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The Influence of Ancient Greek Culture on Macedonian Literature of the 19th Century

1. General review

Thanks to the geographical situation, Macedonia has been exposed to the influence of classical culture during the long period from the ancient times to our days. Through the centuries, this influence was stronger or weaker, but ever present in some way. In the beginning, the contact with the classical Greek culture was immediate in architecture and art. The remains of many ancient cities in Macedonia today, with their theatres, monuments, statues etc. are strong evidence of this contact. Many historical and literary documents also provide evidence of authentic classical cultural way of living in ancient Macedonia. During the Byzantine period Macedonia remained part of the empire. The specific interest in the classical culture of Byzantium was evident to various degrees in cultural centers of Macedonia. The continuity of the classical influence was interrupted by the Turkish conquest in the 15th century and this trend remained until the 19th century.

In the first half of the 19th century, historical and cultural circumstances started to change. It was the time of rebellion of Balkan peoples against the Turkish rule and emergence of new independent national states. The interest for classical culture returned under the influence of Western Europe, especially France – the French Revolution launched ideas of new humanism, romanticism and neoclassicism. But this influence in Macedonia did not become apparent immediately. At the time, Macedonia was still under Turkish rule and all new ideas were originating in the countries newly founded in the neighborhood. In part in Serbia, but the main influence was coming from Athens where the ancient Greek culture was used as part of political propaganda. Adamantios Korais, for instance, educated in France,

came back to Athens believing that for the recently liberated country, it was most profitable to present itself as heir and modern representative of ancient Greece. This attitude was generally accepted as the main pillar of national propaganda and the interest in classical culture became politicized. The school curricula were modified to suit this purpose and the classical culture and literature became the main subjects of education.

In spite of the existence of the native Slavonic language of the Macedonians, Modern Greek was introduced at schools in major Macedonian cities under the Turkish rule. It was part of the political and cultural propaganda of the government in Athens, supported by the so called Greek Orthodox Church from Constantinople and its representatives in the church communities in Macedonia. Eventually, most of the young Macedonians of that time were being taught Greek and some became well acquainted with classical literature.

In the mean time, the power of Turkey was rapidly collapsing; this facilitated an intensified commercial and manufacturing cooperation with the world around and contributed to the formation of a new middle class in Macedonian towns. Under the leadership of the patriots belonging to this new middle class, Macedonians began to work for their national Renaissance (Nurigiani 1972: instead of, 124). Many young people were sent to study abroad, mainly to Athens and Moscow, and they came back as educated intellectuals. During the 1850s and 60s, great figures appeared on the stage of the cultural Renaissance of Macedonia. Some of them were well educated in classical Greek culture and they influenced in this respect several fields, such as education, literature and classical Greek literature in translation. Among them, most prominent were brothers Miladinovci (Dimitar and Konstantin), Jordan Hadži Konstantinov-Džinot and Grigor Prličev. They were trained and worked as teachers, but they also contributed creatively to the Macedonian literature.

Dimitar Miladinov (1810-1862) and his younger brother Konstantin (1830-1862) were born in Struga, a small town on the Lake Ohrid. Dimitar was a student at the grammar school in Ioannina (at that time, an important cultural center north of Athens) where for three years he studied ancient Greek and ancient Greek literature. After his return home, he became a teacher in the Macedonian towns of Ohrid, Struga, Kukuš, Bitola, Prilep etc. In the beginning, he taught in Modern Greek (as it was imposed by “Greek-orthodox” ecclesiastical authorities in Turkey). His visit to the neighboring Slavonic countries north of Macedonia (Bosnia, Herzegovina and Serbia), encouraged him to fight for the liberation of his people from the Turkish rule and particularly from the influence of the cultural propaganda of Athens. Dimitar changed his personal attitude regarding the Greek language

(ancient and modern) and began to teach in the local native language of Macedonians. As a result of intrigues of the “Greek” bishops in Macedonia, Dimitar was arrested and jailed in Constantinople where he died. He was not an author of literary works, but as a teacher he helped very much in teaching young Macedonians ancient Greek language and literature. His younger brother Konstantin also studied in Ioannina and three years at the Faculty of Philosophy in Athens, but he then left Athens and studied Slavonic philology at the University of Moscow. There he began to write poems inspired by Macedonian folk poetry.

Jordan Hadži Konstantinov-Džinot (1820-1882) spent some time in Thessaloniki learning Modern Greek and at the same occasion visited monasteries on the Holy Mount Athos, as well as the famous islands of Chios and Patmos, important cultural and educational centers. These visits increased Džinot’s interest in ancient Greek culture and literature. But, as a school teacher in Macedonia (in Veles, Skopje, Prilep...) he took immediately a stand against the assimilating aspirations of the government of Athens and the “Greek” bishops in Macedonia. Consequently, he refused to teach in Greek and introduced local Macedonian dialect as the language of instruction. As a result of extended confrontations with the bizarre views of the ecclesiastic propaganda, Džinot was arrested and sent to prison in the Asian part of Turkey, for a period of three years. As an intellectual and author, he was focusing on the ancient Greek culture and literature. While most of his works were unfortunately lost, we have enough information to reconstruct his creative portrait.

Grigor Prličev (1830-1893) was born in Ohrid, the cradle of Macedonian culture. His life was similar to that of the majority of Macedonian intellectuals in the mid 19th century (Nurigiani 1972; 149-150). Prličev was a teacher, but as an author he was undoubtedly the most important Macedonian poet of the 19th century. He studied under Dimitar Miladinov who was teaching in Ohrid and in 1860, he entered the Faculty of Medicine in Athens. But, as he wrote in his *Автобиографија (Autobiography)*, he had “no enthusiasm for medicine,” but rather for poetry. He decided to enter the poetry competition held at the University of Athens submitting a poem in Greek *Ὁ Ἀρματωλός* (translated into Macedonian as *Сердаром* or *Μαρτοποζομ* i.e. *Leader, Defender*). He won the competition and was awarded the laurel wreath. However, he did not accept the offer to study in Oxford or Berlin made by University authorities on behalf of the State, as it involved serving the nationalistic propaganda of Athens. He understood that “it was time to go home” and became a teacher in Macedonia. It was a long period of struggle against the well known “Greek” bishops and other champions of anti-Macedonian propaganda; during that time he

undertook to introduce Macedonian language at schools. At the same time, Prličev worked as a writer. Beside 'Ο Ἀρματωλός, he wrote another poem in Greek, Σκενδέριπτης (in Macedonian *Скендербеј*), and many other works in Macedonian language, such as *Автобиографија* (*Authobiography*), poems for children, essays, letters etc. He also translated Homer's *Iliad*.

2. Classics and education

The best description of Dimitar Miladinov as a teacher we owe to his most outstanding pupil Grigor Prličev in the *Автобиографија* (*Authobiography*): “Among the many teachers I had while I was studying at Ohrid, none was esteemed as highly by the pupils as Miladinov. There was magnetism in everything he did. Eloquence flowed from his lips like honey” (Прличев 1953; 20, Engl. transl. Nurigiani 1972; 127). By using a standard Homeric simile of eloquence (“like honey”), Prličev explains that Miladinov taught him Modern Greek, but also ancient Greek language and literature. He gives evidence that they translated in class Plutarch from ancient Greek into Modern Greek: “we translated the first volume about Telemachos in six months” (Прличев 1953; 20).

Particular attention was paid to Homer's *Iliad*. Analysis and learning by heart of parts of this famous epic poem was a method of studying this author. Prličev says that he knew by heart the whole of *Iliad* in ancient Greek. This impressive knowledge can be easily detected in his original poems written many years later. With the intention to introduce the local Macedonian dialect as a language of instruction, Dimitar communicated with his pupils in both, modern Greek and Macedonian.

Jordan Hadži Konstantinov–Džinot taught in Macedonian, but followed a new, modern program, quite different from the one used in traditional religious schools. Beside subjects such as grammar, history, geography and mathematics, he introduced Greek mythology and etymology. Unusually for young people educated at that time, Džinot's pupils were acquiring elementary knowledge of ancient Greek culture and literature (Конески 1987; 10-11).

Džinot designed a new methodology of teaching. He called it the “Socratic method;” it relied on sustained communication and dialogue between the teacher and his pupils. He deeply believed in the Socratic “irony and maieutica” as a creative educational method and was trying to apply it in practice.

We have not many details about Prličev's didactics, but undoubtedly, as a young teacher and poet obsessed by ancient Greek poetry, he instilled in his pupils the knowledge of classical literature. Regarding the ancient

Greek culture, Prličev went through a dramatic intellectual evolution from a passionate champion to an ardent opponent and even enemy. Deeply disappointed by the policy of Athens and of the “Greek clergy” hostile towards Macedonian people and their language and culture, he mistakenly identified authentic ancient Greek culture with the so called “modern Greek culture” and bitterly attacked and criticized ancient philosophy and literature, not sparing even his former idol – Homer!

3. The ancient Greek literature as a creative inspiration

Among the Macedonian authors of the 19th century, Jordan Konstantinov-Džinot and Grigor Prličev were apparently the most sensitive to the inspirational force of the ancient Greek literature.

The private library of Džinot is today a good indicator of his interest in ancient literature. We find there the poems of Homer and Hesiod, the tragedies of Sophocles, hymns and epigrams of Callimachus and others classics in the original and in translation. It is the evidence of close creative contacts between this author and ancient literature.

His literary activity was motivated by the historical circumstances of the Macedonian society. Literary writing was one of the instruments in Džinot’s struggle against the social evils, such as political violence, prejudices of the clergy, moral deformations etc. He believed that literary dialogue was an effective mean in this struggle. He wrote dialogues entitled *Минерва и девет музи и Остримеч се разговарјат ради изгубена Болгарија* and *Србија шетаатсја в земел своих*. The political context is obvious, but on the literary level the poems are undoubtedly inspired by the *The Dialogues of the Gods* by Lucian of Samosata. It is easy to identify echoes of this work of the second sophistic in Džinot’s dialogues, such as for instance the appearances of the Gods (Zeus) and other personalities from ancient Greek mythology as interlocutors (Зорграфска 1983; 92). The dialogues of the Macedonian author were performed at school as part of educational and cultural activities.

The influence of classics is obvious in two plays by Džinot: *Фиал Сократов* and *Дионисиј Тиран, Дамон и Финдијас ради пријателство*. The author stated in the journal *Цареградски весник* in Constantinople that the plays were ready to be published, but unfortunately they didn’t appear. Today, we are able to discuss them only on the basis of the titles. *Фиал Сократов* points very clear to the last moments in the life of the philosopher, immediately before the legal suicide in the prison. It is well known that Džinot was preoccupied by Socrates’ tragic fate and that he even identified with the personality of this ancient sage. We can suppose

that this drama was a mixture of autobiographical and classical motives. But it seems that beside Plato and Xenophon, a closer literary model was also used, a previous adaptation by an 18th century “Serbian Socrates” – Dostitej Obradović, highly respected by Džinot (Зорпафска 1978; 401-2).

The title of the second play, *Дионисиј Тиран, Дамон и Финдијас ради пријателство* obviously refers to the ancient theme of the Pythagorean ideal of friendship as presented in *On Pythagoras' Life* by ancient Neoplatonic author Iamblichus (Зорпафска 1978; 406). The immediate inspiration and model in this case was probably D. Obradović's adaptation of *Damon, or the True Friendship*, a comedy by Lessing.

From the stand point of modern criticism, dramatic works of Džinot are indeed naïve and without high literary value (Конески 1987; 32). The real contribution of these imperfect plays to Macedonian literature of the 19th century may be grasped only in the context of romanticism and classicism of that time.

The poetry of Grigor Prličev is subject of many critical studies in Macedonia and in the neighboring countries. Such interest is quite understandable because while Prličev was a Macedonian bred and born in Ohrid, who lived and died there, he wrote his two epic poems ‘Ο *Ἀρματωλός* and *Σκενδέριμπεης* in “katharevousa,” a particular form of Greek language with many archaic elements, especially Homeric elements, popular at that time in Athens where Prličev won the poetry competition. Additionally, the heroes of the poems are not exclusively from Macedonia, but from the region and history of South Balkans. The poet was inspired by history, folklore and literature belonging to the Balkan culture around him.

There is one dominant literary model in the poetry of Prličev which provides it with a kind of artistic unity. It is undoubtedly the Homeric epic. The influence of *Iliad* prevails in ‘Ο *Ἀρματωλός* and *Σκενδέριμπεης* and it is the necessary key to solve a number of poetic puzzles. This is why the relation between Homer and Prličev is an obligatory and central subject of serious critical studies dealing with the Macedonian poet during the last 150 years. In the beginning, the critics were endeavoring to detect the Homeric influence as evidence of the poetic quality of Prličev's poems, but it was not a conscious imitation but rather spontaneous or incidental. Contrary to this trend, other critics emphasized the originality and creative independence of Prličev.

Between the two extremes, there was also a discussion about creative or dependent approach to Homer by the poet. In the second half of the 19th century, several studies appeared analyzing in detail and systematically Prličev's poetic works in comparison with Homer (cf. Петрушевски 1970; Митевски 1995).

From the viewpoint of modern scholarship, the precise identification and analysis of the Homeric elements in Prličev is much more important than definition of “creative or unoriginal imitation” of the ancient epic bard. The main areas of the comparative investigation are epithets, similes, typical epic themes, poetic world and heroes.

At first sight, it is noticeable that in the poems of Prličev there are many epithets and that they are mainly of Homeric origin. Most are directly borrowed from the *Iliad* as it corresponds to the intention of the poet who wanted to write “in the style of Homer.” There are also epithets invented by Prličev himself, but also inspired by Homer. This is obvious from their form and themes. Formally, we can recognize many typical Homeric composite epithets, such as *anemotraphēs*, *megathymos*, *polymēchanos*, *rododaktylos* etc. Many epithets invented by Prličev also reveal Homeric models: *nyctomachos*, *pentatholos*, *daphnostephanos* etc. A well educated reader easily recognizes in Prličev the epithets indicating the typical features of a hero or god in the *Iliad*, such as: *thourios* (Skenderbey resp. Ares in *Iliad*), *philomeidēs* (*aggelos* in *Σκενδέρμπεης* resp. Aphrodite in *Iliad*) etc. (Петрушевски 1970). Some of the epithets invented by Prličev are thematically original: *nyctomachos* (*warrior in the night*) or *mystacias* (*warrior with moustache*); it is not surprising in view of the new historical and cultural circumstances present in the world of Macedonian poet.

The function of the epithets is most important from the standpoint of modern epic theory proposed by M. Parry and A. Lord. The epithets in Homeric traditional and oral poems are formulaic and are used in a way entirely opposite to the use in the literary poetry. It means that the epithets in Homer are metrically conditioned and semantically empty. Consequently, the epithets in Prličev’s literary poems should be metrically unconditioned and semantically definite. An analysis of the use of epithets in *Σκενδέρμπεης* shows that, in general, this concept can be accepted as valid. But, unexpectedly, there are epithets in the poem which can be treated as formulaic too. Namely, some of epithets are repeated several times under identical metrical conditions, for instance, *annasa Dōrikē* (the wife of Skenderbey) is regularly placed at the end of the line and in nominative. Of course, it indicates that in Prličev there is a spontaneous connection between the epithet and the meter similarly to Homer. The explanation of this unusual phenomenon is provided by the fact that our poet knew the *Iliad* in the original language by heart (as we have already mentioned) and therefore was able to imitate (possibly unconsciously) the mechanism of oral poetry.

Nevertheless, most of repeated epithets (connected to nouns or personal names) in Prličev are metrically unconditioned. They are used merely as typical features of the Homeric style without the metrical necessity.

The influence of Homer is evident in similes as well. The extended similes, without a doubt, are a remarkable stylistic feature of the ancient poetry and Prličev uses them abundantly. He imitates his master in regard to the number, form, theme and function of the similes.

Precisely, if we consider on one side the number of lines in the *Iliad* (15693) compared to the number of similes (350), and on the other side the number of lines in 'Ο Ἀρματωλός (912) or in *Σκενδέρμπεης* (3793) compared to the number of similes in 'Ο Ἀρματωλός (47) or *Σκενδέρμπεης* (158), it becomes obvious that Prličev uses similes even more frequently than Homer.

Extended similes (extended to several or more lines) in Prličev are comparatively less frequent than in Homer, but they also can be sometimes significantly longer than in the *Iliad* and count eight or nine lines (*Σκενδέρμπεης*, vss. 3293-3300 or vss. 3530-3538). The Macedonian poet employs as well series of several similes, unusual in Homer.

It is well known that the pastoral motives or scenes of everyday life are dominant in the similes of the *Iliad*. They serve as a thematic counter-balance to the main narrative theme of war. The themes used in the Homeric similes occur widely also in 'Ο Ἀρματωλός as well as in *Σκενδέρμπεης*, poems describing a war. But it seems that the introduction of these themes is artificially motivated in Prličev, i.e. more under the immediate impact of the Homeric patterns than as a pure poetical inspiration or conscious device.

As far as the function of the extended similes is concerned, Prličev's relation to Homer is a complex one. He accepts the basic functions of Homeric similes, but at the same time, applies his own literary method of dealing with this traditional epic stylistic device. For example, there are no indications of a deliberate distribution of similes in the *Iliad*; they are employed in narrative parts as often as in battle speeches of the heroes. In opposition to this tradition, the extended similes in 'Ο Ἀρματωλός and in *Σκενδέρμπεης* are mainly distributed in the narrative parts. It seems that according to the sense of psychology in modern poetry, the use of artificial extended similes in the battle speeches of heroes is shunned as unnatural and psychologically unfounded.

On the other hand, Prličev uses similes regularly in the Homeric way, i.e. with the intention of illustrating the action or of introducing comparisons; for example, the cruelty of war scenes is compared to the cruelty in nature etc. However, he differs from the ancient bard's usage when it comes to series of similes; in the *Iliad* they can be transformed into an independent lyric scene without presenting any comparative relation to the main narrative. Prličev never forgets the basic function of the simile, that of the comparison. A strong comparative relation between the simile and the main narration can be found in most of the extended similes (Μιτεβσκι 1995; 42-62).

The relation Homer-Prličev becomes the most sophisticated in the area of standard epic themes. It occurs partly in the form of mechanical imitation, partly as a creative development of Homeric patterns. Occasionally, the traditional epic themes are used merely as an inspiration. Prličev imitates Homeric oral method mechanically by repeating identical short themes in *Σκενδέρμπεης*. It can be interpreted just as a stylistic simulation of the ancient epic, but it is not a creative achievement.

Creative developments of major standard themes, such as for example, the theme of donning armor and selecting arms, are much more interesting. The scenes of hero preparing for the battle by arming himself with a spear, a sword, a shield and so on, is a standard theme in the *Iliad*, a masterpiece obviously composed according to the old epic patterns. Homer uses regularly the same (six) consecutive elements, ordered in the same manner and provided with identical repetitive formulas. The Macedonian poet is aware of this special feature of his master's poetic method and consequently, he applies the same pattern when describing two major arming scenes, that of Skenderbey and of his rival, Balaban. In spite of the non-Homeric terminology, appropriate to the new cultural circumstances, we can recognize the Homeric pattern: in both cases there are the same six consecutive elements and the repeated formulas.

A similar treatment of the epic patterns can be discerned in the standard themes of battle, especially in duels. Presenting duels between major heroes, Prličev brings in the elements from the *Iliad*: a challenge just before the fight, a typical sequence of events during a duel, similes, a biographical sketch of the killed hero, standard descriptions of the hero etc.

In some other standard themes, such as catalogues of warriors or banquets, the author takes some liberties with Homeric models. A funeral lament, also a standard theme, occurs at the end of the *Iliad* after the death of Hector. This became an inspiration for Prličev in his lament for the dead hero Kuzman, meant as a central theme of 'Ο 'Αρματωλός (Μιτεβски 1995; 63-91).

Prličev's epic world is a heroic world ruled by the supreme power of gods. The Homeric gods he mentions in his poems are Zeus, Ares, Aphrodite... At first glance, it seems that the ideology of epic heroism is as formally dominant in Prličev as it is in Homer. However, the heroism in 'Ο 'Αρματωλός and *Σκενδέρμπεης* differs essentially from the heroism in the *Iliad*. A hero in Homer is an independent individual who can be brought into conflict with some of the gods. The hero in Prličev's poems is a typical pious Christian hero. Kuzman, the protagonist in 'Ο 'Αρματωλός, is a defender of the pure and humiliated Macedonian people. In the very beginning of *Σκενδέρμπεης*, the author dedicates the poem to a "great

defender of Christianity.” A detailed analysis shows that in spite of the presence of Homeric gods in both poems, they are only Prličev’s literary inspiration. The real power and ruler in his epic world is the Christian god. Ideologically and conceptually, the heroic world of Prličev differs from its ancient model in the highest degree.

4. Translations of the Ancient Greek literature

Historical and cultural circumstances in the second part of 19th century in Macedonia were as unfavorable for translation as they were for creative literature. The main problem on the cultural level was the absence of a Macedonian literary language. There was the Old Church Slavonic language with its long literary tradition, but its rigid terminology was not suitable to express ideas and themes of a secular or non-Christian world. There existed, on the other hand, a vernacular Macedonian, but it was incapable to render abstract terminology, or convey lexical treasure and other qualities of developed literary languages. In spite of these unfavorable circumstances, some attempts were made by the authors mentioned above, Jordan Konstantinov-Džinot and Grigor Prličev. They both translated masterpieces from the ancient Greek literature.

In 1859 Džinot announced in the periodical “Цареградски весник” his forthcoming translations of Sophocles’ tragedy *Antigona* and of 100 pages of Lucian from Samosata. Unfortunately, these translations were never published. We can only say that this was the first attempt of translating the ancient Greek literature into Macedonian. As far as the other literary works of Džinot indicate, his Macedonian translation was influenced by the neighboring Slavonic languages and plentifully supplied with archaisms.

Prličev’s translation from ancient Greek is connected again to Homer. Coming back to Macedonia from Athens, he made several attempts at translating the *Iliad*. The lack of a Macedonian literary language at that time was a big problem for him too. Prličev did not accept the vernacular language or precisely, the dialect of his native town of Ohrid as did some other authors. As a connoisseur of Homeric rhetorical language and epic style, he believed that the poem cannot be adequately translated into any modern literary language. This was the reason why Prličev created a special, artificial language and translated the *Iliad* into this language, called by some modern scholars the “Slav Esperanto.” Prličev’s language was in fact an unusual mixture of several Slavonic languages (Macedonian, Bulgarian, Serbian, Russian) and of the Old Church Slavonic, enriched with some archaic and dialectic forms. In the special Grammar of this language, written for the occasion, the author recommends it to the other

writers and translators. Answering the objections of an imaginary critic, Prličev explains that he used many strange and non contracted endings (for instance: *-aago* or *-uimti*) in his translation of the *Iliad*, following the original forms in Homer (Митевски 2000). In spite of the generally idealistic and problematic character of such an attempt, Prličev revealed elements of an approach to the translation of Homer that were appropriate and well anchored in practice.

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Влијанието на старогрчката култура врз македонската литература во XIX-иот век

Во рамките на Турската Империја од која Македонија е дел во текот на 19-иот, македонскиот народ е изложен на политичка пресија и културното влијание и на Турција и на некои соседни држави. Под влијание на пропагандата на владата во Атина која отвора свои школи во Македонија, а во исто време и зафатени од бранот на романтизам, некои македонски интелектуалци се запознаваат со старогрчката култура што ќе остави силен печат врз нивното литературно творештво. Во тој поглед се издвојуваат две најзначајни имиња – Јордан Хаџи Константинов Џинот и Григор Прличев.

Џинот се јавува со драмски дијалози инспирирани од класичната старогрчка митологија кои се изведуваат на приредбите во школите во кои тој е учител, а во печатот најавува објавување на свои драми со античка тематика кои, од непознати причини, не се појавиле.

Прличев е добро образован во старогрчкиот јазик и особено добар познавач на Хомер. Под влијание на хомерската поезија, тој пишува на еден архаизиран грчки јазик епска поема под наслов *’Ο Ἀρματωλός* (во македонски превод *Серадом* или *Мартолозот*) и со неа победува на поетскиот конкурс во Атина 1860 година. Второто негово епско дело под наслов *Σκευδέρμητης* исто така е напишано во духот на хомерската поезија и тоа се гледа главно во областа на стилот (епитети и споредби) и во композицијата (обработка на типични епски теми).

На преведувачки план, Џинот најавува во печатот превод на трагедијата *Антигона* од Софокле, дело чија судбина исто така не ни е позната, а Прличев пишува препев на Хомеровата *Илијада* на еден посебен јазик кој претставува смеса од словенските јазици, а самиот автор го нарекува „општословенски“.

Wpływ starogreckiej kultury na literaturę macedońską w XIX wieku

W ramach imperium osmańskiego, którego częścią jest Macedonia w ciągu XIX wieku, macedoński lud-naród podlega politycznej presji i wpływom kulturowym ze strony Turcji i innych państw. Pod wpływem propagandy, którą prowadzą Ateny i która wyraża się m.in. w zakładaniu swoich szkół w Macedonii, niektórzy macedoń-

scy intelektualiści, ogarnięci w tym samym czasie wpływami romantyzmu poznają kulturę starogrecką, co silnie wpłynie na ich twórczość literacką. W tym kontekście wybijają się dwie najbardziej znaczące postaci – Jordan Hadži Konstantinov-Dżinot i Grigor Prličev.

Dżinot jest autorem dramatyzowanych dialogów inspirowanych klasyczną, starogrecką mitologią, wystawianych w szkole, w której sam jest nauczycielem. Na łamach prasy zapowiada publikację swoich dramatów o tematyce antycznej, jednak z niewiadomych przyczyn żaden z nich nie pojawia się w druku.

Prličev dobrze zna starogrecki i jest znawcą twórczości Homera. Pod wpływem poezji Homera pisze w archaizowanym języku greckim poemat epicki zatytułowany 'Ο Ἀρματωλός (w macedońskim przekładzie *Сердаром* albo *Μαρμπολοζομ*), który przynosi mu zwycięstwo w konkursie poetyckim w Atenach w 1860 roku. Jego drugie dzieło epickie zatytułowane *Σκενδέριμπεης* jest napisane także w duchu poezji Homera, głównie jeśli chodzi o styl (epitety i porównania) i kompozycję (opracowanie typowych dla eposu motywów tematycznych).

Obydwaj są także tłumaczami, Dżinot zapowiada w prasie przekład *Antygony* Sofoklesa, o losach przekładu nic nam nie wiadomo, a Prličev dokonuje poetyckiego przekładu *Iliady* Homera na wymyślony przez siebie język, który jest w istocie mieszanką języków słowiańskich, a sam autor nazywa go „ogólnosłowiańskim”.

Przekład z języka macedońskiego
Jolanta Sujeka