

These are lyrical works, similar to ballads, which allows Stoikova to draw the conclusion that there are both epic and lyrical *bugarštica*. The subject matter of the remaining songs is congruent with the motifs known from heroic epos, i.e. it is related to the struggle of such heroes as Prince Mark and other gallant swordsmen, including very young ones, against the Turkish enemy, and occasionally to the events of their love life. The songs have their local colour, expressed in the names of characters, the development of the plot and fictional details. They contain a number of constituents which are described as 'extremely archaic', of mythological provenance (e.g. characters presented as little kids and their superhuman strength).

As Stoikova notices in the *Summary*, Bulgarian archives are in possession of numerous unique texts of songs which have never been published before and deserve special attention and professional analysis. When presenting the results of the past research, the author of *Хърватските бугарицици и техните български съответствия* aptly points to those aspects of *bugarštica* which still await to be studied: their poetic form, tonal verse structure, musicological approach, and comparative analysis of their language against other 16th century texts, e.g. sermons by Damaskinos Stouditis. A similar revision would be required in the case of some

studies which were already conducted, e.g. comparative analysis with Greek verse.

The discussed study, despite its relatively short length, provides the reader with a substantially sound pool of knowledge, expressed both in the scientific text and the publication of original source material. My remarks regarding the validity of quoting only fragments of articles are of secondary importance in the face of Stoikova's comment summarising the present state of research in *bugarštica* and the content of the annex. On the one hand, the publication synthesises earlier scientific theories and conclusions and, on the other hand, it includes their profound revision, encouraging further studies and provoking with an intriguing source text. Thus, it deserves to be read, reviewed, commented on and promoted. *Хърватските бугарицици и техните български съответствия* is an important voice in the debate on what is common and foreign within Slavic cultures and relationships which represent miscellaneous religious traditions, a voice that emphasises the gravity of Slavic-Slavic relations, resulting, for instance, in the permeation and interaction of literary threads and motifs in the mainstream and within folklore, as can be noticed at the textual, linguistic and translation levels.

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PRZEMYSŁAW MARCINIAK, *Taniec w roli Tersytyesa. Studia nad satyrą bizantyńską* [Dance in the role of Tersytes: A study of Byzantine satire], Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, Katowice 2016, pp. 225 [= Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Śląskiego w Katowicach, 3420].

The work under review, written by Przemysław Marciniak, an expert on Byzantine literature, theatre and humour¹, deals with the issue of Byzantine satirical literature. The book's chronological focus is mainly the twelve century. The work is divided into five parts.

¹ Among his most important works are: *Greek Drama in Byzantine Times*, Katowice 2004 and *Ikona dekadencji. Wybrane problemy europejskiej recepcji Bizancjum od XVII do XX wieku*, Katowice 2009.

In Part 1, *Satyra w Bizancjum* [*Satire in Byzantium*], p. 15–31, Marciniak attempts to define satire as a literary genre, reaching as far back as (*silloi*) Xenophanes. In his search for the meaning of the concept of satire, he follows some distinguished Byzantine authors such as Eusthatus, John of Lidia, Phocius, Psellos and Tzetzes. His analysis indicates a semantic affinity between the term satire, as understood in Byzantine culture, and other concepts such

as invective, comedy, lerody and drama. In the conclusion of this part of the book, Marciniak states that satire, which owed its popularity to the contradictions that plagued the Byzantine society and which provided an outlet for both individual and group emotions, was present in Byzantine literature on a noticeable scale.

Part 2, *Z kogo się śmiejecie? Z innych się śmiejecie! – humor w bizantyńskich satyrach* [Whom are you laughing at? You are laughing at others! Humour in Byzantine satires], p. 33–55), focuses on the Byzantine sense of humour. In addition to highlighting the difficulties that the contemporary reader is likely to encounter in trying to understand this, the author specifies its constitutive elements and points out subjects commonly joked about (those in position of power, sex, religious zealotry). He also emphasises the fact that there are both coarse and subtle jokes to be found in Byzantine satirical literature. The jokes that fall into the second category called for some familiarity with the literary canon.

Part 3, *Z Samosat do Konstantynopola* (*From Samosata to Constantinople*, pp. 55–90), is devoted to Lucian of Samosata and to the great influence he exercised on the Byzantine satirical literature. The author tries to explain the popularity that Lucian's works enjoyed in Byzantium – a fact quite remarkable in view of the latter's dislike of Christianity. Marciniak also tries to retrace the process of Lucian's acquisition of the status of a classic author, indicating that his oeuvre drew much attention in the twelfth century, especially in the circle of Theodore Prodromos.

Part 4, *Bizantyński Lukian – Teodor Prodromos i jego satyry* [A Byzantine Lucian – Theodore Prodromus and his satires], p. 91–130, contains the analysis of some selected satirical works by Prodromus, including *Sale of political and poetical lives* (*Bion Prasis*), *Against a lustful old woman* and *Against an old bearded man*. While Prodromus' work is shown to be indebted to that of Lucian's, the author also convincingly demonstrates the originality of the Byzantine author.

Part 5, *Wesołe podziemia, czyli satyryczna katabaza* (*Merry underworld, or a satirical katabasia*), p. 131–162) is devoted to Byzantine katabasias. The author analyses the following works: *Timarion*², a satire against Stephan Hagiochristoforites, *Mazaris' journey to Hades* and an anonymous cento modelled on *Dialogues of the dead* by Lucian. Marciniak explains their origin, characterises their content and shows their common characteristics.

The annexes form an important part of the book. They contain the translations of *Against a lustful, old woman*, of an anonymous cento analysed in the fifth chapter and of the edition of *Sale of political and poetical lives* prepared by E. Cullhed (p. 167–203). The work also includes a preface (p. 7–13) and a bibliography (p. 205–225).

To conclude, Przemysław Marciniak has given us an interesting and important work. *Taniec w roli Tersytyesa* greatly deepens our understanding of Byzantine satirical literature and the Byzantine sense of humour. Given the fact that respective parts of the book appeared as articles in important scholarly journals devoted to the history of Byzantium (*Byzantinoslavica* and *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*), the author's findings will become part of scholarly conversation outside Poland. It is worth noting that the translations of Byzantine works into Polish included in the book add to a small number of Byzantine literary texts available to the Polish reader.

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² The work has recently been translated into Polish by Przemysław Marciniak and Katarzyna Warcaba (*Timarion albo Timariona przypadki przez niego opowiedziane*, trans. P. MARCINIAK, K. WARCABA, pref. P. MARCINIAK, Katowice 2014, pp. 120).