

RLMSEE-2020**The Russian Language in Modern Scientific and Educational Environment****"CHINESE TEXT" IN THE POETRY OF M. TSVETAEVA AND V. MAYAKOVSKY**

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Abstract

The article examines the "Chinese text" in the poetry of M. Tsvetaeva and V. Mayakovsky. Certain expressions referring to China in M. Tsvetaeva's poems reflect the protagonist's state of mind, her attitude to the world. The intertextuality of M. Tsvetaeva's poem-fairy tale and N. Gumilyov's poem is hypothesized. The image of a porcelain (crystal) bell-heart is the leitmotif in the works of many contemporaries. The article considers the appeal to the Chinese material things in the works of M. Tsvetaeva. The space-time theme of otherness coexists with the material earthly realities of Russia and China. The "Chinese text" in V. Mayakovsky's poetry appears when the poet refers to household names (gaoliang, rice), historical realities of the time (people from Mukden, Manchurians, Mandarin), the proper names of statesmen (Chang Tso-ling – Zhang Zuolin, Wu Peifu), neologisms (dragonja, raskitaennyj, chantsolinglia and others). The author's reasoning and conclusions are based on the critical researches and comparison of two cultures. The analysis of M. Tsvetaeva and V. Mayakovsky poetic works is conducted in a semantic aspect using the search for text parallels. The study of the Chinese aesthetics in the poetry of M. Tsvetaeva allows seeing the world view of the Silver Age culture from the other side.

Keywords: Aesthetics, "Chinese text", poetry of the Silver Age, the image of China, M. Tsvetaeva, V. Mayakovsky



1. Introduction

The "Chinese text" of Russian poetry takes an important place among the already studied "texts" of other cultures. It is poorly studied not only because of the complexity of interpretation, but also of the cultural and historical reasons for the interaction of the two countries.

- Researchers of Tsvetaeva's creativity found echoes of different cultures in her poetry: German (Chigirin), Italian (Komolova, Dokukina, Malova, Bystrova), Iranian (Shahriari) and others. However, the question concerning links between Tsvetaeva and Chinese culture is still studied insufficiently. Nowadays article by Voitekhovich "Tsvetaeva and China", where he writes: «The topic of Tsvetaev and China has not yet been independently discussed» (Voitekhovich, 2018, p. 201) is almost the only thorough and deep research. At the same time, the theme of China in Tsvetaeva's poetry is indicated quite clearly and, undoubtedly, requires close attention.
- The image of the East appears in Mayakovsky's poetry already in 1912 in the poem "Night" and goes as the leitmotif through all his works. The poet perceived himself as belonging to the East:

There are more of us

Europeans.

For twenty – one hundred.

The Earth here is

bigger than in the West,

But we are *Asia*,

we are

East.

The paw

On the European throat.

(Mayakovsky, 1928, p. 79)

The image of China is also presented in his poetry variably: household names (gaoliang), proper names of statesmen (Chang Tso-ling – Zhang Zuolin, Wu Peifu), geographical names (Tibet), neologisms ("dragonja", "raskitaennyj", «chantsolinglia", etc.).

2. Problem Statement

- The reception of China in Tsvetaeva's poetry shows a rich palette of feelings. Built through the detail, the author's psychological state acquires an important feature for the interpretation of a complex poetic text. Some expressions, one way or another ascending to the image of China, reflect the protagonist's state of mind.
- The presence of the "Chinese" layer of meanings in the works of Mayakovsky, and unexpected combinations of semantic constructions indicate the poet's deep knowledge of the Chinese culture. However, it is necessary to state the presence of certain, emphatically trivial ideas

about China, reflecting the historical reality of Russian culture at the beginning of the twentieth century.

3. Research Questions

- How was the "Chinese text" built in the poetry of Tsvetaeva and Mayakovsky?
- What caused the development of the theme of China in the poetry of Tsvetaeva and Mayakovsky?

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this article was to study the features of the "Chinese text" in the poetry of Tsvetaeva and Mayakovsky.

5. Research Methods

The methodology of literary research in this work is complex. While considering poetic works and in order to establish the meanings of poetic vocabulary, there were applied hermeneutic approach, comparative historical method (consideration of the "Chinese text" in the works of Tsvetaeva and Mayakovsky with regard to a broad historical and literary background), structural semiotic method (comparison of the facts of semantics going back to the historical, cultural and other Chinese realities). During the selection of the analyzed material there was used the method of continuous sampling, that made it possible to identify and describe the reception of China in the studied texts by Tsvetaeva and Mayakovsky.

6. Findings

6.1. The disclosure of "Chinese text" in the poetry of Tsvetaeva gave the following results.

- In November 1915 Tsvetaeva created the poem "Hell, my ardent sisters, be assured..." (Tsvetaeva, 1990, pp. 81-82). Here the image of China appeared only in the expression "the finest Chinese silks", which is contextually synonymous with idleness, bliss, luxury and, unfortunately, hell. The poem was created based on the biblical images of hell, dancers and pipes of Pan, *garden of Eden* and dedicated to the topic of unaccountably wasted human life, its lost "morning". The phrase "The world was ours, each one of us a queen" explains the poem's denouement: those who were queens of the world (and had the finest Chinese silks to wear), pleasing the world, and not God, ended up in hell.
- In Tsvetaeva's poem-fairy tale "The Tsar Maiden..." (1920), the image of a "bell-heart" becomes a "Chinese attribute". It can be assumed that it was inspired by Gumilyov's poem "I believed, I thought..." (1911). The image of the "bell-heart" is so original that it is difficult to discuss random coincidences when it is repeated.

Let's note the similarity of the poetic vocabulary of the two works:

Chinese <science>, heart, crystal will clink on the walls – by Tsvetaeva;
in yellow China, heart, a porcelain bell is affably singing – by Gumilyov.

The semantics of "two" hearts is peculiar. Gumilyov's poem tells about the heart that is "free of pain, didn't cry", it became light and empty, singing as "porcelain bell". The definition of "Chinese" at the same time means the complexity of love "science" (the opposition of simplicity – complexity is resolved through the opposition of children's science – Chinese), that unexpectedly appears in the context of a "crystal", wide and loud (too audible) beating heart.

The image of a porcelain (in Tsvetaeva's poem – crystal) bell-heart conveys all the drama of the poet's mindset. Acquiring movement, response, it becomes a kind of leitmotif in the works of many contemporaries, creating an atmosphere of time: «So he left like one of the last chapters of the book about what happened: how the grass grew, how people dreamed about bells in yellow China, about a tall palm tree in an oasis, about wise Hussein - about everything that promised to bring back to the road...» (Kuzmina-Karavaeva, 2012, p. 67).

- The appeal to the Chinese material things in the works of Tsvetaeva is undoubtedly inspired by biographical and real facts. In the poem by Tsvetaeva "Sit in the chair, full of laziness ..." (1918) there is an image of the "Chinese ring". In the comments to the poem written by Anna Sahakyan and Lev Mnukhin it is stated: "Tsvetaeva gave a silver Chinese ring to Zavadsky. And she also said that Zavadsky's ring is smaller – his ring is from a Chinese woman, and hers is «from a Chinese man, a Chinese sage» (Tsvetaeva, 1994a, p. 396). Tsvetaeva had one more "Chinese" ring from jade. She mentions it in a letter dated December 8, 1940: "Dear Olga Alekseevna, do you want to change? I desperately need a full Derzhavin, - if you want my jade ring (beetle) in return, it is a lucky charm and contains all the wisdom of China <...> I would not offer it to you if you loved it very much, and I love it very much» (Belkina, 1992, p. 323). In the short story "The Chinese" (1934) Tsvetaeva calls "Chinese" rings, "many rings" "sworn": "definitely sworn rings didn't bring any luck, one especially bad day I put them off, because even if they are not (Tsvetaeva's italics) sworn, - God knows them, almost-compatriots - maybe what is good for Chinese is bad for Russian?" (Tsvetaeva, 1994b, p. 210). Tsvetaeva's story "The Chinese" (1934), replete with everyday details of China, is often mentioned by the poet in his letters: "I really want you to read my "Chinese" (Tsvetaeva, 1991, p. 90).
- China as a geographical and historical reality, where one can disappear, hide, is mentioned in the poem by Tsvetaeva "The Ratcatcher" (1925). A similar space and time theme, appeared from the idea of overcoming the geographic terrestrial spaces and, broader, the worlds, as it is known, was developed by Tsvetaeva in the "The Poem of Air". The abundance of proper names, the bravery of historical projections and their "incompatibility" in the same semantic field of the poem (from the image of Columbus to Goethe) is nothing more than the poet's "answer" to the given idea: the ascent of the soul, that is an act taking place outside a specific geographical locus ("Into full obscurity / Of the time and place"), therefore the "mixing" of times, names and places, reference to different countries are natural.

Gasparov identifies to the poet's perception of the East "as pure spirituality", and notes the renunciation of feelings as a state close to ascetic: «"Disdainful of feelings" – initially it seems that they

mean feelings-emotions ("Above the world's husbands and wives", then – that feelings-sensations ("Relinquishing – even chimes"); maybe this is a mutual continuation: first, renunciation of feelings-emotions, purification to monasticism, and then – from feelings, sensations, even further» (Gasparov, 1997, c. 176). However, in addition to the "eastern" word *fellah*, meaning a peasant farmer in Arab countries (Ozhegov & Shvedova, 1994, p. 838), no less valuable for understanding the poet's attitude to spirituality is the geographical locus – *Optina Pustyn*. The above mentioned fragment of the poem may contain historical realities. Optina Pustyn is a famous monastery, ruined, like many monasteries in the 20s of the 20th century ("Relinquishing – even chimes"), and a necessary image in the poem to describe the protagonist's state of mind.

In other words, the above mentioned fragment of the poem contains the following meanings:

- - the soul is ravaged like Optina Pustyn;
- - the soul is poor like an Arab peasant (*fellah*).

The expression "A soul without feelings / state" can go back to the eastern motives of nothingness, oblivion, death: «Real people of antiquity did not know what it means to enjoy life and turn away from death, they were not proud of the birth and did not resist leaving the world. Detached they came, detached they left, not looking for the beginning, not rushing the thought to the end <...> the mind of these people is immersed into oblivion» (Malyavin, 1985, p. 14).

Tsvetaeva's expression "disdainful of feelings" is not asceticism, not a victory over passions, but their embrace: «At the hour / Of death veins thus quiver, / Extended beyond all our / Capacity». Dzutseva called this state of mind "Tsvetaev's poetic breakthrough – a "breakthrough" into new zones of artistic life" (Dzutseva, 1998, p. 156). There is depicted the illusion of the soul ascent in the space where there is neither peace nor air. The passions, like a "lurking dragon" (Porol, 2019b, p. 699), wait for their time and collapse with unbelievable force, the duel ends in defeat and madness ("and it would just come unhinged"). It can be assumed that the above lines convey a feature of Chinese philosophy, which K. Balmont called "plexus of all passions in a strict knot" ("The Great Nothing", 1900).

The ascent of the soul, involuntary resistance to the "new earth – / Air", a new spiritual path through the passage of the spheres, apparently, are impossible for a poet without referring to earthly countries. Gasparov noted the poet's "stylistic device": the implementation of the instrumental case "through space", "as if – it's through / Russian rye, through ripened rice - / China – sown by you, and absorbed from birth, we move", "resistance from the [atmo] sphere is compared with the resistance of the stems going through rye or rice..." (Gasparov, 1997, p. 178). Commenting on the poem by Tsvetaeva, the researcher noted that this form of the instrumental case is repeated in the poem at least 20 times.

It can be assumed that the poetic lines: "Since resistance from the sphere / Feels as if – it's through / Russian rye, through ripened rice – / China – sown by you!" – are a complex, first of all, semantic construction, meaning the transition of a person or object to another state (the path of otherness) or another earthly space through "rye" and through "rice". In other words, the otherness, adjacent to the material earthly realities of such different countries (Russia and China), ceases to be the otherness, growing into some terrible spiritual reality. "Chinese theme" continues to sound in the V fragment of the poem: the description of free ascent-sliding ("I'm – slick as fresh-peeled / Bast, or else an onion"). The pagoda expresses specific "exoticism", as it is undoubtedly belongs to the traditional "signs" of China.

The poet describes a pagoda with bells-bells (pagoda-music) suspended from it, which in Chinese are referred to as 铃铛 (ling dang) and traditional Chinese lanterns 灯笼 (deng long). Bells (jingles) are not only an aesthetic necessity, they are also used to drive away birds and protect flowers and plants, for example, in the courtyard of a temple (Buddhist) or in a palace (pagoda-veil) (Porol, 2019a, p. 154).

6.2. Based on the results of studying the poetic texts of Mayakovsky, the following data were obtained, which most clearly characterize the "Chinese text" in his poetry:

- One of the first mentions of China in Mayakovsky's poetry is found in the poem "Newspaper Day" (1923), which mentions the name "Zhang Zuo-ling" - Zhang Zuolin (1875-1928), Chinese and Manchurian military, statesman and politician. Participated in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905. on the side of Japan. During the Xinhai Revolution, he helped the governor suppress the revolutionary movements in Manchuria, received the rank of lieutenant general. In 1918, he took the post of inspector general of the three eastern provinces, which consolidated his power over all of Manchuria. Created one of the most powerful armies in China. Mentioned in the poem by gaoliang is a plant that is a species of sorghum. The poet probably means 高粱醋 (gāoliang cù) – sorghum vinegar, colloquially called gaoliang, or 高粱酒 (gāoliáng jiǔ) – gaoliang wine.
- China in the poetry of Mayakovsky is often associated with images of uprisings, revolutions ("About the 26th", 1924). The "program" text of this kind was the poem "Get your hands off China!" (1924).
- At the beginning of Mayakovsky's poem "Get your hands off China!" the phrase "Roar, worker..." involuntarily refers the reader to the play by Tretyakov "Roar, China!", Written on March 20, 1924 and staged in Moscow by Meyerhold. Let's designate vocabulary consciously oriented towards China: "kuli" and "rickshaws". "Kýli" 苦力 (kǔlì) – "laborer", "porter": the Chinese character 苦 (kǔ) translates as "bitter", "painful", and the hieroglyph 力 (lì) means "strength" – this is how they called the inhabitants of eastern countries, laborers carrying unthinkable burdens. In the dictionary of Ozhegova and Shvedova gives the following definition to the concept of "rickshaw": «In the countries of Southeast Asia: a man who, harnessed to a light two-wheeled cart, jogging carries riders, loads, as well as such a cart itself" (Ozhegov & Shvedova, 1994, p. 668).

The image of China as an expression of an emotional state is indicated in Mayakovsky's poem "Strictly Forbidden" (1926), where the image of a caddy is encountered. Caddy – 茶叶罐 (cháyèguàn), a vessel for storing tea. What kind of mood can be from the smell of Chinese tea can be suggested when referring to I. Bunin's story "Dreams of Chang" (1916), where the theme of China is one of the leading: «Chang <...> made out with half-closed eyes a semi-dark corridor cluttered with mat bales of tea – and *he was naughty, drunk from nausea, heat and strong tea smell ...*» (our italics).

- The poem by Mayakovsky "Moscow China" (1926) deserves special attention, conveying the atmosphere of modernity surrounding the poet. The poem uses a layer of meanings,

deliberately oriented towards China: *Zhang Zolin, Wu Peifu, Sui da Fui, rice, Mukden people, Manchurians, Mandarin.*

Sui da Fuy – Mayakovsky's neologism, onomatopoeia of "incomprehensible" Chinese culture. A similar onomatopoeia, characterized by a comic focus, was also found in Tolstoy in the poem "Sits under a canopy ..." (1869), in which the author invented his own Chinese name: *Tsu-Kin-Tsyn*.

An ironic subtext is endowed with the expression: "sort it out, / from efforts in soap", as the poet describes a Chinese laundry ("What brings them / to blue / and starches ..."), which were at that time in Moscow a large number after the flow of Chinese migrants those who left their homeland after the Ihetuan uprising that broke out in China in 1899, and later there were two more flows of migration: after the Russo-Japanese and during the First World War. The realism of the migratory flavor is reflected by V. Mayakovsky in his appeal to the lexeme "shibaka", which goes back to the Russian-Chinese pidgin and means "very much" ("very").

Let us turn to the historical realities that formed the basis of the poem "Moscow China" (1926). Let us not forget that Mayakovsky's poem begins with the use of the Chinese proper name Zhang Zolin, Mukden and Manchurians are also mentioned.

It is known that during the Civil War, most of the Russian emigrants in China were Russian military, former participants in anti-Bolshevik movements, and that the presence of the name Zhang Zuolin in the context of these events was obvious: «Until the early 1930s, Mukden, the capital of Manchuria, was the fourth largest Chinese city in terms of the number of Russian soldiers living here after Harbin, Shanghai and Tianjin. Until the early 1920s, only a few dozen Russian citizens lived in Mukden, the events of Marshal Zhang Zuolin played a decisive role in increasing the Russian population of Mukden. By 1928, about 2 thousand emigrants already lived in Mukden, more than half of whom in the past were soldiers and officers of the White Army» (Smirnov, 2019, pp. 55-60).

The Chinese word "mandarin" is the naming of a Chinese official in imperial China: "I am / although / is not a mandarin at all, / but I shy away / from their mowing". The lines "This life / sailed away in a dream" involuntarily refers to the widespread and, I must say, correct understanding of the Chinese perception of reality, according to their traditional foundations: life is a dream, oblivion. This idea became central to the creation of the microcycle "Great Nothing" by Balmont, the poem "I believed, I thought ..." by Gumilyov and a number of other works.

Mayakovsky's poem "Moscow China" depicts a Chinese labor day, which for the Chinese is "long" not only in Russia during the time of Mayakovsky, but to this day is a common condition of the nation's life. The number of Chinese workers, the multitude of their hands, is conveyed by the phrase: "Iron here / iron there". The ironic text of the poem "Moscow China" is endowed with a deep meaning of the constants of Chinese culture.

7. Conclusion

7.1. The poet's thirst for life, the poet's gravitation towards the concrete world formed in the poetry of Tsvetaeva the aesthetics of the image of China concretely material ("rice", "Chinese silk", "Chinese ring", "Chinese state", etc.), which could not be found in the poetry of the Symbolists, but it is possible - among the Acmeists. For example, in Gumilyov's poem: "A quiet girl in a dress of red silk, / Where

wasps, flowers and dragons are embroidered with gold..." ("I believed, I thought...", 1911); O. Mandelstama: "They still walk in the cities of the Union / From moth, clawed fabrics / Chinese dresses and blouses" ("We are also full of life to the highest degree...", 1935), "... Where are pure and honest Chinese / Grab balls of dough with sticks, / They play narrow sliced cards / And they drink vodka like swallows from Yang Tzu (" I am still far from the patriarch... ", 1931).

Has the theme of China been revealed in Tsvetaeva's poetry in a multifaceted manner, including both philosophy and the history of China? - a question requiring further research. But the paradox (or regularity?) Lies in the fact that for Russian poets and writers (Tolstoy, Gumilev, Pilnyak, etc.), this topic often became fateful, preventing them from continuing their life path.

7.2. The image of China in Mayakovsky's poetry has the following semantic content: the poet's appeal to household names (gaoliang, rice); bringing historical realities of time (Mukden, Manchu, Mandarin); use of the proper names of statesmen (Zhang Zuo-ling – Zhang Zuolin, Wu Peifu); the use of geographical names (Tibet); the creation of neologisms by the poet ("dragonja", "raskitaennyj», «chantsolinglia" and others).

The "Chinese text" in the poetry of Mayakovsky expresses not only the emotional state of the poet, but also his social views.

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