

A NEW STUDY OF THE 1950S WANG XILIAN'S WHITE SNAKE LEGEND FIGURES ON THE WHITE GROUND FAMILLE ROSE CONG VASE — PART OF THE "EXPORT EXHIBITION PORCELAIN" FROM EARLY TIME OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, COLLECTION AT THE REGIONAL ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUM, PLOVDIV, BULGARIA

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Abstract: This study examines a significant mid-20th-century Chinese porcelain painting recently identified in a foreign museum collection. The focus of the article is directed towards the relationship between the folk tale used as the main motif and the socio-historical context of the period. Emphasis is placed on the artist's aesthetic choices, as well as on the cultural and educational exchange of exhibits from local traditional crafts and decorative-applied arts within the socialist countries of that time.

Keywords: Central and Eastern Europe; Cultural Activities; Intercultural Exchange; Inter-institutional Exchange; Culture.

НОВООТКРИТА ВАЗА С ЖИВОПИС ВЪРХУ ПОРЦЕЛАН НА УАН СИЛЯН ОТ 50-ТЕ ГОДИНИ НА ХХ В. ПО МОТИВИ ОТ „ЛЕГЕНДА ЗА БЯЛАТА ЗМИЯ“ (ВАЗАТА Е БИЛА ЕКСПОНАТ В „ПЪТУВАЩАТА ИЗЛОЖБА НА ПОРЦЕЛАН“ ОТ РАННИТЕ ГОДИНИ СЛЕД ОСНОВАВАНЕТО НА КИТАЙСКАТА НАРОДНА РЕПУБЛИКА, А ДНЕС Е ЧАСТ ОТ ФОНДА НА РЕГИОНАЛЕН ЕТНОГРАФСКИ МУЗЕЙ – ПЛОВДИВ)

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Wang, Xiliang (王锡良, Male, 1922–2023), hailed from Yixian (黟县), Anhui Province (安徽省), was born in Jingdezhen (景德镇), Jiangxi Province (江西省), China. His surname, "Wang," is one of the most common in China, and his given name, "Xi-liang," symbolizes "a heavenly good fortune" (天赐良缘; in Classical Chinese, "锡" can be used interchangeably with "赐"). Wang Xiliang joined the Jingdezhen Arts and Crafts

Cooperative in 1952, and in 1954, he moved to the Jingdezhen Ceramic Arts and Crafts Society. He was later transferred to the Jingdezhen Ceramic Research Institute (which changed its name to The China Light Industry Ministry's Ceramic Research Institute, etc., now is Ceramic Research Institute of Light Industry of China). In 1959, he received the title of "Ceramic Artist" from Jingdezhen, and in 1979, the Chinese Ministry of Light Industry awarded him the title of "Chinese Craft Artist (which was later upgraded to "Chinese Craft Master" in 1988)." 2005, he was honored with the "Lifetime Achievement Award in Chinese Craft Art."

Wang Xiliang left school at a young age and apprenticed to his uncle, Wang Dafan (王大凡), a core member of the "Eight Friends of Zhushan Mountain (珠山八友)" painting group, which blended the traditions of literati painting with porcelain art, well influencing both the late Qing imperial period and the early Republican era. Wang studied traditional blue-and-white and famille rose porcelain painting techniques in his youth, eventually breaking free from the constraints of the Zhushan (stands as the commanding height within the Imperial Kiln Factory, located in the heart of Jingdezhen's historic old town) style and incorporating modern elements into his work, with a particular focus on overglaze enamels and New-decorative-colour techniques, pioneering a new path in the art of porcelain painting.

This *White Snake Legend* (白蛇传) figures vase is one of Wang Xiliang's early masterpieces, showcasing his unique approach to porcelain painting. It is currently housed in the Regional Ethnographic Museum in Plovdiv (Регионален етнографски музей-Пловдив), Bulgaria. In recent years, following preliminary research, the museum at one point provisionally referred to it in Bulgarian as Cyrillic word "конг,"¹ which phonetically

¹ The Museum's original record in Bulgarian reads (Collection Inventory Book, p. 56): 1648 Ваза порцеланова бяла с правоъгълни страни с две китайки и двама китаеца в национално облекло. Височина 28 см. Китайски произход. Оценка 12 лв (in English : 1648, Porcelain vase, white, with rectangular sides, featuring two Chinese women and two Chinese men in traditional clothing, height 28 cm, Chinese origin, Estimated value 12 BGN; The BGN, or Lev is the currency unit of Bulgaria). While, according to that Inventory Book, the earliest record of this item is listed under temporary receipt and registration number 31 (Header Column 2). It was first recorded on September 6, 1965, and identified as originating from China (both noted in Header Column 5). At the time, it was stored in Cabinet No. 3 of the museum (Header Column 8) and was not designated as a Bulgarian national treasure (Header Column 9). A more recent note in the final remarks column (Header Column 10) indicates that, following an assessment conducted on June 25, 2010, this Cong-shaped vase—at least along with items numbered 1642 to 1663—was reclassified from the second major category, "Crafts," to the category of "Furniture and Interior." // [bg: Оригинален запис от инвентарната книга на РЕМ – Пловдив (стр. 56): „1648/ЕМ-П 2(5) Ваза порцеланова бяла с правоъгълни страни с 2 китайки и двама китаеца в национално облекло. Височина 28 см. Китайски произход. Оценка 12 лв.“ В най-ранния запис от инвентарната книга на музея е отбелязано, че вазата

transliterate the Chinese term "琮" (in Latin, cong, pronounced "ts'hoŋ²"). The vase's outer side features a depiction of a female figure (lower right of "Xiao-Qing" scene), with a rectangular seal reading "錫良(Xi-liang)" in red, and another inscription "一九五四年造" on the base, stating "Made in 1954." The vase is shaped in the Cong form, with a round mouth, a ring foot, and a hollow rectangular cuboid, symbolizing the Chinese philosophical concept of "heaven is round, and the earth is square(天圓地方)." The rim is adorned with interlocking motifs of cloud, pomegranate and bat-like patterns (the cloud and the bat symbolize 'auspicious fortune', and the pomegranate symbolizes fertility). At the same time, the four corners of the body, in addition to the Buddhist-yellow square border lines, are decorated with lotus-cloud-like motifs. The lower foot is decorated with a continuous motif of deformed cicada and lotus flowers, while three golden bands encircle the mouth and foot. These all represent a typical Qing Dynasty Archaic Imitation(仿古) or Antique-style(復古) that continued to be produced in Jingdezhen. From the late imperial period to the modern era in China, due to its large, flat, four-panel rectangular surface, the Cong Vase was often custom-ordered or purchased by artists as a medium for porcelain painting. In other words, they were not created by the master painters themselves and collaborating journeyman, but were mass-produced by porcelain craftsmen.

On the white porcelain body of the vase bottle, Wang Xiliang employed a panoramic composition, using glaze to outline and color the design. On each of the four sides, he depicted one of the main characters from the famous Chinese folk tale The White Snake Legend, which gradually took shape during the Tang and Song dynasties (唐、宋, 618-1279) and became especially popular towards the end of the Ming and early Qing periods (明末清初, 1573-1723), that combine elements of Buddhism and Confucianism. Through

е постъпила с квитанция № 31 (вж. колона № 2 от таблицата в инвентарната книга). Като дата на местонахождение е посочен 06.09.1965 г., а като страна на произход – Китай (и двете са отразени в колона № 5 от таблицата в инвентарната книга). По онова време вазата се е съхранявала в шкаф №3 (вж. колона № 8) и не е регистрирана в Държавния музеен фонд като предмет с „национално значение“ (вж. колона № 9). В последната колона от таблицата в инвентарната книга има бележка от по-късен период (вж. колона № 10), според която вазата цун е била повторно инвентаризирана на 25.06.2010 г. и заедно с експонати от № 1642 до № 1663 е преместена от фонд „Занаяти“ във фонд „Мебели и интериор“.]

While, The Regional Ethnographic Museum in Plovdiv's Collection Inventory Book (circa 1960s–1970s), handwritten information in the red box pertains to the porcelain vase numbered 1648; The ten column headers are: 1.Collection Number, 2.Receipt Number and Date of Record, 3.Museum Object Name and Description (shape, material, dimensions or weight, condition, etc.), 4.Quantity, 5.Provenance (where, how, when, and by whom the item was discovered), 6.Name and Contact Address of Buyer or Donor, 7. Appraisal, Protocol Number, and Date of the Document, 8.Storage Location, 9. National Cultural Relic and State Museum Assigned Collection Number, 10.Remarks).

this, Wang Xiliang created a continuous, dramatic narrative space. The story centers around a marriage that defies societal taboos, symbolizing resistance to oppression, and highlights universal human emotions such as joy, sorrow, hatred, and filial piety with righteousness. Commonly, synthesizing the materials compiled by literati of successive dynasties, with particular emphasis on the prominent circulating editions of the late Qing and early Republican periods, the plot follows: Bai Suzhen, a thousand-year-old snake spirit, repays a debt of gratitude from a past life by borrowing an umbrella at West Lake (西湖, in Hangzhou) and marrying the mortal Xu Xian; after their marriage, Bai accidentally drinks realgar wine during the Dragon Boat Festival, revealing her proper snake form, which frightens Xu Xian to death; determined to save him, she steals the magical Lingzhi mushroom (灵芝, holy or Reishi mushroom, named Ganoderma) to revive him; Fa Hai, a monk at Jinshan Temple (金山寺) who is both human and demon, imprisons Xu Xian in the name of maintaining order between humans and demons; Enraged, Bai Suzhen, accompanied by her female snake maid Xiao-Qing, confronts Fa Hai in a battle of magic; as a result of the flood that submerges Jinshan Temple, Bai breaks divine laws and is ultimately suppressed by Fa Hai beneath the Leifeng Pagoda also in Hangzhou (杭州雷峰塔); eventually, Xu and Bai's son, as top scholar after the imperial examination (状元及第), sacrifices himself to the pagoda to free his mother, and the family is finally reunited².

The vase features four panels with depictions of the characters by Wang's paintings:

1. **Fa Hai** (法海, the intended meaning could be conveyed as "boundlessness of the Dharma Sea"), **with a beard**. In the portrait, he wears a crown adorned with five Buddhas and has a proud and upright posture. His thick eyebrows are deeply furrowed, his eyes are sharp and cold, and his face is filled with anger, resentment and dogmatism. In his left hand, he holds a small monk's alms bowl (钵盂), while his right hand grips a monk's staff (锡杖) with three wheels, four strands, and four rings. His Haiqing (海青) inner layer is a yellow robe, cross-collared and left-front-panel (交领右衽) garment, and a red robe fastened with circular knot ring-buttons, symbolizing the traditional Futian

² 梦花馆主编：《白蛇传前后集》(The Legend of the White Snake: Parts I and II), 《前白蛇传·第三十一回-巧换》·北京·中国书店(影广益书局版)·1988年版, 第117页。

ancestral robe (福田祖衣) worn over it. On his feet, he wears white cloth-tied socks and black monk's shoes with white soles featuring a cloud-patterned embroidery and a vertical ridge on the upper. The alms bowl he holds is rendered in an unusual purple color, setting it apart from the yellow of his monk's robes. This choice likely refers to the "purple crystal (紫晶) alms bowl," suggesting the bowl is made of crystal rather than the more common purple-gold (紫金) alloy. The subtle implication here is that Buddhist ritual implements possess the power to subdue evil spirits. Furthermore, this could be a veiled reference to the ultimate fate of Bai Suzhen, who is eventually imprisoned beneath the Leifeng Pagoda in Hangzhou.

2. **Bai Suzhen** (白素贞, the intended meaning could be conveyed as "pure and innocent") **stands with her right hand resting on a sword.** Wearing a green cloak with yellow trim, cloud-shaped shoulder (云肩) decoration and a front opening(对襟), and beneath it, she dons a simple purple robe and a military-style green and yellow rim waist wrap with blue and white background featuring tortoise-shell pattern (龟背纹). Her blue shoes are adorned with cloud-patterned-like three-petaled red lotus (三瓣红莲云头青鞋), with white soles. A white snake-shaped ornament coils in her hair, signifying her thousand-year-old identity as a snake deity. This, along with her purple robe, suggests that Fa Hai's purple ritual implement, that alms, is intended to subdue this particular demon. In her left hand, Bai Suzhen holds a dark red Lingzhi, which not only alludes to the legendary tale's segment of "stealing the herb to save her husband" but also highlights her divine nature and healing powers, symbolizing the union of the righteous spirit and the immortal in one body. This contrasts sharply with Fa Hai's red robe: While Fa Hai wears his robe outwardly, Bai Suzhen reverently holds the Lingzhi for her compassion and righteousness.
3. **Xiao-Qing** (小青, the intended meaning could be conveyed as "immaculate and unblemished"; when linked to Bai Suzhen's name, it reinforces and embodies purity, integrity, an open heart, and a spotless, guilt-free soul, reflecting the Chinese meanings of "清清白白, 坦坦荡荡, 无罪亦无瑕"), **the**

blue-dressed heroine. Her hair is in double-ringed buns, and she wears a yellow-edged and left-front-panel blue robe. She is depicted turning her body, drawing out a sword slung across the back with her right hand. The red silk ribbon fastened at the waist, divided into three sections, each adorned with two loops, flutters gently with movement, the sharp edge remains upward, indicating that she is preparing for a battle or duel following the debate between Bai Suzhen and Fa Hai.

4. **Xu Xian** (许仙, the intended meaning could be conveyed as "betroth to an immortal family"), **the scholar, stands out.** He is dressed in a green-edged and left-front-panel purple robe, with a yellow silk sash tied around the waist, and a blue Tang-style cap with green jade inlaid, echoing the blue of Xiao-Qing's attire. The ribbons of his cap are exaggeratedly long, one flowing forward to convey a sense of movement. His arms are folded within the sleeves of his robe, and he is slightly bent forward. His face is pale and gaunt, with full red lips. His ambiguous expression—half smile, half sorrow—suggests his inner conflict and helplessness in the tangled relationships between humans, monks, and demons. Xu Xian's purple robe, red- cloud-patterned blue shoes (红云头青云履), etc., not only suggest his role as Bai Suzhen's husband, Xiao-Qing serves as a maid in the family, but also allude to Fa Hai's desire to subdue the snake spirit, and the purple robe symbolizes Xu Xian's eventual transformation, signaling that his physical and spiritual being will undergo a profound change.

It is noteworthy that Wang incorporated his physical traits into the portrayal of Xu Xian, adding a special touch of the artist's presence to the traditional iconography. From a technical perspective, despite the limited number of four figures depicted (taking a clockwise direction on the bottle, the characters are Fa Hai, Bai Suzhen, Xu Xian, and Xiao-Qing; in terms of composition and figure sizing, Fa Hai is noticeably the tallest, followed by Bai, Xiao, and Xu), the artwork achieves both meticulous line drawing and expressive detail. The figures' body outlines are well-balanced, with the facial features following the principles of modern sketching. Moderate handling of light, shadow, and perspective creates a lively and three-dimensional effect. However, the depiction of the hands, such as Fa Hai holding the alms bowl, seems slightly rigid. While it reflects the aesthetic features of the era, it also shows that the artist was still in the process of

mastering the integration of Western painting techniques with the application of Chinese glazes and brushes. As for the robe and garment lines, Wang employed traditional Chinese "iron-line drawing (铁线描)" for the figures' attire. The lines are carefully interwoven and clearly defined, presenting a dynamic, energetic look, with occasional brushstrokes showing traces of tremulous brushstrokes (战笔) at the turns. The outer garments of Bai Suzhen and Xu Xian, along with their collar edges, are further embellished with floral accents.

The color scheme of the Cong Vase follows the distinctive methods, including "grounded pastel (落地粉彩)," from the Zhushan School, where, instead of using the hazy "glass white glaze (玻璃白料)" as a base, the outlines are directly drawn with low-grade cobalt blue pigment (生料) that turns black after firing, then filled and coated with translucent "snow white glaze (雪白料)" mixed with coloring agents. This approach allows for vivid details, especially in the facial features. The application of color enhances the individuality of the faces, building upon the traditional "three whites (white highlights on the forehead, nose, and chin)" by adding a "five-white gradient or blending" effect, highlighting the eyelids and tragus with a smooth transition of light and shadow by using thickened "glass white glaze"(a core glaze used in overglaze famille-rose porcelain decoration, opaque and milky-white both before and after firing, with a pronounced relief texture, though its color rendering is relatively stiff). After the piece is fired in the kiln, it presents a delicate, jade-like raised relief. The handling of the large, flowing sleeves also showcases Wang's mastery, layering colors to capture the texture of the fabric with softness and precision.

This porcelain painting further exemplifies Wang's departure from traditional Republican-era porcelain painting and themes. Though the design and clothing retain the old style, the figures are selected with a style more akin to Han Chinese (汉地) everyday attire or general opera costumes from the Song and Ming dynasties. While inheriting the practices of the Zhushan School, he applied Western artistic methods, pushing the depiction of traditional figures toward a more realistic, figurative style focused on proportion, structure, and movement. The scene gives off a strong sense of monodrama and theatricality, influenced by folk opera performances. Also, the Legend topic aligns more with popular tradition and revolutionary aspects.

Compared to similar works by Wang around the time of 1949, which typically feature longer inscriptions (长款), this vase only bears a single red seal, reflecting his shift toward shorter, more concise and minimal inscriptions and signatures (短款、穷款) in the post-revolutionary period, like the facts commented on by the researchers. This suggests that, as represented by Wang Xiliang, artists who transitioned from the old society adjusted their artistic practices in the 1950s, seeking to redefine their style and positioning in a rapidly changing social context. So, this era's works all clearly embody the blending of old and new approaches. In conclusion, this porcelain painting fully demonstrates Wang's deep understanding of transforming the Chinese brushwork system into a language of overglaze, inheriting the lingering echoes of the Zhushan School's literati porcelain while being influenced by modern artistic movements. This work marks a crucial turning point in his creative development, revealing the historical context of "using the ancient for the present, and the Western for Chinese purposes" in the broader social aesthetic and political landscape.

The inscription "Made in 1954" at the bottom of the vase indicates that the painting was completed no earlier than 1954, though this may refer to the production year of the porcelain vase rather than the painting work itself. Additionally, there are two registration labels with Chinese, Latin, Arabic numbers and Cyrillic characters "磁213/RPR" and "1648/EM-п2(5)" (traces of damaged and previously adhered old labels can be observed on the inner edge of the vase's rim as well as the bottom ring foot), likely indicating the item's category and catalog information. According to museum staff, the Chinese label was affixed before the item entered the museum collection in 1965. Based on the museum's opinion, the preliminary judgment is that it may be an abbreviation for categories, nations (like Romania was called the "Romanian People's Republic"-the Republica Populară Română, from late 1947 to 1965, which abbreviated "RPR"³) and related activity information. Here, "磁" refers to ceramics, porcelain factories, etc. As for the Cyrillic letter codes, the museum has informed us that they are used for collection registration counting and as abbreviations for the museum's name, also indicating that at first it is classified under the second major category for Collection, "Crafts", and then moved to fifth major category for Collection, "Furniture – Interior Design."

³ (英) 尼古拉·克莱伯 (Nicolae Klepper): 《罗马尼亚史》(*Romania: An Illustrated History*), 李腾译·上海·中国出版集团东方出版中心·2010年版, 第187-194页; Hitchings, Keith. *A Concise History of Romania*. New York: Cambridge UP, 2014, 226, 275.

The 1950s were a key period in Wang Xiliang's artistic development and transformation, during which he participated in the "Founding Porcelain" (建国瓷) project led by the Ministry of Light Industry of P. R. China. He began to experiment with sketching, color, and life drawing under the guidance of artists such as Zhu Da-nian (祝大年, 1916-1995), Gao Zhuang (高庄, 1905-1986), Zheng Ke (郑可, 1906-1987), and Mei Jian-ying (梅健鹰, 1916-1990). In the spring of 1954, a batch of ceramic works was needed for touring Exhibitions (named "The People's Republic of China Arts and Crafts Exhibition," or the "Exhibition of Ethnic Cultural Crafts Work" "The Exhibition of Ethnic Art and Handicrafts in Socialist Countries"), which refers to the "Export Exhibition Porcelain," in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and other countries, organized by the Ministry of Culture of P. R. China and the Central Academy of Fine Arts. Wang integrated traditional themes with modern techniques, using observational sketching to create works such as the "Picking Tea and Catching Butterflies (《采茶扑蝶》)" plate. This porcelain vase may well be one of those pieces. Later that year, Wang traveled to Beijing (北京) with ceramic works for a pre-exhibition, representing the art community of Jingdezhen, accompanied by Liu Yucen (刘雨岑), one of members of the "Eight Friends of Zhushan Mountain". Based on these, it is likely that the Vase was involved in international exhibitions, such as those in Eastern Europe.

According to the "Wang Xiliang Chronology," his work "Picking Tea and Catching Butterfly" porcelain plate was selected for the Exhibitions in Eastern Europe in 1954. The vase entered the museum's collection after 1965. It is possible that this vase was later touring exhibited in Eastern Europe or given as a diplomatic gift or state present, perhaps to Bulgaria and Plovdiv, as part of post-WWII international cultural exchanges⁴. While in June 2023, Professor Lian Mian (连冕) a Chinese Hong Kong-based professor invited to Bulgaria for an official overseas visit, confirmed it as one of Wang Xiliang's early masterpieces at the Museum. His on-site research, conducted while acting as the principal

⁴ According to colleagues at the Museum—who reviewed the initial English draft of this article via email between April and May 2025, and particularly agreed with the hypothesis that the Vase by Wang may have been part of international exhibitions in the early years of the People's Republic of China—the classification codes 2 and 5 likely shed light on the provenance of the item. That is, it was originally acquired as a craft object for international exhibitions but was subsequently reclassified, at the time of registration, under the general category of furniture and interior design. As for the reason behind this reclassification, one might further speculate that it was simply regarded as a decorative object for a domestic setting, leading to a relatively modest valuation and a failure to recognize its potential as a prestigious cross-cultural gift or a significant work of transnational artistic creation.

curator in initiating and advancing the proposed exhibition in China of Bulgaria's nationally significant and large-scale hoards of excavated classical gold artefacts, and while providing expert guidance to museum, historical, and curatorial professionals in Bulgaria on identification, evaluation, and classification of Chinese objects held in national and regional collections, also revealed that related works, including paintings by He Xiang-ning (何香凝, 1878-1972), Xu Bei-hong (徐悲鸿, 1895-1953), and a pierced, rotating ivory sphere (镂空转心象牙球) with other crafts, are housed in the Bulgarian capital Sofia's National Gallery (Националната галерия-София). The Vase's provenance demonstrates the international recognition of Wang's artistry and offers valuable insight into the cultural exchanges of the mid-20th century socialist bloc. Yes, the core role of craft art in diplomatic and multilateral contexts is further emphasized. Furthermore, Wang Xiliang's works, the last prominently featured in a significant thematic exhibition during his lifetime, were showcased in the "Historical Truth and National Artisan: Special Exhibition of Chinese Ceramic Painting" in the first half of 2023, organized by the China Academy of Art. Professor Lian, as the director of the Museum of Folk Art at CAA, chaired and curated the exhibition. Wang's large-scale pastel works, in 1962, such as "Peach Harvest" and "Joy in the Fields" (《桃丰收》《田间乐》, held by the Jingdezhen China Ceramics Museum), displaying in that Exhibition showed the similar color techniques and brushwork to those seen in this Cong Vase, clearly indicating a common artistic thread.

Acknowledgement

Note⁵: This article was written at the request of Associate Professor Angel Yankov, Director of the Regional Ethnographic Museum in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, and conveyed through

⁵ Настоящата статия е изготвена в края на м. януари 2025 г. по молба на доц. д-р Ангел Янков, директор на Регионален етнографски музей – Пловдив, след направено официално запитване по електронна поща от музейния педагог г-жа Светлана Василева. Първопричината за написването на тази статия може да бъде проследена до 2023 г. (годината на черния заек според традиционния китайски календар), когато по време на Фестивала на драконовите лодки бях поканен за участие в първата по рода си поредица от културни дейности, посветени на празника в България, от културното аташе на посолството на Китайската народна република в България г-н Гуан Син (кит. 关昕), и заместник-главния директор на издателството на вестник „Ханджоу душъ куайбао“ (кит. 浙江杭州都市快报社), г-ца Уан Жунджуан (кит. 王荣娟). Като консултанти по време на проучванията и писането на настоящата статия се включиха също Джан Пън (кит. 张鹏), докторант в Китайската академия на изкуствата, Шъ Цинян (кит. 释庆严), магистър в Будистката академия в Ханджоу, преводачите от китайски език Елица Миланова и Милчо Иванов и др. Искрени благодарности на всички подпомогнали процеса и особено на Образователен фонд „Циентан“, гр. Ханджоу за щедрата поддръжка.

the Museum Educator and In-Charge of the "Exhibit in Focus" section, Ms. Svetlana Vasileva via an E-mail sent at the end of January 2025. The origins of this work can be traced back to around the Dragon Boat Festival in the Gui-Mao year (癸卯年, 2023), when Mr. Guan Xin (关昕), Cultural Counselor at the Chinese Embassy in Bulgaria, and Ms. Wang Rongjuan (王荣娟), Deputy General Manager of the Hangzhou Urban Express Newspaper, extended a cordial invitation to participate in the inaugural Bulgaria "Dragon Boat Festival" series of events. During the writing process, consultations were made with Zhang Peng (张鹏), a PhD student at the China Academy of Art, and Master Shi Qingyan (释庆严), a master's student at the Hangzhou Buddhist Academy, and Bulgarian Chinese translators Ms. Elitsa Milanova, Mr. Milcho Ivanov. While, Wang Qiuxia (王秋霞), Professor and Senior Craft Artist at the Ceramic Research Institute of Light Industry of China, Jingdezhen, Jiangxi, P. R. China, and the daughter of Mr. Wang Xiliang, served as a reviewer in Chinese for this article. Special thanks are hereby expressed to all involved, with particular appreciation extended to the Hangzhou Tsientang Education Foundation for its generous support.

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<http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202504/19/WS680306c9a3104d9fd38205ad.html>). Всички снимки,

използвани в статията (подробно описани и озаглавени), са публикувани след писмено разрешение от музея, в чиято колекция се съхранява вазата. Снимките не могат да бъдат копирани, възпроизвеждани и използвани без изричното разрешение на музея

Min(刘敏) and Li Liang (李亮). The Chinese version was recommended for publication by Mr. Peng Weizhe (彭伟哲), President of Liaoning Fine Arts Publishing House (辽宁美术出版社), and appeared in *Art Panorama* (《美术大观》), no. 5, October 2025, pp. 113–116).

With the kind assistance of Ms Lora Hristozova and other colleagues at the aforementioned REMP Museum, and upon acceptance by the organisers, this English version was delivered as a dedicated oral presentation in October 2025 at the Eleventh International Scientific Conference, “Cultural and Historical Heritage: Preservation, Presentation, Digitalization”, hosted by the Institute of Mathematics and Informatics, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

I hereby express my sincere appreciation to all above.

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НОВООТКРИТА ВАЗА С ЖИВОПИС ВЪРХУ ПОРЦЕЛАН НА УАН СИЛЯН ОТ 50-ТЕ ГОДИНИ НА ХХ В. ПО МОТИВИ ОТ „ЛЕГЕНДА ЗА БЯЛАТА ЗМИЯ“

(ВАЗАТА Е БИЛА ЕКСПОНАТ В „ПЪТУВАЩАТА ИЗЛОЖБА НА ПОРЦЕЛАН“ ОТ
РАННИТЕ ГОДИНИ СЛЕД ОСНОВАВАНЕТО НА КИТАЙСКАТА НАРОДНА РЕПУБЛИКА, А
ДНЕС Е ЧАСТ ОТ ФОНДА НА РЕГИОНАЛЕН ЕТНОГРАФСКИ МУЗЕЙ – ПЛОВДИВ)

Abstract and Keywords in Bulgarian Language

Резюме: Обект на настоящото изследване е значимо произведение на китайската живопис върху порцелан и керамика от средата на ХХ в., открито неотдавна във фондовете на чуждестранен музей. Фокусът на статията е насочен към връзката между фолклорната приказка, използвана като основен мотив, и социално-историческия контекст на времето. Поставя се акцент върху естетическите избори на художника, както и върху културния и образователен обмен на експонати от местните традиционни занаяти и декоративно-приложно изкуство в рамките на социалистическите страни от онзи период.

Ключови думи: Централна и Източна Европа; културни дейности; межкултурен обмен; междуинституционален обмен; култура

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