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The image of China on the pages of the periodical *Naokoło Świata*

Abstract

The main aim of this article is to present the image of China on the pages of one of the biggest Polish popular science magazines, *Naokoło Świata* (Around the World), which was issued between 1924 and 1939. The published articles were devoted to customs, festivals and beliefs, and often surprised the reader, displaying a poor knowledge of China. Most of the authors had travelled to Asia, hence the articles were of a good quality, but tended to contain many oversimplifications. The reason is not only the character of the magazine, but also the stereotyped assumptions of the authors of that time.

Keywords: China, image, press, Second Polish Republic.

Introduction

The aim of this article is to present the image of China in the eyes of the average citizen of the Second Republic of Poland, between 1918 and 1939. Not only does it have intrinsic value, but it is also away to understand Poland-China relations in the interwar period.¹ As emphasised by Józef Włodarski, China was at the centre of foreign affairs, mainly because of the Polish community living in China, which numbered several thousand, but also because of the Polish government's need to adopt a position on the China-Japan conflict.²

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¹ After Poland regained its independence, Poles continued to form relations with the Chinese people. Official Poland-China relations invigorated at the end of 1920s, when two of the most influential treaties were signed: the Treaty of Friendship and Trade (1928) and the Treaty of Friendship, Trade and Navigation (1929). Piotr Łossowski (ed.), *Historia dyplomacji polskiej TOM IV 1918-1939* [The History of Polish Diplomacy Volume IV 1918-1939], Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1995, p. 432.

² Józef Włodarski, 'Kilka uwag na temat współpracy wywiadu polskiego z wywiadem japońskim w Mandżurii w latach 30 XX wieku' [A few remarks about the cooperation between Polish and Japanese Service Intelligence in the Manchuria in the 1930s] in *Azja Wschodnia w oczach Polaków - wybór tekstów Józefa Włodarskiego z lat 2001-2015* [The

During the period, any piece of information about the Far East was well received among newspaper readers. Poles created an image of China based to a large extent on information implicit mainly in the popular science magazines. Józef Bachórz emphasises that the subject of China had been appearing in the Polish press from as early as 1899, the year of the Boxer Uprising. Moreover, the Polish press not only used foreign periodicals as a source of knowledge, but also its own journalists' accounts.³

One of the most popular travel magazines of this time was a monthly periodical *Naokoło Świata* (literally: Around the World). It was established in 1924 in Warsaw, the capital of Poland. The last issue, the 184th, was published in August 1939, right before the breakout of the Second World War. The editor-in-chief was Stanisław Lam. The main aim of the magazine was to reach a wide audience; therefore, it was more entertaining than scientific. Evidence of this can be found both in the informal language of the articles, as well as in the subjects of the articles, which were supposed to be more sensational rather than scientific. The magazine hence explained various topics in a simple, straightforward way. But perhaps the greatest value of this as a source is that all issues have been preserved.

Readers of the *Naokoło Świata* were mainly people of moderate means, a middle class of secondary and higher education. The editorial office also endeavoured to include articles entertaining both men and women.

The main themes in the magazine are fauna and flora, and the traditions and customs of foreign countries. The authors were usually travellers, who described their own experience. The articles touch upon subjects such as architecture, medicine, geography, astronomy, history, history of art, cinema, sport, motorisation, psychology, *savoir-vivre*, and even esotericism. Every issue comprises of four permanent sections; 'Świat kobiety' (the world of women), 'Z dziedziny kosmetyki' (On cosmetology), 'Rozrywki umysłowe' (riddles) and 'Dział grafologa' (geography). Occasionally, the articles would focus on contemporary

East Asia in the Eyes of Polish – The Anthology of Józef Włodarski's Works], K. Zeidler, J. Kamiń (eds.), Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, 2015, p.193-194.

³ Józef Bachórz, 'Prawda' Aleksandra Świętochowskiego o chińskim Powstaniu Bokserów' in *Chiny w oczach Polaków*, J. Włodarski, K. Zeidler, M. Burdelski (eds.), Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, 2010, p. 349-351.

state of the world. Moreover, the magazine includes squibs, translated parts of novels and short stories.

The authors publishing in the magazine used the Wade-Giles transcription, which was an early Romanisation of Mandarin Chinese, used in books published before 1979. However, the modern standard transcription, pinyin, is used for the purpose of this article.

The overall image of China

Two of the most popular subjects, which the authors of *Naokolo Świata* touched upon, were China and Japan. The main aim of their articles was to explain the customs, traditions or historical events of these two countries, and the information included often surprised the Polish reader. This article focuses mostly on the image of China.

China is described as an exotic, intriguing land with a rich and long culture, but also as a place of struggle with numerous setbacks. It is a country of contrasts, where a great number of citizens live in poverty, especially peasants and rickshaws pullers, who live in utter distress, compared to a group of millionaires. Apart from social and economic disparities, the Chinese struggle with kidnappings for ransom. The safest places, according to some of the articles, are the European and American districts.⁴ In 1930s, the criminal groups called *hunhuzi*, operating mostly in Manchuria, were infamous for such crimes. The members were ex-soldiers, local warlords and shepherds. The victims were both the Chinese and members of minorities. According to Ella Maillart, the number of *hunhuzi* was estimated at around 80 thousand.⁵ The authors of other articles occasionally mention modern historical events such as the civil war in China, the Boxer Uprising and the struggle of the Chinese government with opium.⁶ On the other side, in the Polish language, the adjective *Chinese* has more than one meaning; it is a symbol of distance and of something extraordinary.⁷

The Sino-Japan conflict

⁴ A. Wielawski, W. Winiarz, 'Riksha Kulis', *Naokolo Świata*, No. 130, February 1935, p. 69-72.

⁵ Ella Maillart, *Wysłanniczka specjalna do Mandżurii - w zderzeniu z Imperium*, Warszawa: Noir Sur Blanc, 2012, p.102.

⁶ Jerzy Bohdan Rychliński, 'Mah-Jongg', *Naokolo Świata*, No. 13, 1925, p. 96-118.

⁷ W.P. 'Aforyzmy chińskie (ilustracja J. Brzezińskiego)', *Naokolo Świata*, No. 90, October 1931, p. 77.

Authors of articles in the periodical regularly mentioned the China-Japan conflict, which started in 1931 with the occupation of Manchuria by the Kwantung Army. The editors of the magazine attempted to explain the genesis of the problem and the possibility of military action in the region. The article 'Anglicy Wschodu'⁸ (the English of the East) was devoted specifically to this subject. According to the author, the genesis of the conflict lay in the economic hegemony and overpopulation of Japan, the poor ordnance of China and the tumultuous history of Manchuria. The immediate cause of the military action in the region was Japanese aggression, which was carried out in response to an anti-Japanese economic boycott by the Chinese.⁹ The occupation of Manchuria was the subject of another article, which appeared in the 96th issue. It includes pictures of combat in Shanghai and civilians escaping from the occupied city.¹⁰

The outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War resulted in attempts to increase readers' interest in the situation both in the region and across China. The 191st issue was devoted mainly to China, including three articles on the subject: "Liryka chińska"¹¹ [the Chinese Lyric] by Idalia Badowska, 'Chiński Herostrates'¹² [the Chinese Herostratus] by A. Czermiński and "Prolog chińskiego dramatu"¹³ [The prologue to the Chinese drama] by Jan Waśniewski. Before the last of the three articles, there is a poem from the Book of Tao, translated by Jan Lemański. The tone of that poem is pacifistic.¹⁴

The main aim of the article "Prolog chińskiego dramatu" [The prologue to the Chinese drama], as with "Anglicy Wschodu" [the English of the East], is to explain the causes of the conflict in the Far East. The authors focus on the genesis of the problem, rather than assumptions as to further military actions. According to the author, the weakness of China was rooted in the 19th and 20th centuries: the destructive Taiping Rebellion and the Boxer Uprising, as well as

⁸ Louis Charap 'Anglicy Wschodu', *Naokolo Świata*, No. 95, March 1932, p.14-16.

⁹ Louis Charap 'Anglicy Wschodu' ...

¹⁰ 'Dni grozy w Szanghaju', *Naokolo Świata*, No. 96, April 1932, p. 12-15.

¹¹ Idalia Badowska, 'Liryka chińska', *Naokolo Świata*, No. 161, November 1937, p.12-17.

¹² A. Czermiński, 'Chiński Herostrates', *Naokolo Świata*, No. 161, November 1937, p.55-57.

¹³ Jan Waśniewski, 'Prolog chińskiego dramatu', *Naokolo Świata*, No. 161, November 1937, p. 4-11.

¹⁴ Jan Lemański 'Tao (z ksiąg Lao-Tse)', *Naokolo Świata*, No. 161, November 1937, p. 3.

bureaucratisation and the absence of reforms, despite the attempts of emperor Guanxu and Chinese thinkers/reformers.¹⁵

The Chinese people

Another subject of the articles is the description of typical Chinese people; extraordinarily polite and hospitable. One humorous short story, entitled 'W gościnie u Chińczyka' (a visit to a Chinese person), describes a tea-party at a Chinese home. The main character is a wealthy Chinese man, called Bo Daili. He is presented as an extremely polite and well-behaved host. The whole process of preparing the tea-party is complicated; it is important who will be invited and the invitation itself has a specific procedure. What is more, the etiquette during the party contains many rules, is elaborated, and even exorbitant. The conversation between the guests is official and polite. The hierarchy between the participants is also a matter of great importance.¹⁶

The mentioned article is of a satirical character and contains many hyperbolas; the host, who prepared over forty dishes, apologises to his guests for such a small dinner. The illustrations attached to the article present in a humorous way the interaction between the host and the guests. It is clear that the author's knowledge about customs in the Middle Kingdom is poor and based predominantly on stereotypes, as the types of meals are not mentioned, and the only two specific types of beverage are tea and wine. The hierarchy and ritualised behaviour of guests are merely explained by their politeness. In China, that kind of behaviour is strongly connected with one of the five virtues promoted by Confucius, a Chinese philosopher. The teachings of Confucius are still important in Chinese society and they play a key role in the life and behaviour of every Chinese. One of the virtues, called *li*, means to fulfil the rituals,¹⁷ therefore the behaviour of the host and the guests may seem exorbitant for the Western reader not familiar with this element of Chinese culture.

The Chinese were also regarded as people with a talent for doing business. Stanisław Miłkowski in his article presents a story about

¹⁵ Jan Waśniewski, 'Prolog chińskiego...

¹⁶ Mi-Hao-De, 'W gościnie u Chińczyka', *Naokoło Świata*, No. 83, March 1931, p. 137-142.

¹⁷ Zbigniew Wesołowski, 'Konfucjańskie podstawy porządku społecznego i zjawisko „tworzy”' in *Zrozumieć Chińczyków. Kulturowe kody społeczności chińskich*, Ewa Zajdler (ed.), Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademickie Dialog, 2011, p. 223-224.

two Chinese acquaintances, who over only a few years amassed a great fortune. One of them was a cook; the other was a water delivery worker. The author explains the background of their success, which is not only their resourcefulness and hard work, but also the fact that the Chinese had far lower material requirements and spent less money than the Europeans.¹⁸

Many Chinese gained knowledge on various subjects and became diligent students. One story mentions academic competitions, consisting of extremely difficult examinations, which took place in Tonkin. This event was held only once every three years. The rewards, given to only 300 people out of 10-12 thousand participants, were the title of bachelor. It consisted of several steps and the main topics were connected with religion or philosophy. Some of the participants needed to take part in this event ten times until they obtained the much-anticipated title, which is impressive given the fact that the average age of participants was around 50.¹⁹ One article, 'Studenci i Sędzia Piekieł' (The students and the Judge from Hell) is devoted to a story about a student called Chu who made acquaintances with the Judge from Hell, Lu. The powerful and grim inhabitant of the netherworld showed his affection for the dexterous student and helped him gain knowledge. Lu and Chu would hold long conversations on literary topics. The friendship between the mortal and the divine lasted a long time, until the death of Chu.²⁰

One of the articles describes Chinese medicine and the attitude of Chinese people towards the Western doctors. The traditional treatment was not as effective as the Western; however, this was strictly connected with the fact that Chinese medicine was often based on superstitions. The author highlights that there were specialists among Chinese doctors, who gained an expert knowledge in some areas of medicine, such as organ treatment and anaesthetics, but surgeons and dentists were of bad reputation.²¹

Women in Chinese society

¹⁸ Stanisław Miłkowski, 'Jak bogacą się Chińczycy', *Naokoło Świata*, No. 72, April 1930, p. 55-60.

¹⁹ Jerzy Radlicz, 'Turniej Uczonych w Tonkinie', *Naokoło Świata*, No. 30, 1926, p. 71-78.

²⁰ J.W. (tłum.), 'Studenci i Sędzia Piekieł (legenda chińska)', *Naokoło Świata*, No. 29, 1926, p.159-168.

²¹ J. B-r, 'Jak leczą w Chinach', *Naokoło Świata*, No. 35, 1927, p. 13-20.

Another popular subject among the articles is the role of a woman in Chinese society, which is often showed in a simplified way. According to one of the authors, Emil Theobald, the position of a wife in Chinese society at that time could be compared to a female servant or a slave. The author explains that the wife was completely dependent on her husband, and what is more, the tradition of polygamy was still preserved, especially in villages.²² In this case, the author did not understand every aspect of the Confucian system. According to the teachings of Confucius, women depended on their father first, then on their spouse, and last on their eldest son. The main aim of this system was to ensure the woman's safety, not only her life, but also financially. The man took full responsibility for her, and such a system allowed abuse. The husband had the right to divorce his wife if she did not give him a son, did not pay respect to her parents-in-law, or in the case of her falling seriously ill.²³

The typical Chinese woman was presented in a particularly negative light. According to the authors, women were honest but stupid and ill-mannered. Furthermore, they often did not have any deep feelings towards their husbands, and objectified them. Together with other wives, they would try to force the husband to purchase expensive robes and precious gems.²⁴ In a similar way, a woman is portrayed in a Chinese legend about the source of gods. It is a folk tale about a couple of elderly people: a woodsman called Chen Men and his whining wife Wu Li. One day, they drank water from a divine source. As a result, Chen Men became a young man and Wu Li, who was greedy and drunk too much water, became a newborn baby. The woodsman brought up his wife as if she was his daughter. Wu Li became a peaceful, smart and hard-working woman. This story, according to the author's opinion, explains why Chinese people would give away their young daughters to be brought up by the family of their future husband.²⁵ This legend presents how authors publishing in *Naokoło Świata* imagined an ideal Chinese wife. It is also an example of how they were trying to explain, incomprehensible from a European

²² Emil Theobald, 'Chińczyk i Chinka', *Naokoło Świata*, No. 139, November 1935, p. 27-32.

²³ Wolfram Eberhard, *Symbola chińskie – słownik*, Kraków: Universitas, 2007, p. 249-252.

²⁴ Emil Theobald, 'Chińczyk i Chinka'..., p. 27-32.

²⁵ Aleksander Monoz, 'Źródło Bogów-legenda chińska', *Naokoło Świata*, No. 184, August 1939, p.73-76.

point of view, Chinese customs. A typical practise of this time was arranging marriages, even among children. The woman, after marriage, had to leave her family home, and move to her husband's. She became a part of her spouse's family, even after his death. From the moment she left her own family, she could not worship her own ancestors. The ceremony of worshipping ancestors was important due to the fact that prayers were of help to all living family members who would obtain support from deceased ancestors. This ritual was supposed to help the deceased obtain eternal peace.²⁶

Emil Theobald, in his article about the role of a woman in Chinese society emphasises the distinct position of courtesans. He states that this job had a different connotation than in Europe; such women were free, respected, usually well-educated, and did not have any reason to feel guilty for their deeds. Furthermore, they had a better chance for a good marriage, than an ordinary Chinese woman.²⁷

Chinese culture

The Chinese people, according to the magazine *Naokoło Świata*, were supposed to be strongly attached to their culture and tradition. The evidence presented in articles on the subject, was that every Chinese person knew his ancient, national poetry and sang such poems at almost each occasion.²⁸ Another important element of Chinese culture was a ceremonial bow, which was a common way to show respect to the interlocutor. It was supposed to be "S" shaped and exquisite.²⁹ The Chinese were also open to different religions, as long as these beliefs had a positive influence on their society. For instance, many people from the Middle Kingdom supported the Y.M.C.A., despite the fact that the majority of people were Confucians, not Christians. They regarded Christian culture as helpful in promoting moral values among teenagers. Poul Super, in his article, quoted a Chinese man, who stated that lack of integrity was one of the biggest problems in his country.³⁰ The Chinese, he wrote, would follow European patterns as long as they could be beneficial for them: Chinese workers, who had contacts with Russians, took Russian first names; wealthy, powerful, substantial businessmen

²⁶ Edward Kajdański, *Chiny. Leksykon*, Warszawa: Książka i Wiedza, 2005, p. 123-124.

²⁷ Emil Theobald, 'Chińczyk i Chinka'..., p. 27-32.

²⁸ Idalia Badowska, 'Liryka chińska', *Naokoło Świata*, No. 161, November 1937, p. 12-17.

²⁹ Jerzy Bohdan Rychliński, 'Mah-Jongg'..., p. 96-118.

³⁰ Poul Super, 'Y.M.C.A. Na trzech kontynentach', *Naokoło Świata*, No. 15, 1925, p. 117-128.

wore European clothes.³¹ To show their modernity, rich Chinese people visited Western doctors, although they trusted traditional medicine in a greater degree. They often called for a folk healer after a visit at a western clinic, as well as in emergency.³²

The religion of the Chinese people plays a key role in some of the articles in *Naokoło Świata*, despite the fact that the authors did not always fully comprehend each aspect of the Chinese belief system. As an example, the article about a collector called Deo Jing, who was praying to both Buddha and his servants, Confucius and Laozi, even though while the three of them are equal, they represent different doctrines.³³ Confucius represents Confucianism, and Laozi – Taoism. The Chinese can simultaneously believe in all three, because each of them is responsible for a different aspect of life: Buddhism explains the afterlife, Confucianism presents moral and social rules, and Taoism teaches aspects of life such as health and longevity.³⁴ The articles also touch upon the matter of the soul in Chinese culture, as it is believed that people have three souls: the first one stays at the battlefield, the second stays in Heaven and the third stays at home with family. Taoism, on the other hand, presents another idea, according to which people have two souls: earthly *po*, which slowly disappears after death, and heavenly *hun*, which lives as long as it receives sacrifices. The magazine describes in detail Chinese beliefs, as in the article "Chiński Nowy Rok" (Chinese New Year), whose author, Tadeusz Szukiewicz, not only describes customs, but also the deities connected with the celebration of New Year in China, as well as the traditional stories of this festival.³⁵

The Chinese, presented as a pious nation, were still not as religious as the Mongolians. According to the article "Taniec Demonów" (The dance of the demons), 25% of Mongolian men were lamas. The author explained that every family chose one child to become a lama, in order to be able to receive his services free of charge. She also includes a piece of information that Mongolians practise

³¹ Stanisław Miłkowski, 'Jak bogacą się Chińczycy'... 1930, p. 55-60.

³² J. B-r, 'Jak leczą w Chinach'... p. 13-20.

³³ Mieczysław Sterling, 'Poborca likinu-Teo-dzing', *Naokoło Świata*, No. 38, 1927, p. 21-42.

³⁴ Leonid Wasiliew, *Kulty, religie i tradycje Chin*, Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1974, p. 377, 379.

³⁵ Tadeusz Szukiewicz, 'Chiński Nowy Rok', *Naokoło Świata*, No. 138, 1927, p. 145-158.

shamanism.³⁶ In the next part of the article, the author describes in detail the festival called *Dźerno* and the ceremonial dance Cz'an.³⁷

Some of the articles include more scholarly facts about the culture of China. Their language is not scientific; nonetheless it is still entertaining for the reader. One such article is devoted to Chinese writing, in which the author explains the basic grammar rules of this oriental language. It is worth mentioning that the author clearly had a good knowledge about the structure of Chinese characters. In his article, he uses terms such as *klucze* (keys) or *elementy* (elements) while referring to the compound ideograms. Furthermore, the article contains a few well described characters.³⁸ In another article, entitled "Jak powstają cyfry" (How numbers come about), one of the paragraphs explains the origins of Chinese numbers.³⁹

Some of the articles are devoted to the Chinese culture of tea. In one of them, the author presents a Chinese legend about the beginnings of tea in China, describing its role in Chinese medicine, and also includes the description of preparing the beverage. The author highlights that the Middle Kingdom is the country with the oldest tea culture history. The role of tea in Chinese is described as a ritual of purity, and even as a religious cult. According to the article, a special bond is created when a host and guest share a cup of tea.⁴⁰ One of the authors of an article in *Naokoło Świata*, includes the piece of information that China was the biggest exporter of tea at that time, and cites that they exported more 100,000 tons per year.⁴¹ Nowadays, tea is not as important as it used to be, and one of the reasons is the change in its preparation; the leaves are not ground, but are brewed. The Chinese say that with brewed tea, although the taste is unchanged, the poetry of the ceremony is lost.⁴²

The Chinese also had a major impact on the process of paper making, as it was invented as early as the 1st century BC. Chinese paper was widely known and popular at that time, because it was extremely

³⁶ Aleksandra Chelmicka, 'Taniec Demonów', *Naokoło Świata*, No. 175, 1938, p.18-19.

³⁷ Aleksandra Chelmicka, 'Taniec Demonów'..., p. 20-23.

³⁸ 'Pismo chińskie', *Naokoło Świata*, No. 107, March 1933, p. 81-82.

³⁹ B. Szarlitt; ' Jak powstały nasze cyfry', *Naokoło Świata*, No. 10, March 1926, p. 58-63.

⁴⁰ Michał Derenicz, 'Herbata', *Naokoło Świata*, No. 114, October 1933, p. 38-41.

⁴¹ Z. Kacprowski, 'Herbata', *Naokoło Świata*, No. 66, October 1929, p. 63-64.

⁴² Okakura Kakuzo, tłum. M. Derenicz, 'Pokój do herbaty', *Naokoło Świata*, No. 76, August 1930, p.121.

thin and strong.⁴³ Apart from paper, the Chinese were known for their silk, whose production was often a part-time job for farmers.⁴⁴ One of the articles presents the list of countries and their famous objects. According to this source, China was most famous for the Great Wall.⁴⁵ Some of the articles are devoted to cruel Chinese customs such as foot binding.⁴⁶

The Chinese were also interested in astronomy, as the earliest record about astronomical phenomena dates back to 2500 BC, during the reign of the mythical emperor Huangdi. Although the Chinese did not use sophisticated astronomical devices, they conducted deep research, discovered five planets and the immobility of the Polar Star. The lack of major discoveries was connected with little knowledge of mathematics, the proof of this being the invention of the reflecting telescope and the spotting scope as late as the 16th century.⁴⁷

At this point it is worth mentioning that during the Second Polish Republic, the Chinese people were associated with their characteristic haircut with a single braid. The name *warkoczowiec* ("the one who wears a braid") occasionally occurred in this magazine, as a synonym for the Chinese of that time.⁴⁸

The Mandarins

In another article, entitled "Ho-uen", the author described a typical Chinese mandarin. He would wear a small cap with a knob, a long doublet and oval-rounded slippers, with felt soles, as well as a long single braid and lacquered umbrella. The main character of the article was a judge, who wore glasses, which were a symbol of his wisdom.⁴⁹ The description of the mandarin's outfit is correct, although the knob on a cap symbolised not only that he is an official, but also his position in the Qing administration. What is more, in the picture of the judge, a characteristic *mandarin square*, quadrangle embroidery, is missing, which was one of the most important elements of the official

⁴³ Kazimierz Szymański, 'Dzieje papieru', *Naokoło Świata*, No. 15, 1925, p. 130-142.

⁴⁴ Jerzy Mariusz Taylor, 'O jedwabnictwie', *Naokoło Świata*, No. 18, 1925, p. 177-188.

⁴⁵ A. Świdwiński, 'Z czego słyną narody', *Naokoło Świata*, No. 19, 1925, p.187-188.

⁴⁶ W. Bernstein, 'Męczennice tradycji', *Naokoło Świata*, No. 10, March 1926, p. 135-138.

⁴⁷ Z.K., 'Astronomia w Państwie Niebieskim', *Naokoło Świata*, No. 32, 1926, p. 83-82.

⁴⁸ L.B., ' Pałac letni cesarzów chińskich', *Naokoło Świata*, No. 3, 1924, p. 129-131; B. Szarlitt; ' Jak powstały nasze cyfry' ... , p.58-63.

⁴⁹ Mariusz Zaruski 'Ho-uen – nowela z cyklu „Na morzach dalekich” napisał i ilustrował Marjusz Zaruski', *Naokoło Świata*, No. 7, 1924, p. 169-170.

robes at that time, indicating the specific position of the official.⁵⁰ In another article, it is mentioned that umbrellas were the attributes of the judges at academic competitions in Tonkin. The number of umbrellas, which were held over the mandarin's heads by servants, indicated their rank. For instance, four umbrellas was a sign that their owner was an exalted dignitary.⁵¹

Chinese history

The articles in the magazine also touch upon history. Idalia Badowska in her article describes Chinese lyric poetry, which together with Hindu and Hebrew, is world's oldest heritage of poetry.⁵² The ancient Chinese poetry is still comprehensible for contemporary Chinese people, as the writing was not changed, only the pronunciation of the characters. According to the author, the *Classis of Poetry*, or *Shijing*, which is believed to be compiled by Confucius himself, had a major impact on the Chinese people. In her article, she discusses different Chinese ancient and modern lyricists, concluding that Chinese culture is old and original, and that that is the reason for its survival, despite Western influence.

Another article which touches upon the history of China includes a story about the duke Qin, who became the first emperor of China, called Shi Huangdi. It describes his road to power, his cruel reign and struggle with the Confucians.⁵³ Another article is devoted to the emperor's palace, in which the author briefly describes the building, with admiration. Apart from the architecture, the article includes facts about the history of China, events such as the Boxer Uprising, the Western punitive expedition, as well as the struggle of empress Cixi with her son, and their deaths.⁵⁴ The language of this article, in contrast with previous ones, is colloquial. The author describes the Chinese as *warkoczowiec* (the one who wears a bride) and their outfits are called bizarre, which shows his poor knowledge on customs. He is surprised by peacock

⁵⁰ W. J. Sidichmienow, *Chiny Karty Przeszłości*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Iskry, 1978, p. 180.

⁵¹ Jerzy Radlicz, 'Turniej Uczonych w Tonkinie'..., p.77.

⁵² Idalia Badowska, 'Liryka chińska'..., p. 12-17.

⁵³ A. Czermiński, 'Chiński Herostrates...

⁵⁴ L.B. 'Pałac letni cesarzów chińskich'..., p. 129-131.

feathers at the top of mandarins' hats.⁵⁵ The ornamental elements on mandarins' hats were not only decorative, but also indicative of the rank of the civil official.⁵⁶ The article mentions the emperor's concubines with fox tails, who organised secret, diabolical meetings in the mountains. Although Chinese folklore describes a story about female demons who seduce men and take away their vital force, but unlike in the article, they were supposed to live in woods and mountains, not in the emperor's palace. They were not witches and they did not organise Sabbath, as the author claimed.⁵⁷

Travelling

Some of the articles were devoted to travelling. Tadeusz Ross based his article on a report of one of the Christian missionaries, a member of the Society of the Divine World in China. The clergyman described his experience gained while visiting lamas in Kumrum.⁵⁸ He presented in detail not only the architecture and history of the temple, but also the monks' customs. Two the most interesting and memorable of his notes were about butter and prayer; the traveller mentioned that the aromatic candles and oil ointment were made of butter. Every year, during the celebration called the *Butter Festival*, the people of Kumrum would conduct a procession with statues of Buddha, animals and other figurines, which were made of butter. The author was fascinated by the atmosphere of the prayer everywhere, and its key role in the life of the land.⁵⁹ Another article which touches upon this subject is "W krainie Lamów" (In the land of the Lamas). It mentions Choni, a dukedom which in 1928 became a part of the Republic of China.⁶⁰ The article „Śladami ekspedycji himalajskiej” (In the tracks of a Himalayan expedition) brings up a similar topic. However in this case, the author pays more attention to the description of the mountain's fauna and flora, and not the difference between the Chinese and European historical architecture and customs.⁶¹

⁵⁵ W. J. Sidichmienow, *Chiny Karty Przeszłości*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Iskry, 1978, p. 180.

⁵⁶ Edward Kajdański, *Chiny. Leksykon...*, p. 145

⁵⁷ Wolfram Eberhard, *Symbole chińskie - słownik...*, p. 132-134.

⁵⁸ Tadeusz Ross, 'U Lamów w Kumrum', *Naokoło Świata*, No.135, July 1935, p. 53-57.

⁵⁹ Tadeusz Ross, 'U Lamów w Kumrum'..., p. 53-57.

⁶⁰ W. Peszkowa, 'W krainie Lamów', *Naokoło Świata*, No.66, October 1929, p. 13-24.

⁶¹ Adam Czeżowski, 'Śladami ekspedycji himalajskiej', *Naokoło Świata*, No. 16, 1925, p. 157-190.

Another interesting reportage was written by Poul Super, the head of a Y.M.C.A in Poland. He describes his experience in China and Japan.⁶² Readers could find out about a five-member Polish expedition to the Altai Mountains which took place in 1917. Eugeniusz Krosnowski, the author of another article on this subject, describes not only adventures, but also the customs of the natives, and fauna and flora.⁶³ The article entitled "Szanghaj" (Shanghai) is devoted to a description of the people, architecture and industry. The author mentions that the metropolis is the second world's most important international port; the first at that time was New York, the third - London. Despite this the city was safe and peaceful. The journalist sadly comments that the streets of Shanghai are cleaner and in better condition than in Warsaw.⁶⁴

Chinese legends and popular stories

Besides popular science articles and reportage, some of the authors focused on legends and short stories about China. One of them is a story written by Amelia Hertz, who describes the 18th century emperor Qianlong, as well as a sculptor called Shu Yan and his beloved Chan Xian.⁶⁵ The author of the story about the emperor Qianlong included illustrations, which are worthy of mention, as they are an interesting way of popularising knowledge of this period. The illustrations present a statue of a dragon on a silver stand, which is holding a crystal ball; a tiny room screen, made of ebony and jade, with a bird and a phoenix sitting on a peony tree, and the emperor's poem; a sculpture of a goddess standing on a dragon, made of coral; a statue of a lady with a parrot and a peach tree. These treasures also play a key role in the story. The author presents, in an innovative way, antiques from the period of the Chinese monarchy.⁶⁶

Another examples are "Źródło Bogów" (The source of the gods), a folk tale, mentioned earlier in this article,⁶⁷ and "Studenci i Sędzia Piekieł" (Students and the Judge from Hell), a story which describes a friendship between a student Chu and the Judge from Hell,

⁶² Poul Super, 'Y.M.C.A. Na trzech kontynentach'..., p. 117-128.

⁶³ Eugeniusz Krosnowski, 'Polscy podróżnicy na Altaju', *Naokoło Świata*, No. 53, September 1928, p. 77-94.

⁶⁴ A. Rolicz, 'Szanghaj', *Naokoło Świata*, No. 25, May 1926, p. 41-56.

⁶⁵ Z.K. 'Wielki cesarz Czien-Lung'..., p. 65-78.

⁶⁶ Z.K. 'Wielki cesarz Czien-Lung'..., p. 65-78.

⁶⁷ Aleksander Monoz, 'Źródło Bogów'..., p. 73-76.

Lu.⁶⁸ One of the stories, "Ho-uen" presents a history of a mandarin and a judge, called Daochun Bai, who solved a mystery of the death of a fisherman, called Zao Li.⁶⁹ Criminal stories were also a popular subject for the magazine, for instance a story about a doctor of demonology, Anders, who conducted an investigation on the death of his friend, Vosgan. As the result of the investigation, the protagonist discovered a secret opium den, whose owner is a Chinese mandarin. The story includes Japanese motives, such as Andrew imagining a dancing geisha after taking the drug.⁷⁰

Romance stories were also a popular theme in *Naokolo Świata*. One such article describes the story from the Tang dynasty about Chang and Yin-Ying.⁷¹ The article "Poborca likingu" (The lijin collector) describes the dramatic fate of the family of an official called Deojing. As a result of the chaos of the civil war, Deojing and his three children die in dramatic circumstances.⁷² The magazine includes a fragment of a book by Antoni Ferdynand Ossendowski "Widma Szanghaju" (The phantoms of Shanghai).⁷³ The 161st issue contains a poem from the Tao book, translated by Jan Lemański.⁷⁴

Conclusion

Subjects connected with China were popular in the magazine *Naokolo Świata*. The articles touched upon different aspects of Chinese culture, occasionally presenting the current situation in the country. Only two of the articles, entitled "Prolog chińskiego dramatu" (The prologue to the Chinese drama) and "Anglicy Wschodu" (The English of the East) are connected to the Second Sino-Japanese War.⁷⁵ Such a small amount of information on this subject is linked with the character of the magazine; the main aim of *Naokolo Świata* was to popularise any kind of information, not only the current political

⁶⁸ 'Studenci i Sędzia Piekieł' ..., p. 159-168.

⁶⁹ Mariusz Zaruski, 'Ho-uen'..., p. 169-170.

⁷⁰ Jerzy Bohdan Rychliński, 'Mah-Jongg'..., p. 96-118.

⁷¹ Ignacy Schreiber, 'Romans panny Yin-Ying', *Naokolo Świata*, No. 19, 1925, p. 169-186.

⁷² Mieczysław Sterling, 'Poborca likinu'..., p. 21-42.

⁷³ The book describes the living conditions and political situation both in Shanghai, and in broader perspective - in the whole country; the civil war in China, anti-Japanese public mood and the boycott of Japanese goods. Antoni Ferdynand Ossendowski, 'Widma Szanghaju', *Naokolo Świata*, No. 142, February 1936, p. 19-20.

⁷⁴ Tao' tłum. Jan Lemański, *Naokolo Świata*, No.161, November 1937, p. 3.

⁷⁵ Jan Waśniewski, 'Prolog chińskiego ... L. Charap, 'Anglicy Wschodu...

situation. That is why a great number of articles describe the traditions, customs, festivals and beliefs of the people of China. An article had to meet two criteria: it should surprise the reader, and should appeal to the readers' poor knowledge about China.⁷⁶ In order to enrich their knowledge, the articles were devoted to tea, Chinese writing and silk production etc, presented in a straightforward way.

The task the authors faced was not difficult, according to one of the journalists. Emil Theobald, in his article "Chińczyk i Chinka" (The Chinese man and the Chinese woman) mentions that the sources of knowledge on China, even for well-educated Europeans, were limited. At that time, they were thought to know merely that the Chinese wear long, single braids, women cultivate a foot binding custom, that there is tea and porcelain in China, that the Great Wall is important, and that this is the land of the mandarins. Many Chinese customs were incomprehensible for the Europeans, such as eating hundred-years-old eggs.⁷⁷

The quality of the article depended on the author; better-informed authors were Michał Derenicz, Tadeusz Ross, Aleksandra Chełmicka, Tadeusz Szukiewicz and Emil Theobald. The articles of those authors who had personal experience of travelling in China are filled with a vast knowledge of the customs. Their erudition was influenced by their experience rather than knowledge on the subject itself. Those authors are Emil Theobald, Jan Kowalewski, Edward Kuryło and Tadeusz Ross. The latter described the visit of a missionary to the Kumrum monastery,⁷⁸ and although his article contains a great number of oversimplifications, it is connected with the popular science character of the magazine, as well as his stereotyped assumptions. The authors presented their experience from a European point of view, frequently comparing it to European standards, and lacking a deep understanding of the differences between Western and Asian cultures. One of the examples is an article on the role of the women in Chinese society.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ One of the articles begins with the words 'Japan - wonderful oasis of the Far East, the country of flowers, sun, geishas, is the primeval land of new religions, philosophy, and spiritual concepts, all the time bringing to life new prophets of different religions I. Koss, 'Oomoto (nowy ruch religijny w Japonii)', No. 24, April 1926, p. 71-80.

⁷⁷ Emil Theobald, 'Chińczyk i Chinka'..., p. 27-32.

⁷⁸ Tadeusz Ross, 'U Lamów w Kumrum'..., p. 53-57.

⁷⁹ Emil Theobald, 'Chińczyk i Chinka'..., p. 27-32.

The authors differentiate between Chinese and the Japanese civilisations, and do not mix them. Emil Theobald, in one of his articles, highlights the individuality of the Middle Kingdom's culture, as opposite to Japanese culture.⁸⁰ However, some of the authors find common aspects of the two cultures, such as the tea ceremony, the role of courtesans in society and the function of characters in the Chinese and the Japanese language.

Besides popular science articles, the magazine *Naokoło Świata* includes short stories connected with China, some of which are original legends translated by the authors. Other popular genres were crime and romance, which often included descriptions of Chinese beliefs.

To sum up, concerning this topic, there are 25 works on China in total; 16 popular science articles, 8 stories and one translation of a poem. The number of works touching upon both China and Japan is four. However, the proportion changes when considered seven articles on the lands under the direct influence of Chinese culture. It should be taken into account that the number of works on China in the 161st issue was influenced by the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War; this issue contains three articles and a translation of the Tao poem. It is worth mentioning that articles devoted to China constitute one third of the total number of the works in *Naokoło Świata*.

⁸⁰ Emil Theobald, 'Chińczyk i Chinka'..., p. 27-32.

