

Images of the Russian Literary Ethnography of Manchuria in the First Half of the 20-th Century

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Abstract.

The images of Russian literary ethnography of Manchuria in the first half of the 20-th century reflect the reception of foreign cultures by ethnographic writers (N.A. Baykov, P.V. Shkurkin, V. Mart, M.V. Shcherbakov, B.M. Yulsky), their self-reception, as well as perception of unique frontier conditions, when a meeting of the most diverse peoples and cultures took place in difficult political, sociocultural, and ethnocultural circumstances. The main feature of Russian literary ethnography of Manchuria in the first half of the 20-th century is the erosion of ethnic oppositions when creating mental images of foreign culture. This circumstance is due to the results of deep ethnographic and anthropological studies of Russian scholars in these territories, as well as the experience of close everyday inter-ethnic contacts.

Key words: Manchuria, Russia, China, Far Eastern frontier, literary ethnography, literary mental image.

The geographical discoveries in the second half of the 19-th century, foreign policy interests of the Russian Empire, and gradual orientation of Russian ethnography beyond Russia, undoubtedly contributed to the fact that by the beginning of the 20-th century the Far Eastern countries and the nations inhabiting them began to open up to the consciousness of the Russian people. The Sino-Russian Treaty (1896) on the construction of the Chinese Eastern Railway gave new opportunities for the development of interethnic contacts on the territory of Northern Manchuria.

“Manchuria is a *wild country, covered in dense forests*. The famous ginseng grows here, tigers are found and grass (ula) is extracted for shoes” – that is what the Russian pre-revolutionary textbooks wrote about these places. Nikolai Baykov, renowned for his naturalist writing, reflected on his experience of knowing Manchuria at the beginning of the 20-th century: “There was its own *special life*, and preserved *ancient life*, very distant and alien to modern culture and civilization. The “*Taiga Law*” dominated here, cruel from the point of view of philistine morale, but rational and inevitable. The lord here was not a man, but a wild beast, to which all living beings were subordinate, with no exception for the man”¹⁾. In front of us is the way the writer-naturalist and the writer-ethnographer perceive that vast marginal space in which different ethnic groups, cultures, religions have crossed over the course of millennia – the territory of the Far Eastern frontier.

Frontier means “border”. The frontier theory was developed in the beginning of the 20-th century by F.J. Turner as “a meeting of savagery and civilization”²⁾. Frontier is a term synonymous to the Russian concept of “porubehje”³⁾, which defines the contact zone between countries, peoples or cultures. The term “Far Eastern frontier” refers to the contact zone in the Asia-Pacific region. In this contact zone, in the atmosphere of close interethnic interaction, the fates of the Russian, Chinese, Tungus-Manchu, Japanese, and Korean populations have connected since the mid-19th century; the psychological, linguistic, and cultural boundaries of ethnic compatibility were formed.

In the “code” of the “Taiga Law” recorded by Nikolai Baykov, social, moral, ethical, ethnic differences are completely erased. Similar spiritual processes taking place on the territory of the Far Eastern lands in the 19-th century were recorded by the Russian scholars (N. Sverbeev, G. Permikin, V.P. Vasiliev, Gerstfeld, and others). First of all, we are talking about religious syncretism, when shamanism, mantics, fishing and healing magic of the indigenous population (Evenks, Udege, Ulchi) gradually

1) Baykov N.A. Tribute to the Great Van // *Australiada*. 2003. No. 34. P. 43–45.

2) Turner F.J. *The frontier in American history*. N.Y., 1962.

3) Zabiako A.P. Porubehje (Frontier) // *Russia and China at the Far Eastern Borders. Russians and Chinese: Regional Problems of Ethnocultural Interaction: Collection of materials of an international scientific and practical conference*. Vol. 9. Blagoveshchensk: Amur State University, 2010. Pp. 5–11; Zabiako A.P. Porubehje (Frontier) as a Given of Human Existence // *Questions of philosophy*. 2016. No. 11. P. 36–56.

integrated into the Orthodox religiosity of the new settlers: Chinese soldiers adopted religious customs of the Tungus-Manchu, celebrated rituals in honor of the “mountain spirit”, and the spiritual culture of the Chinese was widely spread among the indigenous peoples of the Amur⁴⁾. Analyzing, for example, the religious practice of the daurs, Gerstfeld saw “a mixture of Confucian and Lamaist customs with Tunguska shamanism⁵⁾”.

At the beginning of the 20-th century scientists who later became writers – P.V. Shkurkin, N.A. Baykov, V.K. Arseniev – plunged into the atmosphere of frontier mentality. In the 1920-s, M. Prishvin felt this atmosphere, traveling along already Soviet Primorye. Prishvin was very surprised by the Russian Vladivostok citizens, who (in his opinion) did not understand anything in the local “rhythm of nature”, their trust in Chinese signs: “This is the way it happened in difficult cases, many of them say: – We should ask the Chinese⁶⁾”.

Prishvin determined the nature of “popular mysticism” of Primorye residents by their trust in *a taiga man* (a ginseng seeker, hunter, and catcher⁷⁾). A taiga man and his images are a special world of religious signs and beliefs, combining the diverse traditions of the peoples of the Far Eastern frontier.

Valery Yankovsky, the offspring of the famous dynasty of Far Eastern fishermen, an Orthodox Christian, who grew up side by side with the Chinese and Koreans, also did not question the effectiveness of folk mythological representations⁸⁾. He described the case when one “old Korean acquaintance” came to his uncle during the construction of his estate, “peered at the surrounding hills and glens for a long time, shook his head. He said that the house would stand on the neck of a mountain spirit, and that one would not tolerate resentment, the owner would not live long”. Uncle

4) Sverbeev N. Description of the Expedition of the Governor General of Eastern Siberia in 1854 on the Amur River // Notes of the Siberian Department of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society, SPb., 1857. Book 3. P. 41, 67.

5) Gerstfeld. About Coastal Inhabitants of the Amur River // Bulletin of the IRGS. SPb., 1857. Book 4. Part XII. P. 99, 321, 322.

6) Prishvin M.M. Far East (Travel Journal, 1931) // Rubezh. Pacific Almanac, 2006. No. 6 (868). P. 201–281.

7) Prishvin M.M. Far East (Travel Journal, 1931). Op. cit. P. 222.

8) About the Yankovsky Family: Yankovsky Yu., Yankovsky V. Nenuni. Far Eastern Odyssey. Vladivostok, 2007.

Yang, who did not attach any importance to those words, soon died in the prime of his life. V. Yankovsky summed up: “the predictions of the old Korean man <...> came true⁹⁾”. He also referred to the notes of his cousin, who miraculously escaped at the “Monster Lake” – the habitat of mysterious theomorphic reptiles, terrifying the local Koreans. Neither the cousin nor Yankovsky doubted the reliability of the monsters existence.

Severe survival conditions in these parts predetermined the sacralization of the spatial and temporal coordinates of the Manchu taiga. “Taiga people” and involuntarily travelers, hunters, and new settlers there are driven by feelings and needs that erase ethnic identity. The Far Eastern and Manchu taiga not only daily confirmed centuries-old plots of taiga mythology, but also gave rise to new religious experiences. Different faith systems and categories of holiness clash here. Despite the difference in linguistic-religious nominations, ideas about *the holy (sacred), sacred space, sacred time, taboo*, and etc. exist in this syncretic picture of the world, one way or another.

Sacred are representations of sacred entities (Heaven as a sacred reality, the spirits of forests, mountains, ponds, etc.). Taiga in the minds of taiga inhabitants is *a sacred space* with all the ensuing specifics of *religious phenomena*. *The rational* beginning, determined by the need for survival (“taiga letter”) is inseparable from *the irrational* in the mind of a taiga resident: the horror of meeting a predator – not just a ferocious boar, a bloodthirsty bear, but with the Lord of the Mountains, the Lord of the Forest – a bear, a tiger: constant dependence on the case, fear of breaking *a taboo* – the unwritten “Law of the Taiga”.

Let us start with the *tiger*, the zoomorphic emanation of the *Forest and Mountains Spirit* in Manchu and Chinese, and then, also in the picture of the world of the Russian emigrant. “Wang” and “De” (“Tsar” and “The Great”) are polysemantic hieroglyphs, which are bred by the nature on the forehead of a Far Eastern predator. “Great Wang”, “Master of the Taiga”, “Lord of the Taiga”, “Akbar”, “Seven stripes on the back”, “Amba” and other allegorical names of this magnificent representative of the genus feline are strongly recommended by different peoples for use instead of its

9) Yankovsky V.Yu. Mikhail Grigorievich Shevelev and His Descendants (from the 19th century to the present day) // Rubezh. Pacific Almanac, 2004. No. 5 (867). P. 298–316.

direct name. To date, for safety reasons, taiga inhabitants are highly discouraged from using an image of the tiger.

To the “Great Wang” – “Lord of the Forest and Mountains” – taiga idols were erected and prayers for ginseng hunters were served. The prayer is approximately as follows: “Great spirit, do not go away! I came here with a pure heart, freed from sins and evil thoughts! Do not leave!”¹⁰⁾ *Ginseng* is a dendromorphic embodiment of the Spirit of the Forest and Mountains. “The Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, Mongols, Tungus, Indo-Chinese and Turkestans have their own cycle of legends and tales of ginseng, and each of these peoples gives them its own national imprint and physiology”¹¹⁾, – N.A. Baikov wrote. After the discovery of virgin expanses of the Far East and its nature, ginseng gains unusual popularity and enters the mass consciousness not only as a panacea, but also as a truly *wonderful* plant: “Previously, there were few true medicines, the culture of the people was low. Therefore, people believed in alternative medicines, although they did not always help. In previous years – the beginning of the 20th century – they talked a lot and wrote about ginseng. Miracle root, heals, rejuvenates, even resurrects; glows at night, brings happiness, phosphoresces, and other most colorful legends went about ginseng”¹²⁾. M. Prishvin thought in his diary: “If ginseng had no healing properties and acted only according to people’s faith, then all the same worship of this herb by the unanimous multimillion people for thousands of years and at the same time the ability of this herb to live for many centuries...”, and then returned to his “preludes” (M.P.): “It (the root) serves as a stimulus of justice and goodness, the emblem of the universe, it contains a particle of the Great Spirit, life and movement in infinity of the world. Ginseng – is the source and root of life, the invisible light of the world energy”¹³⁾.

Sacred places are various elevations, ridges, ponds (neck, tail, Dragon ridge, “Monster Lake” – V. Yankovsky, B. Yulsky), powerful trees (“Mr. Forest”, ash tree – B. Yulsky, N. Baykov), *ginseng* growth sites are special loci in the taiga, where appearance of

10) Baikov N. For Ginseng // Baikov N. In the Wilds of Manchuria (Chapters from the Book) // Rubezh. Pacific almanac. 2003. No. 4. P. 243–259.

11) Baikov N. Ginseng // Rubezh. Pacific Almanac, 2004. No. 5 (867). P. 209–223.

12) Arsenyev A. Arsenyev and Ginseng // Arsenyeva A. My Husband – Volodya Arsenyev. Memoirs // Rubezh. Pacific Almanac, 2006. No. 6 (868). P. 295.

13) Prishvin M.M. Far East (Travel Journal, 1931). Op. cit. P. 201–281; 212; 250.

the Forest and Mountain Spirit is most likely. According to the ideas of the Far Eastern peoples, “the Khingan mountain range is a stone skeleton of a dragon, whose head rests on the Amur, and the tail ends at the mouth of the Liao-he River. It was petrified a long time ago, many thousands years ago, but the time will come when the dragon will wake up, its joints will tremble and it will throw off its land and forests and move west, destroying everything in its path”¹⁴⁾.

It is in these places that idols are most often erected, sacred rituals are carried out using special items. Thus, *tiger*, *ginseng*, *sacred places* are closely related. Following the logic of mythological consciousness, this connection expresses the mobility of the deity's residence sphere and its power¹⁵⁾.

But frontier is determined not only by religious coordinates. The basis of all frontier ideas is the anthropological aspect, – purely strong-willed people, passionate personalities capable of surviving in the Far Eastern taiga. The problems of adaptation in these harsh conditions (from the Amur to the sea borders), multiplied by the need for frontier interaction with other ethnic groups, have defined some common features in the ideological and psychological appearance of the newcomers in the Far Eastern lands – the Manchu, Chinese, Mongols, Koreans, Japanese, Russians, and etc. Studying documents and chronicles in the 16-th – 20-th centuries, scientists find similarities in the sociocultural, ethnopsychological and ethno-religious appearance of the peoples who mastered the cross-border territories in the Amur Region, Ussuri Territory, and Primorye.

Who made up one's mind for risky enterprises in the Far Eastern lands? They were the people of relevant moral and psychological attitudes. From the 17-th century a completely special group of Russian new settlers was “a layer of the population that explicitly or implicitly opposed the state – criminals, runaway adventurers, peasants seeking freedom, and other people who came to the Amur lacking law abidance or as the Russians say “without a tsar in their head”. Since the time of Khabarov's campaign, the authorities had been maintaining the policy of settling exiles in the

14) Baykov N.A. The Great Van // Baykov N.A. The Great Van: A Tale; Black Captain: Novel / Entry. art. by E. Kim. Vladivostok, 2009. P. 22.

15) Toporov V.N. Names // Myths of the World. Encyclopedia in 2 volumes. Vol. 1. M., 1987. Pp. 508–510.

Amur Region...”¹⁶⁾. The criminal elements rushed to the lower reaches of the Amur River and, on the other hand, from China and Manchuria¹⁷⁾. Basing on archival research in Chinese sources and materials of Russian scholars of the 50s of the 19-th century, researchers emphasize that local Chinese for the most part were fugitive criminals from Manchuria, the central provinces of China, or individuals sent here for various offenses¹⁸⁾.

G.I. Nevelskoy noticed the insolence and certain impudence of the Manchu, who traded with the Gilyaks and met no resistance¹⁹⁾. According to him, the Qing authorities forbade their patrials from visiting the lower reaches of the Amur River, and, therefore the Manchus and Chinese traded here illegally, giving bribes to border guards. L.I. Schrenk “quite often came across Chinese merchants, whom he characterized as dexterous businessmen who were not afraid of “neither labor, nor deprivation, and who did not shun any means in order to extract as much benefit as possible for themselves or their owners””²⁰⁾. In 1914, these sociocultural realities were recorded by N.A. Baikov: “Since time immemorial chasers of easy money, runaway Chinese soldiers, honghuzi, criminals who escaped venal justice, and any rabble, having lost “the image and likeness” of God due to various vicissitudes of fate and hopeless life flocked here from near and far places. The majority, of course, died here

16) Zabiako A.P. Russians in the Conditions of the Far Eastern Frontier: the Ethnic Experience of the 17th – early 20th centuries // Zabiako A.P., Kobyzov R.A., Ponkratova L.A. Russians and Chinese: Ethnomigration Processes in the Far East. Blagoveshchensk, 2009. P. 10.

17) About this: Anikhovsky S.E. The Chinese in the Far East of Russia: Ethnosociological Aspect (Second Half of the 19-th – early 20-th Centuries) // Russia and China at the Far Eastern Borders. Vol. 7. Blagoveshchensk, 2006. P. 103; Grave V.V. The Chinese, Koreans and Japanese in the Primorsky Region // Proceedings of the Amur Expedition, Sent by the Highest Order. Issue 11. St. Petersburg., 1912. P. 5; Kobyzov R.A. The Chinese in the Far East of Russia: Ethnic and Social Portrait (Second Half of the 19 – early 20 centuries) // Zabiako A.P., Kobyzov R.A., Ponkratova L.A. Russians and Chinese: Ethnomigration Processes in the Far East. Op. cit. P. 46.

18) Przhevalsky N.M. The Experience of Statistical Description and Military Review of the Amur Region (1863). Manuscript. Archive of the Amur Region Geographical Society (Russian Federation). Coll. 13. Aids. 1. Fol. 14. P. 91 back. – 92, 94 back.

19) Nevelskoy G.I. Feats of Russian Naval Officers in the Far East of Russia. 1849–1855. Moscow, 1947. P. 119–120.

20) Shrenk L.I. About the foreigners of the Amur Territory. St. Petersburg, 1899. Vol. 2. P. 289.

either at the hands of their own bestial comrades, or at the hands of wild primitive justice in the person of an elected elder, or from epidemiological diseases and excessive smoking of opium”²¹⁾.

During his expedition in 1908 – 1909 V.K. Arseniev noted the predatory impulses of all the peoples who came to the Amur and he specified: “Russians are not such predators-traders, like Chinese-“kulaks””²²⁾. But Russian newsettlers from their first steps along the Far Eastern lands were distinguished not only by their insolence in thoughts and deeds, but also by their passionate ability to survive in difficult conditions, to succeed – and often not in a very specious way. Thus, N. Baikov emphasized the “lack of culture and principles” of Russian hunters hunting in northern Manchuria²³⁾. He did not miss a chance to deduce a special type of ethnosocial marginal – the Russian honghuzi: “This was one of the types that are often found now in Manchuria. Fleeing from a fair punishment of the law, these people run to the honghuzi and offer them their services. Having nothing sacred on earth, believing in neither good nor evil, guided exclusively by evil criminal will, they are sometimes useful to the honghuzi in relations with the Russians, but you have to give credit to the Chinese robbers, they hate them not only as representatives of the white race, but also as people capable of any vile and shameful business for the sake of profit. Not trusting them, the Chinese only tolerate them when they see even the slightest benefit for themselves, and kill them when the opportunity arises. Despite the low degree of morality, the honghuzi are superior to these scum of a cultural society”²⁴⁾.

Frontier circumstances left their mark on the face of the Russian intelligentsia: “Half a century ago, Eastern Siberia really was the “Far Outskirts” or the “Far East”, as it was commonly called by Russian inhabitants. To get to its extreme eastern limits, that is, to the shores of the Pacific Ocean, it was necessary to “ride” ten

21) Baykov N.A. Love of the Honghuzi (In the Mountains and Forests of Manchuria) // Baykov N.A. In The Mountains and Forests of Manchuria: Essays; Tigress: a Story. Vladivostok: Rubezh, 2011. P. 384.

22) Archive of the Amur Region Research Society. Coll. Of V.K. Arseniev. Aids 1. Fol. 11. Pp. 131 back – 132.

23) Baykov N.A. Notes of the “Zaamurets” (Officer of the Zaaumursky regiment). Memories // Russians in Asia. 1997. No. 4. P. 121.

24) Baykov N.A. Love of the Honghuzi. Op. cit. P. 388

thousand miles across Siberia, or “sail” along the “seas-n-oceans” for forty days and forty nights! Usually those who decided to go to these “deadly places” were escorted, as if for the last time! And not in vain, since people who reached the Far East almost never returned to their homeland and, gradually losing touch with them, became “Kamchadals,” that is, *people with their own special psychology and worldview*.

This *isolation from the homeland, harsh living conditions in a wild, deserted land, lack of cultural interests and comparative material security* developed a *special type of Far Eastern intelligentsia* that differed from the native Russian in *its wide scope, efficiency, energy and enterprise*, but at the same time, *reckless frivolity, tyranny and carelessness*”²⁵⁾ (italics supplied. – A.Z.).

It would, of course, be unnecessarily categorical to define the psychology and moral-ethical qualities of the inhabitants of border areas as traits of only a “criminal elements”. However, the natural features of the Amur and Primorsky landscapes, the difficulties of survival in this region, multiplied by national specifics, also formed a behavioral portrait of many representatives of ethnic groups interacting in the Far East.

In the 20s this “frontier specifics” of the psycho-mental complex was augmented for the Russian settlers by emigrant hardships. The existential situation experienced by a person who finds himself in exile is similar to the perception of death / rebirth in the rites of transition. In reality, a person does not die in either case, but his liminal status is fraught with incarnation in a new quality. Therefore, the “death / rebirth” dichotomy and the accompanying categories of “rebirth”, “fate”, “predestination” are the main categories of emigrant consciousness. For Far Eastern emigrants, this archetypical model of the “borderland” was realized in special geographical, sociocultural, and ethno-religious coordinates, which contributed to the manifestation of specific spiritual, religious, and artistic experiences.

Thus the *literary ethnography* of the Far Eastern frontier was born as a result of the *literary familiarization* by the authors of cultural, religious, psychological attitudes, moral and ethical standards, and the peculiarities of arranging the life of

25) Baykov N.A. Lancelops (Near the Campfire) // Literature of Russian Emigrants in China: 10 tons / original collector, chief compiler, chief editor Lee Yanlen. Beijing, 2005. Vol. 3. Sonata over the Khingan. P. 170–174.

representatives of a certain ethnic group (primarily – foreign cultures by Russians) that inhabit the geographical area of the Far East²⁶⁾. Concerning literary ethnography, we uniquely differentiate the scientific and literary texts, as theory of science distinguishes the use the term *image* regarding science and literature. But, since literary ethnography takes its roots in scientific ethnography, representatives of ethnic groups in their real living conditions and ethnocultural communication are in the center of the ethnographic writer's image.

Artistic development involves “literary covering” of factual material by fiction, artistic conventions, a poetic syllable, adventurous plot, and special narrative strategies. The ratio of the two principles (scientific and artistic) can balance in one direction or another – depending on the installation and preferences of the author, giving rise to a variety of genre-style forms – from the parable to the detective²⁷⁾.

Literary ethnography is embodied in literary mental images of foreign culture, and, conversely, one of the ways to create a literary mental image in literature is literary ethnography. By *the literary mental image* we understand the literary projection of ethnic consciousness, due to the historical situation in which the meeting of ethnic groups, ethnic constants of perceiving cultures, as well as ethnic, political, sociocultural, and artistic settings of each individual author²⁸⁾.

In the first half of the 20-th century, the literary process in the territory of Northern Manchuria was entirely determined by the phenomenon of mutual understanding between Russians and Chinese. The reception of images of foreign culture and its carriers in the Russian and Chinese consciousness was reflected in scientific, journalistic, literary texts.

The experience of Pavel V. Shkurkin (1868–1943) is unique in this respect²⁹⁾. He

26) About this in detail: Zabyako A.P., Kobyzov R.A., Anikhovsky S.E., Voronkova E.A., Zabyako A.A. Evenki of Priamurye: Deer Trail of History and Culture (monograph). - Blagoveshchensk: RIO Publishing Company, 2012. P. 270–275.

27) About this: Zabyako A.A. Literary Ethnography of the Far East: Soviet and Emigrant Text // Traditional Culture of the East of Asia. Blagoveshchensk: Amur State University, 2014. P. 270–290.

28) Zabyako A.A., Senina E.V. Perceptions of China and Chinese in Soviet Literature and Journalism of 1920–1940 // Rossica Olomucensia. Vol. LVIII. – No. 1. - Olomouc, 2019 . – Pp. 67–86.

29) On the ways of formation of this branch of the Far Eastern prose: Zabyako A.A. Textual

began as a military specialist, then at the Eastern Institute he studied Chinese and Manchu languages, several times went to the north-eastern territories of China, where he collected archival and field materials³⁰⁾. Already in his first scientific publication "Hulanchen" (1902) Shkurkin demonstrated the skills of the methodology of collecting ethnographic material (including observation, interviews, working with archival sources), touched on the main topics that were subsequently developed throughout his life: ethnic processes in China, the everyday life of the Chinese, the ethnic character of the Chinese and Manchu, religious life, honghuzi, attitude to Russians, and etc. Shkurkin's appeal to the religious and philosophical background of the sociocultural phenomenon of "honghuznichestvo" is based on his initial comprehension of mythology and the linguistic and religious picture of the world of the peoples of the Far East. It is Shkurkin who outlines the path of the self-valuable development of Far Eastern ethnography along the path of belles-lettres in the introduction to the "Honghuzi"³¹⁾.

One of the ways to create mental image of perceived culture (Chinese and Manchu) becomes "double ethnic point of view" on a certain event: its subject of narration can simultaneously be a carrier of two types of mentality, for example, Manchu and Russian. Evaluation of the heroes' actions is expressed not by author's characteristics, but either through the narrator's cues or in the form of a dialog. At the same time, the heroes' speech is extremely realistic, laconic, often implicated by the Russian-Chinese pidgin³²⁾.

In the "naturalistic" works of Nikolai A. Baikov (1872–1958), the scientist constantly competes with the writer. The ethnographer conveyed the details of hunting in the Manchu taiga, scientific information about the "object of description", and the artist transformed those notes into poetic sketches from hunting and military life, where mythology played a special role. So, the essay "The Root of Life Ginseng" (1926)

Paths of the Far Eastern Ethnography (the Problem of the Authenticity of the Texts of Writers of 20 – 40-ies) // Russian Harbin Captured in the Word. Vol. 5. Op. cit. P. 84–102.

30) Zabiyaiko A.A., Zhou Xinyu. P.V. Shkurkin: Biographical, Historical, Cultural, Ethno-social Context of the Formation of a Scientist and a Writer // Social and Human Sciences in the Far East. 2019. No. 4. P. 135–143.

31) Shkurkin P.V. Honghuzi: Ethnographic Stories. Harbin, 1924. P. 5.

32) Zabiyaiko A.A. The Mentality of the Far Eastern Frontier. Novosibirsk, 2016. Pp. 45–56.

smoothly flows into the narration “In the Wilds of Manchuria” (1934); “The Manchu Tiger” (1925), “The Tigers in the Far East” (1927), “The Tiger Hunt” (1927) are remelted into “Great Wang” (1936), etc. In the works of N. Baikov, the objective vigilance of the naturalist scientist, the peculiarities of the colonial thinking of the Amur officer, the passionate subjectivity of the Great Patriotic, and specific ethnography are reflected. His favorite hero is a “typical taiga tramp”, regardless of his ethnicity (Russian, Chinese, Manchurian, Korean, Mongolian) – a person who respects the Taiga Law, gives prayers to the Spirit of the Forest and Mountains – and organically coexists with the rest of the taiga inhabitants. To this type of people, Baikov ranks both Tung-li (“In the Mountains and Forests of Manchuria”, “The Great Wang”), and himself³³⁾.

Venedict Mart (Matveev) (1896–1937) also came to literary ethnography for a reason. Mart’s father N.P. Matveev was born in Hakodate (Japan), in the family of a paramedic of an ecclesiastical mission, “becoming the first Russian child to be born on the Japanese soil”, who also grew up under the supervision of a Japanese nurse³⁴⁾. For Nikolai Matveyev, Japanese was the second native language³⁵⁾. Before the revolution, he traveled to Japan on his own about fifteen times. Interest in Japan and its peoples was professional – since 1896 N.P. Matveyev joined the Society for the Study of the Amur Region, in 1898 he became the secretary of the Society and in 1901 – its full member³⁶⁾. His interest in local history flowed in the general direction of the development of Far Eastern ethnography, encouraged by the Russian state at a turning point in the history of the country and society.

N.P. Matveyev had “pro-Japanese” sympathies. After the October events, he and his wife decided to emigrate to Japan with their youngest children. There N.P. Matveyev continued doing journalism, becoming a representative of the Russian Far East magazine in Osaka, wrote articles, published children’s books³⁷⁾, composed, and

33) Zabiako A.A. The Mentality of the Far Eastern Frontier. Novosibirsk, 2016. Pp. 22–45.

34) Khisamutdinov A.A. Vladivostok. Sketches for the History of the Old City. Vladivostok, 1992. P. 212.

35) Vitkovsky E. A Successful Emigrant // Elagin I. Collected Works in 2 vols. Vol. 1. Poems. Moscow, 1998. P. 5–40.

36) Savada K.N.P. Matveev in the Harbin Magazine “Rubezh” // Matveev N.P. “Your Japanese correspondent ...”. Rubezh. 2011. No. 11 (873). P. 375–391.

37) Khisamutdinov A.A. Through the Countries of Dispersion: Monograph: in 2 parts Part 2.

also acquainted Russian emigrants with the most famous achievements of this country³⁸⁾.

Paternal authority played a decisive role in young Venedict's study of Chinese and Japanese languages. Gradually, he became close with the culture and literature of Japan and China in the primary sources. Debuts in the artistic development of this topic began with lyrical "sketches from nature", or rather, from memory. As a young man, during his stay in St. Petersburg, he wrote poems "Little Songs" (1915)³⁹⁾, "On the Amur Bay" (February 19, 1916)⁴⁰⁾ and "In the Smoking Room" (February 4, 1916)⁴¹⁾.

In 1918, Mart traveled around Japan, sending travel notes to Far Eastern magazines, writing a brilliant essay on the Japanese aquatic Kappa – the "nightmare monster" of Japanese bestiary⁴²⁾. A little later, his "Unsealed Secrets" (1920) appeared – a strange alloy of modernist eroticism and stylization of Japanese medieval literature⁴³⁾.

Mart was a successor of the people's democratic principle in literature. From a young age he was attracted to the image of a simple person, namely, a representative of a foreign culture: Chinese, Japanese and Nanai ("Dere – Water Wedding"). Mart as a prose writer clearly gravitated to a linear narrative in the spirit of ancient Chinese short stories. This type of prose text, reflecting the national picture of the Chinese world, was also adequate to the requests of Russian belles lettres of that time as a whole⁴⁴⁾, and corresponded to the experiences in literary ethnography of other

Russians in Japan, America and Australia. Vladivostok, 2000. 172 p.

38) Savada K.N.P. Matveev in the Harbin Magazine "Rubezh". Op. cit. P. 125.

39) Mart V. Pesentsy. Vladivostok, 1917. P. 5.

40) Ibid. P. 6

41) Ibid. P. 8.

42) Mart V. Kappa // Khabarovsk Museum of Local History. Coll. 10. Aids 1. Fol. 1225. P. 31–33. About this: Zabiako A.A., Levchenko A.A. The "Nightmare Monster" of Japanese Bestiary: The Image of Kappa in Russian Literature at the Beginning of the 20th Century (V. Mart) // Study of Religion. 2014. No. 3. P. 187–196.

43) Mart V. Unsealed Secrets. Miniatures // Okno. 1920. No. 2. P. 8–10.

44) Zabiako A.A. On the Back Roads of Russian Literature: an Incident of Harbin Fiction // Russian Foreign Literature. Eastern Branch: C hrestomathy: In 4 volumes. Vol. 1. Prose: In 3 parts. Part 1 (AK). Op. cit. P. 3–36.

Far Eastern writers⁴⁵⁾.

In 1920, Mart published the collection "Tiger Enchantments"⁴⁶⁾. The book includes semantically related works: 2 stories – "Paw of Min-zi", "Debt of the Deceased" and the poem "Fortuneteller". They are united by the traditional beliefs of the Chinese in fate, the transmigration of souls and the afterlife.

In 1921, Mart moved to Harbin. His literary ethnography was continued in the series of essays "Yellow Slaves"⁴⁷⁾: here Mart manifested as an ethnographer, an essayist and a prose writer, taking a real journey into the natural environment. This environment, though, did not go beyond Harbin, as was located in a specific area of it – the Fujians, the place of dens and other evil places⁴⁸⁾.

The direction of literary ethnography, initiated by the writer-naturalist N.A. Baikov and continued by sinologist-ethnographer P.V. Shkurkin, suspended due to his departure to the USSR in the works of Venedict Mart, diversely developed in Harbin journalism and belles lettres. Ethnographic material gained popularity not only in narrow scientific circles, but also among ordinary citizens, gradually realizing the uniqueness of their location, the region that became their home. To gain new impressions, Harbin writers went on trips (also as correspondents for leading periodicals – A. Achair, A. Kheidok, V. Loginov, N. Baikov etc.); Shanghai authors traveled to the south of China and Asian countries (M. Shcherbakov). Their ethnographic reports and sketches provide valuable information about the traditions, customs, and beliefs of the indigenous peoples of the East Asia and show interest in the surrounding exotics both of emigrant writers, and, first of all, of newspapers and magazines readers⁴⁹⁾. By 1937, everyday life in Northern Manchuria borderland

45) Zabiako A.A. The Mentality of the Far Eastern Frontier. Op. cit. P. 283–308.

46) Mart V. Tiger Enchantments. Vladivostok: Printing House "Echo". 1920. 19 p.

47) Mart V. Yellow Slaves // Kopeika. 1923. No. 123–126, 159.

48) Fujian (now called Daowai) – Harbin district; in the early 20's of the XX century Chinese trade flourished here, Chinese theaters and variety shows, traditional Chinese cafes, brothels, and opium smoking rooms worked.

49) Achair Al. At the Sacred Lake (Special Correspondence for "Rubezh" from Hanzhou) // Rubezh. 1929. No. 6. P. 11; Haydok A. City of Dawn Dusk (Impressions of Jilin) // Rubezh. 1929. No. 45. C. 3; Kedrov I. Savages at Harbin Side // Frontier. 1933. No 10. Pp. 3–4; Transbaikalets. Falconry in China // Frontier. 1929. No. 48. P. 6; On the Spurs of Khingan (Results of a Scientific Expedition) // Frontier. 1931 (?). No. 11. P. 5–6; Shcherbakov M. On the Channels. With Photographs of the Author // Slovo, 22. 03. 1930; On the Ancient Canals.

turned to be so difficult due to the political situation in the Far East, that it became possible to write about its hardship in the illustrated magazine and in more solid publications⁵⁰⁾.

Mikhail V. Shcherbakov (1890–1956) came his own way to literary ethnography. Since the beginning of the 1920s his imagination had been occupied by the central mythologemes of the Far Eastern frontier. The collection “The Root of Life” took almost twenty years to complete. The works that make up the collection are diverse in genre, plot, and content. Among them are the short story (“The Root of Life”), and the Korean Legend (“The Rich Man’s Lake”), and fantastic stories (“The Dragon Rock”, “Johnny, the Young Mammoth”), lyric sketches (“The Shanghai Outline”), and etc.

In the stories “Johnny, the Young Mammoth”, “Irinari” (Inari), “The Rich Man’s Lake”, “The Dragon Rock”, the heroes of Tunguska, Japanese, Korean, Chinese mythology are somehow incorporated into the life of a Russian person: like the revived mammoth – young mammoth Johnny, in the guise of demon foxes *irinari* (*inari*) in the outlines of a mythologized landscape, as a materialized oriental dragon, biting off Russian officer’s leg with the most real-life teeth. Russian people have nothing to expect from alien gods – the reader draws such conclusion⁵¹⁾.

In the “Irinari” story, the Englishman, starting a conversation about the “true Orthodox faith,” nudges the Russian to steal a small Japanese god figure from the joss house. Reproaching someone else’s shrine “for a bet” leads the gullible and ardent Russian to believe that the god figure “materializes” and persecutes Pyotr Faddeich: “Return the idoll.. Put it back!”⁵²⁾.

The unifying beginning of the collection is the mythology and mythological views of various peoples inhabiting the Far East: Chinese, Manchu, Koreans, Japanese, and Koryak are viewed through the prism of the Russian people perception.

Ethnographic Essay // Monday, 1930. No. 1: Sacred Island. Essay on Putu // Parus, 1932. Issue. 9.

50) About this, for example: Zabiako A.A. “Savages at Harbin Side”: the Religious Life of Evenks of Northern Manchuria in the Periodical Press of the Far Eastern Emigration // Study of Religion. 2014. No. 4. Pp. 185–192.

51) Zabiako A.A. The Mentality of the Far Eastern Frontier. Op. cit. P. 308–320.

52) Shcherbakov M. Odyssey without Ithaca. Op. cit. P. 105–111.

The rethinking of the toposes in frontier mythology was carried out in the work of the representative of the young generation of writers – Boris M. Yulsky (1911–1950?). In the story “The Return of Madame Tsai”, the writer turns to the Chinese mythology of posthumous existence. Lao Tsai (old man Tsai) lost his wife and lives only on the memories that opium smoking gives him. For Tsai, a huge rat becomes an unexpected gift from heaven. Rats are known to be extremely intelligent and affectionate. Also, the Chinese believe in reincarnation. Who is she? Just a rat or the soul of a dead wife? In a difficult life situation, when Tsai pledged his wonderful house for debts and decides to sleep eternally, the animal/wife helps the old man out – brings him diamonds⁵³⁾.

Capturing the reader's attention with an unusual storyline, Yulsky simultaneously talked about the Chinese faith in female shapeshifters, and that ancient Chinese people used opium smoking it to “visit their homeland” and also “meet with the deceased”⁵⁴⁾. The story “The Return of Madame Tsai” revealed a young writer – the successor of literary ethnography in a new way. Thanks to the clever animal-spirit, Lao Tsai unexpectedly gets rid of the debt, lives his life, and dies in his sleep. The mere plot about drug addicts – the rat and Tsai – does not make the story attractive to the reader. The “opium mythology” of the Chinese in this case served as a curious reason to rethink the archetypal plot about the return of the soul of the deceased. Yulsky's narrative move is subtle: the story is told by a Chinese who speaks to a poor Russian, and his Russian listener retells what he understands – but within his ethnocultural tradition.

In the “essays” of the “Green Legion”, declaratively aimed at “truthfulness”, the mythological national coloring obscures the deeper level of literary reflection. The writer recreates everyday life of the forest police. He, who did not smell the gunpowder of the First World War, did not pass the Civil Front, living on the Russian “nickel” in the middle of vast China, feels himself in a situation of heroic service, the struggle for a just cause. The heroes of his narrative – Chinese honghuzi, Russian soldiers – are placed in a “life / death” liminal situation. Expanding the framework of “in-group // out-group”, Yulsky actively synthesizes the genre forms of Slavic and

53) Yulsky B. The Return of Madame Tsai // Rubezh. 1937. No. 28.

54) Prishvin M.M. The Far East (Travel Journal, 1931) // P. 211.

Chinese folklore, unites the heroes of diverse tribal demonologies (“The Return of Madame Tsai”, “Trail of the Fox”, “Mr. Forest” etc.).

The images of Russian literary ethnography of Manchuria in the first half of the 20-th century reflect the reception of foreign culture by writers-ethnographers, their self-reception, as well as the perception of the unique frontier conditions in which meeting of various peoples and cultures took place in difficult political, sociocultural, ethnocultural circumstances. The ways of creating mental images depend on authors’ ethnographic experience and the main activity paradigm. N. Baikov designs his mental images as an ethnographer, paying attention to the description of the myth-ritual complex and ethnic portraits of the created types, their ethnic characters (Chinese, Mongols, Manchu, Koreans, Russian Far Easterners). His characters express their ideas about the world and the “alien” through monologues, declarations and ethnic evaluative characteristics.

P. Shkurkin created various forms of ethnographic narratives – from camouflaged translations (“Chinese Legends” and others) to ethnographic stories, where the game “double ethnic point of view” allows you to create a three-dimensional image of the representative culture of the recipient (“Honghuzi”). M.V. Shcherbakov reflected his ethnographic observations in belletristic details – these details capture the results of the actions of the heroes who pass the sacred test, defining the mythological and ritual complex of the Far Eastern frontier (root of life, tiger, Irinari, Dragon, shark, seagull etc.).

V. Mart, in addition to the indicated techniques for creating mental images of foreign culture (Japanese and Chinese), turned to the genres of ethnographic and physiological essays. B. Yulsky, when creating mental images, aggravated the ethnographic principle and synthesized two methods of ethnically fixed folklore narratives.

The main feature of Russian literary ethnography of Manchuria in the first half of the 20-th century is the erosion of ethnic oppositions when creating mental images of foreign culture. This circumstance is a result of deep ethnographic and anthropological studies of Russian researchers in these territories, as well as the experience of close everyday inter-ethnic contacts.

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