveals humanity and supremacy over the western laws in some of its aspects: “The Chinese criminal law distinguishes abettors and main originators from the other accessories. The Law extenuates the guilty in circumstance of voluntary confessions, exonerates under aged from penalty etc.” (Chronicles 1900, p. 21, p. 421).

The problems of the Eastern communities and cultures are analyzed by the Bulgarian authors with frustration and dramatism, and become a part of the great society dispute about the further progress of the free Bulgarian country. In the sphere of politics and economics they follow the

early imposed civilizational conventions, concerning the enlightenment concepts of progress. These concepts are imposed together with the notion of the supremacy of all European, and the “Barbarian status” and backwardness of the Bulgarians. Such a position towards the East is a mark of resistance against possible identification with it, as a world of retrogression, primitiveness, and is a result of the national complexes of backwardness and underdevelopment that become stable, and are stereotyped image of all that Bulgaria represents during the 90s of XIX c.

This tendency appears to stay during the following decades – as late as the First World War. The analyses and the comments of the political events in China in periodical “Modern Thought” show a trend of placing all that happens in China in an outline, known by Europe, or to be explained according to the gaining popularity historical and materialistic Marxist concept.

In the years from the beginning of XX c. until The First World War the Bulgarian intelligentsia, although struggling with the historic circumstances, is gripped by faith in progress, future and national prosperity. This is time of optimism and vitality, irrepressible interest for the world of foreign cultures, and at the same time, of self-absorption and outburst of intellectual energy. The fast change in the horizons resulted in penetration of very different aesthetic, political and societal ideas. “The most important principle” that guides art and literature during this period, according to the researcher of the Balkan’s cultural processes Liliya Kirova (Kirova 1999) is “the change itself”. The ‘Alien’ – despite of its origins – is understood mostly in the light of the European stereotypes, but “Eastern question” in its different aspects provokes the construction of a new hierarchy of moral values in the aesthetic and conceptual orientation of the society.

With its journalistic positions and strategic orientations the Bulgarian periodic press involves in the sphere of public talking on the political cataclysms in the Far East (XIX – XX c.) towards particular cultural categories like ‘Native’ and ‘Alien’, Aggression and Culture. The linguistic strategies of the texts in the Bulgarian press follow the rhetoric of the elevated Romantic metaphors or positivistic terms, which after all come down to “progress”, “mind”, “freedom”. The context in which these terms are used, demonstrates the broken relationship between civilization and culture. In the event, the solidity (unity) of the concept of “enlightenment” on the pages of the periodicals “Bulgarian gathering” and “Chronicles”

disintegrates on the bound of XIX c. On one hand, the concept continues to function by tradition, as a synonym of “erudition” – a heritage of the Revival period, when the enlightenment (realized, understood as “education” and “science”) is accepted as an instrument for achieving national identity and independence. But on the other hand, as a synonym of the concept of “civilization”, it is rejected from the Bulgarian social figures in the person of the editor of “Chronicles” Konstantin Velichkov, and some of the contributors of the periodicals, marking the crisis in the illusions of the enlightenment about the construction of a new Bulgarian country on the base of the positivistic values.

In the beginning of the XX c. the works of Ivan Andreychin also become prominent. In its essence, they express a new attitude towards “alien” and its rationalization in the cultural progress of the nation – a tendency, in general typical for all new Balkan literatures during that period. In the first volume of his Anthology “Social evenings and Mornings” (Andreychin, 1903) Andreychin reveals Chinese literature using short instructive stories, translated from Russian by himself. The works picked by the translator, tend to folklore story and saying, the central place in which is the allegoric genesis. The turning towards the cultural heritage of the East relates to the aspiration for revival of the art in the sphere of the form, as well as in the sphere of the subject. For the creator – symbolist the literature of the Far East is a source of themes that stands close to the search of the European philosophy which could become a bridge between the traditional and the modern, a road that would eventually lead to binding of collective and individual.

According to the opinion of Geo Milev – a herald of the most vanguard tendency in Bulgaria – the expressionism, the modern art is the art of the man without nationality and belongs to an international spiritual community.

Among the first translations of the Asian lyric poetry published in the beginning of XX c. are the issues of “Koralii” collection that should be object of significant attention: “Blue hours” (1922); “Mirages of the heart” (1936); “The blossom of the peach” (1936); “Distant flute whistles” (1937); “The songs of Yamato” (1937); “Flowering twig” (1938); “Love and wisdom” (1939); “Flowers from Anam” (1939). All of them are deed of the first creator in Bulgarian literature, which dedicates his life to the mission of systematic representation of the lyrical works of the Asian

nations to the Bulgarian reader – the poet Nikola Dzherov. After the comparison that was made between the Dzherov's translations and the original texts, although the use of the language – mediators (French, Russian, German), it was ascertained that the poems are as close as they can be to the essence of the original sources, and at the same time, this does not reflect in a negative way their flavour in Bulgarian. His collections include significant patterns of Chinese poetry, which purpose is to introduce the Bulgarian reader the masterpieces of the Chinese literature.

The Fareast conflicts in the end of the XIX and the beginning of the XX c. appear to be a catalyser of the growing interest in Bulgaria towards China. While the political and social life of the Chinese world is accepted through the normative Utopia of the concept of progress, it appears that the culture in the concept of the Bulgarian intellectuals possesses great potential in the search of understanding in recognition of the priority of the universal values. One can come to the conclusion that in the contradictory spiritual and social-political life in Bulgaria on the bound of two centuries the concept of the culture as the only possible dialogue between civilizations settles permanently. Konstantin Velichkov, Ivan Vazov, Stoyan Mihaylovsky, Pencho Slaveykov – creators and upholders of different aesthetic doctrines, assure us in the idea that the culture gathers in itself countless marks, that it is a great treasure house which keeps everything that had happened, passed and is going to happen.

The end of XIX and the beginning of XX c. in Bulgaria are generally characterized by the literary historians as a period of modernism. The “gathering” of the different aesthetic models leads to interpenetration and compounding of heterogeneous stylistic elements, and to intensive expansion of the contacts which stimulate the appearing of new phenomena.

The interest for the East in the Bulgarian world assumes new characteristic. On the pages of periodical press are published profound analyses of authoritative researchers.

The necessity of consolidation of the technical West and the philosophic East by a “worldwide”, “east-west” philosophy that will bring people close to the supreme values becomes an idea of present interest in the beginning of the century, embraced by a lot of authors of that time. One of them is Nikolay Rainov, a part of which works is closely related to the theme of the present paper (for example, his article “The Magic stories” published in “Zlatorog”, 1926; his fundamental for the Bulgarian science

research “Marbled Gods”, 1941 that in fact is a thorough analysis of the architecture, sculpture, art of painting and applied arts in India, China and Japan which traces out their influence over the European literary styles; his retold Chinese stories). In the Chinese texts Rainov uncovers an unreal fantabulous world, no man’s realm between the present time, the world beyond and that one of dreams; a decadent story about colours, forms, sounds, lights and shadows. It is interesting to mention that the author easily combining mythologems of a horizon that is one of a rather broad period of time and large number of different regions, turning their symbolics into his own literary language, while being lead by the idea of using one uniform symbolics to express all philosophical and religious concepts.

Due to its fantabulous essence the story is a preferred genre of the expressionism. It responses to aspiration not only for overcoming and transforming of the reality, but also for its interest to mythologized demonic figures and extreme psychological states, gothic and grotesque.

At that time the translations of Iliina Petrova and P. Teoharov appeared as well. A significant place in the popularization of the East at that time has the monthly issued periodical “Revival”. It introduces to the Bulgarian readers the writings and the activity of Rabidranath Tagore, Mahatma Ghandi, Lev Tolstoy. Here is the place to point out the three outlined with their non traditional genre form, works of Dimitar Shishmanov that are published during the period of 1936 – 1939 in the periodical “Zlatorog”. The author reveals experiences of a Chinese, named Ku Lin Chou. They are built upon the concealed opposition East / West, in which China is represented as the cradle of civilization and humanity, opposing the aggression of the western countries.

Shishmanov brings up to date a considerable cultural concept of the pre-war years, when the “alien” lives in us like a concealed part of our own identity. The literary archetype that expresses this relation is the figure of the stranger, the spiritual wanderer, which is an alien to one’s self. Approaching the Chinese and in a broader sense the Eastern literature becomes a way to self-knowledge of the person in one’s completeness, as a mystic union of God and man, or as the sub-consciousness and the archetype concepts.

At the end of 1930s the Bulgarian reader is already acquainted with the main lyrical genres in the Classic Chinese poetry through the Anthologies of Nikola Dzhеров and the published works in the periodical

press; he has at least a limited notion about the classic prose works. The translations are still done through mediating languages, because of the lack of well-educated sinologists. According to the concepts of the modernism the Chinese poetry should be studied and examined in line with the necessity of a cultural dialogue in the differences and through them.

The aspiration for rationalization of the dramatic nature of the age, for observing the existence in its historical perspective draws the interest of the translators towards the contemporary Chinese novel. The first volume of the Lin Yutang's novel "Moment in Peking" is published in 1942 followed by the second and the third ones (1943). The translator of them is Neviana Rozeva. One might say that Lin Yutang (1895 – 1976) is the first author which translation is made from the original. Grown up in the family of a Christian pastor, Lin Yutang belongs to two cultures – the Chinese one and the American one, and he set in front of him the task of popularizing the Eastern civilization in the West.

A particular part of the representation of the "Chinese" in the novel of Lin Yutang is the presence of outstanding Chinese poets and painters (Su Dongpo, Lin Chinan, Po Chuyi) which works become structural and representational models of narration.

The poetry of San Xiao, translated by Hristo Radevsky ("Such is our fate", 1934), perfectly matches the trends of the left literature during the 30s and complements the concept of its international orientation, while the novels of Lin Yutang has their analogy in the national development of the novel during that period (called by Georgi Tsanev "assault of the novel"), represented by Yordan Yovkov, K. Petkanov, Stoian Zagorchinov, Fani Popova-Mutafova, Dimitar Dimov, Georgi Karaslavov etc.

The Chinese novel logically matches the surroundings of Bulgarian authors such as Boris Shivachev ("Letters to South America", 1932), Matvei Valev ("Dust after the studs", 1937), the first novel of Dimitar Dimov "First Lieutenant Benz" (1938) – authors that describe distant countries or penetrate into the psychology of foreigners, authors to whom "alien" has its own value as an object of description. Their works mark the appearance of a new aesthetic concept about the alien culture – it is already a representation of an independent, different literary world, which indicates not only the generalness of the humanity, but also its unalterable differences.

During that period the historical and political preconditions for the reorganization that starts in the sphere of literature and culture in Bulgaria

are formed. The premised concepts for the decay of the former literature, the underestimation of the complexity of the process of creation in the critical articles, together with the requirement of “unrevoked heroism, optimistic spirit” determines trends of the literary world, evaluated from the distance of time by Pantelei Zarev. A series of mutual visits of authors (Chinese and Bulgarian) eventuate during that period (San Xiao, Ke Lin, Chen Baichen, Ge Baoquan, Valeri Petrov, Stoiian Velej, Bogomil Nonev etc.). Works like “The birth of the hatred. The unusual journey of Marko Polo” revealing the discovery of China by Europeans, emphasizing upon the aggressive colonial politics of the West towards China throughout the centuries; the travel notes written by Valeri Petrov “A book about China”, in which the emotional and delicate poetic nature of the author enables him to perceive the social psychological atmosphere of the distant country often hidden behind the facts and numbers – parts of the genre of the travel notes. During the same period the following books are also published: “Tsabanche Makai. Chinese stories” (1940) (translation from Esperanto by Gergi Dikovski) includes works of Wang Shinai’an and Yao Shiyin focusing over the straggle against the Japanese aggressors; the novel “The boy with the rickshaw” (1946) (the title of the original work is “Luotuo xiangzi” – “Xiangzi the camel”) written by one of the most profound authors in the Chinese literature Lao She.

The number of the translated works in Bulgaria during that period is approximately 30. The translations for their most part are done through Russian language, i. e. usually preceded by the corresponding issue in The Soviet Union. This to some extent predetermines the thematic selection of the titles.

Apart from the restrictions, imposed by the model of the translated literature in Soviet Union, Russian translations are done by qualified specialists – sinologists and are usually accompanied with written by themselves prefaces.

The interpretations of cultural facts during the Revival are predetermined by the concepts of enlightenment of the writers of the Bulgarian national revival about just social order, based upon common sense and knowledge. The travel notes, published on the pages of the periodical press during the Revival, build to a great extent a romantic image of the East “wrapped” in exoticness and mysteriousness. Restricted during the period of the Turkish oppression in his own world’s frames, the

pre-liberated Bulgarian should have been satisfied by the scarce knowledge about the world, received in the “encapsulated” in the Turkish empire.

During the period of Revival the Bulgarians rediscover the variety of distant and close countries and the commensurability with the alien culture is already a way of national identification. The process of communication with all “alien” is oriented unquestionably towards reaching the achievements of the European culture. Nevertheless, the presence of interest for Eastern cultures marks the affiliation, the integration of the Bulgarian culture with the global cultural community, which by no means is a homogeneous one. In the limelight is the aspiration for catching the dialectics of the universal and the unique in the global historical cultural process, which questions the dominant Eurocentric model. In most cases, the global conceptions of the world civilization of the writers of the Bulgarian national revival (as it is with Rakovsky) appear to be only a way for expressing of definite political concepts and respond the main purpose of Bulgarian Revival – to achieve national and spiritual independence.

The process of globalization in XXI century, in its turn, focuses on the concept of the philosophic and cultural integrity, which essence is the entirety of the interpenetrating world in front of which often stands the necessity of cultural pluralism for solving the universal problems of the present days. The contemporary processes of globalization and internationalization put the cultural concepts and symbols of all centuries and nations in the situation of boundless between-cultural dialogue – polylogue. Immersed in the course of psychological, ontological understanding of different ethnic groups and nationalities, the present paper gives its unostentatious contribution in rationalization of basic trends in the Bulgarian culture, analyzing the confrontation between the ‘Native’ and the ‘Alien’ in the process of realization of our own identity.

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