THE RENAISSANCE EPOCH

Varied though the interpretations of the intrinsic nature, content and boundaries of the epoch commonly known in European history as the Renaissance, its existence has never been disputed. Historians of all persuasions and trends have written about it, but, while all are interested in its cultural content, they differ in this: some visualise it simply as an epoch in the history of culture and others associate its cultural-historical content with its social- economic background, that is,regard the Renaissance as one particular link in the general historical process. Then again, among historians of the first-named group, differences of opinion exist: these depend, in the first place, upon whether they consider the entire cultural complex characteristic of the Renaissance,or solely one particular sphere of culture, such as art or literature. These differences are determined largely by the authors' special field of research. Differences existing among historians of the second group depend upon their interpretation of the general historical content of the Renaissance epoch; these differences arise out of the authors' general historical standpoints, and the schools of historical studies which they represent. [1]

It is clear, then, that the situation has its complexity, even though we may confine ourselves to ground that has been thoroughly investigated. As is well known, exhaustive studies have been conducted only in the Renaissance phenomena in Italy and other West European countries—Germany, the Netherlands, France, England and Spain; less is known of the Renaissance in Central European states, and far less in the Eastern half of Europe. [2] A further complication arises out of the fact that, due to an insufficiently clear understanding of the historical essence of the Renaissance in Italy, whence came the conception of the epoch that was accepted in historical science, the name "Renaissance" is not infrequently used to describe any period of intensive cultural activity (most often in art and literature), especially when this activity is associated, to some degree, with a heightened interest in antiquity.

In recent years, the question has become still more involved because Orientalists have become concerned with it. Writing in 1947 on the subject of *Rustaveli and the Eastern Renaissance,* S. P. Nutsubidze referred to the lifetime of this great Georgian poet—the period from the 12th to the 13th centuries—as the Georgian Renaissance. In the *History of Georgia* published in 1948, I. Dzhavakhish- vili described the period extending from the 11th to the 12th centuries as similar in its historical content to the epoch known in the history of the West European countries as the Renaissance. In his work on *The Pedagogics of Georgian Humanism in the 11th and 12th Centuries,* which appeared in 1961, V. D. Chanturiya asserted that the pedagogical ideas of that time were clear evidence of this. In his book *The Armenian Renaissance* (1963) V.K. Ghaloyan tried to prove on the basis of a fundamental analytical study of social-economic and cultural evidence that an epoch of the same nature existed in Armenian history.

Chaloyan's work is, so far, the widest in scope and the most thorough in argumentation among the studies devoted to the subject of the Renaissance in the East.

These studies did not end with Georgia and Armenia. In an article on "'The Middle Ages' in Historical Science", published in 1955, I dealt with the question of a Renaissance epoch in China, occurring between the 8th and 12th centuries, and expressed the view that a parallel epoch, similar in historical and cultural content, could be discovered in the history of Western Turkistan, Iran and North-West India, extending from the 9th to the 12th centuries. The question of a Renaissance epoch in China in the context of the history of social thought was examined in greater detail in my article on "The Rise of Chinese Humanism" (1957). The same question, this time in the field of the history of literature, was analysed in my article "Three T'ang Poets" in 1960.In my article written in 1965, "The Philosophy of the Chinese Renaissance" (on the Sung philosophy), this question was considered in the context of the history of philosophical thought in China. Abundant data on the problem of Renaissance in China is given in an article by V. I. Semanov, "Various Conceptions of the Chinese Renaissance", written in 1962. "Alisher Navoi and the Problem of the Renaissance in Eastern Literatures", an article by V. M. Zhirmunsky (1961), also upheld the idea of the Eastern Renaissance. In his book *Arabic Literature,* published in 1965, I. M. Filshtinsky approached the concept of the Renaissance in discussing Arabic literature of the 8th to the 12th centuries. In the same year, a vivid Renaissance interpretation of the poetry, philosophy and science of Iran and Western Turkistan from the 9th to the 13th centuries was presented in *Iranian Miniatures*, by I. S. Rra- ginsky. 1965 also saw the publication of *Some General Problems of the History of Eastern Literatures,* in which the authors, I. V. Roroli- na, V. R. Nikitina, Y. V. Payevskaya and L. D. Pozdneyeva, gave a detailed analysis of the question of the Renaissance epoch in

Eastern countries against the background of the general history of the literature of those countries.

It is understood, of course, that the quantity of data presented by the authors of the above-mentioned works differs greatly:there is also a considerable difference in the depth of analysis, but one thing the authors have in common is their attitude to what they suggest should be termed the Renaissance—at least conventionally—and which they do not regard simply as a period when literature and art were particularly flourishing, but as a definite historical epoch.

This close attention to the problem of the Renaissance in the countries of the East is perfectly comprehensible. Actually, the question may be said to have been posed not so much by certain scholars as by historical science itself. It is well known that the boundaries of historical knowledge have been greatly extended in this country. The whole of the East, with all its long history, has been included in this knowledge. It has not been merely included, it has assumed its rightful place.

To be convinced of this, one has only to open the ten-volume Soviet *World History*. Numerous works have appeared creating both a general picture of the historical process in the Eastern countries and various aspects of this process. Among the nationalities whose history has now been presented with a completeness hitherto unknown are some with a very ancient historical life and culture, developing in unbroken continuity to this day. These are the peoples of China, India, Iran, Western Turkistan and the Caucasus. The periods of increased social-historical activity among these peoples, the epoch when culture particularly flourished, have now become more distinctly marked and comprehensible. It is perfectly natural that some of these epochs should be compared with similar epochs in the history of European peoples, and that therefore the terms used to denote historical phenomena elaborated from data in the history of Europe were transferred to analogous or similar phenomena in the history of the Orient.

This is understandable, too. As a branch of learning, history took shape in the East earlier than in the West, but as a pragmatic subject it developed more fully and at an earlier time in the West than in the East. For this reason, the use of general designations, such as feudalism, capitalism, class, estate, and so on, when dealing with the history of the East, is fully justified, particularly since Marxist historical science has given these expressions an exact meaning, that is, has made them part of the terminology of historical science. Similarly, the use of expressions that have arisen in studying the history of European peoples—terms like “antiquity”, the “Middle Ages”, “modern times”, [3] is also justified. In the same way, certain expressions, applied to cultural-historical epochs in the West, among them the “Renaissance epoch”, came to be used by historians of the East.

It cannot be regarded as fortuitous or arbitrary that the expression “Renaissance epoch” came into use in discussing the history of the above-mentioned countries of the East. The existence of such an epoch in their history was postulated because it has been observed to arise in the first place among peoples with a long, unintermittent- ly

developing historical life and culture. The idea stemmed from the fact that the country where the "Renaissance" was first observed was Italy, whose people's historical life dated from the 8th century before our era. Italy's Renaissance epoch had been preceded by many centuries of "antiquity" and of the "Middle Ages". Antiquity, for Italy, had meant both Latin and Hellenic culture.

The term "Renaissance" in the sense of "return to antiquity" (*fu-ku*) is encountered also in China's history as characterising one of the features of an epoch reminiscent of the Italian Renaissance. The history of the Chinese people, too, reaches far into the distant past, the 12th and the 11th centuries B. C. This history had its "antiquity", which, at the time of the "Renaissance", was regarded as the period when all the foundations of culture qnd education were laid.

Among the peoples of Western Turkistan and Iran the term "Renaissance" is not encountered, but an epoch characterised by Renaissance features is observed between the 9th and the 13th centuries. The history of the Iranian peoples began, like that of the Chinese, at the end of the 2nd millennium B. C., when Iranianspeaking tribes appeared in North Iran. The historical life and culture of Iranian peoples were interwoven in their course of development with those of the Turkistan and North-West Indian peoples, who also had a rich culture. The first states of Western Turkistan— Khwarizm and Bactria—arose between the 7th and the 6th centuries B. C.Thus, the peoples of that part of the world had their own antiquity, which was, to a considerable degree, common to them all, just as the Italians and the Greeks had a common antiquity.

The group of ancient peoples with a long and unbroken history, a rich and ancient culture, includes the Georgians, who had state life already in the 3rd century B. C. The group also includes the Armenians, whose history, reckoned from the appearance of the ancestors of the latter-day Armenians on their present territory, began in the 7th century B. C. These Transcaucasian peoples possessed their antiquity, which in its cultural-historical aspect had many things in common with Iranian and Near Eastern antiquity, but to a still greater degree with the Graeco-Roman. These peoples also had their "Middle Ages" with a well-developed culture.

Hence, the question posed by historical science is evoked in its essentials by history itself. The essence of it is so important that discussion became imperative. We are dealing here not only with the discovery of "Renaissance epochs" in the history of different peoples (that is to say, with a new interpretation of the historical process), but with far more. It is a question involving the historical meaning of such an epoch, the historical conditions leading up to it and determining it, its historical significance and, lastly, its

inevitable appearance in the history of certain peoples, and, in the final analysis, in the history of all mankind.

Excellent data for the discussion of the whole set of questions could be extracted, I believe, from a comparison of those historical instances of this epoch which are disassociated, which emerged, took shape and developed independent of each other. The first instance, the Renaissance

in Italy,is familiar to us.The second is the Renaissance in China; the existence of such an epoch in China has not as yet been investigated to its full extent, but enough has been written about it, I consider, to warrant our acceptance of the idea as a sufficiently grounded historical postulate.

1

In both cases attention is arrested, first of all, by the existence of an identical expression used to denote the epoch, identical not only in its general meaning but also in its lexical form, and applied to the epoch by its contemporaries. Vasari called it *Rinascita,* Han Yii called it *fu-ku*.The Italian word meant renascence,but was understood as the revival of antiquity. In the case of China, the conception "antiquity" is included in the very term. *Fu-ku* has two component parts: *fu*—"return" and *ku*—"antiquity". The combination of the two may be understood both as "return to antiquity" and as "return of antiquity", that is, its revival.

It is interesting to note the time when these expressions came into use. Vasari lived in the 16th century, from 1511 to 1574, when in his native country the Renaissance was already at an end. Han Yii lived in the second half of the 8th and the^ first quarter of the 9th century (768-824), when the Renaissance epoch had only just begun in his country. This difference indicates that the name of an epoch may denote a summing-up of its past characteristics, or may be in the nature of a slogan heralding its advent in history.

Rut how exactly did this same antiquity look from the standpoints of Vasari and Han Yii?

It must have appeared to them as a shining light. Since every endeavour was directed towards its revival, it must have been held in the highest esteem. Antiquity, in that case, was regarded as a qualitative conception, but, of course it is also a historical conception. What,then, was the concretely historical view of antiquity, as understood by these thinkers?

Renaissance Italians regarded antiquity as the past of their own country—the time of ancient Rome. Not the whole of that time, but for the most part the period marked by extraordinary activity in social ideas and literature: the closing period of the republic and the initial period of the empire. In other words, neither the early nor the late stages in the history of the Romans, but the middle stage which became known as the "classical phase". During the Renaissance the Italians added to their own Latin antiquity the Hellenic antiquity, which the Romans had inherited, especially at the time of the principate. But here again, it was not the earlier, the "Homeric" period, nor the late Hellenistic, but the middle, the classical period, that they sought to revive. True, they venerated antiquity as a whole, but it was undoubtedly the classical period that was accorded the foremost place.

What was Han Yu's conception of antiquity? He presented it with the utmost clarity in his treatise *On the Way,* [4] he understood "the Way" to mean enlightenment, which was so dear to him. It consisted in the entire antiquity of Chinese history up to the beginning of the 1st century

of our era. The last of the great figures that he names in the culture of the distant past are: Ssu-ma Hsiang-ju (died in 117 B.C.), Ssu-ma Ch'ien (145-86 B.C.) and Yang Hsiing (53 B.C.- 18 A.D). From this we may conclude that Han Yii did not accept the later antiquity—the second period of the empire—just as the Renaissance Italians did not acknowledge the Hellenistic epoch or the later empire period. When we recall that Han Yii regarded Confucius as the founder of "the Way", that is to say, of learning and enlightenment, and that the ancient manuscripts which he mentioned (*I-ching*, *Shi-ching* and *Shu-ching)* appeared even before Confucius' time and are surrounded by a halo of the loftiest wisdom due to the name of Confucious, then it seems that in Han Yu's opinion "antiquity" denoted principally the *lieh-kuo* epoch of the city-states, and that this was the genuinely classical period in the history of ancient culture.

We can, then, say that during the Renaissance which took place in Italy and China—two of the major countries surviving from antiquity in Western Europe and Eastern Asia—it was primarily the antiquity of the middle period that the leaders of this Renaissance visualised as reborn; this period was the most integral,in its typological image, in the history of slave-owning society in these two regions of the world.

2

This preference for the middle period of antiquity could scarcely be fortuitous; it seems to me that it is accounted for by one particular feature in the historical outlook of the Renaissance thinkers.

One of the most typical features of the epoch is that the leaders of the Italian Renaissance in glorifying the classical period showed by this that they held in far less esteem the period dividing them from antiquity. They regarded the intervening centuries as the "Middle Ages", and, since antiquity was glorious, and their own epoch strove for the revival of this glory, then the Middle Ages stood for darkness and ignorance.

The Chinese leaders of the Renaissance did not create the expression the "Middle Ages" as a specific term, but there is no doubt that they had the same conception of this intermediate stage in their

history. This is plainly evident from the *Sung History,* a work that appeared in the 14th century, when several centuries of the Renaissance had passed and a definite view of it as a whole had been formed. In this *History,* which covers the Sung Empire (960-1279), there is a section dealing with what is known as the Sung school of philosophy, a school, which, to my mind, forms an inseparable part of the Chinese Renaissance. [5] The section in question enumerates the principal philosophers of that school, outlines the contribution each made to its development, and gives a general evaluation of this trend as a whole.

This reads as follows: "It was then that the learning of Shih and Shu, the Six Arts, the counsels of Confucius and Mencius—all that had been cast into the Ch'in flames,torn to shreds by the Han scholars, plunged into oblivion in the Wei and Liu-ch'ao times—was revealed in all its clarity and brilliance, and all was accorded its proper place. Ey this means the Sung scholars reached over the heads of the thinkers of

previous epochs until they came into direct touch with Mencius." The *Shih-ching (Book of Songs)* and the *Shu-ching (Book of History)* were ancient manuscripts included in the Confu- cian "Five Books"; the "Six Arts" means learning represented in six treatises: the above-mentioned *Shih-ching* and *Shu-ching,* to which the *I-ching (Book of Changes)* had been added, and also the *Ch'un-ch'iu (The Annals),* regarded as the work of Confucius himself, and the *Yueh-ching (Book of Music).* The counsels of Confucius and Mencius— the *Lun-yii* and the *Meng-tzu* — were statements of the doctrine propounded by these two founders of Confucianism, that is, the whole of philosophy as then understood. With Mencius, all this came to an end, in the 3rd century B. C. The interruption lasted for a long time, until the 11th century of our era.

Hence, this had been the classical period of antiquity, both for the compilers of the *Sung History* and for Han Yu.The sole difference was that Han Yu mentioned three other prominent scholars of the initial period of the empire; but the first of them, Ssu-ma Hsiang-ju, was a poet, not a philosopher. The second, Ssu-ma Ch'ien, was a historian. The third, Yang Hsiing, wrote chiefly poetry and was of no particular significance as a philosopher. In this respect, Han Yu referred to him with disapproval. For the compilers of the *Sung History,* therefore, the end of antiquity came with Mencius, as far as philosophy was concerned; he was the last prominent thinker of the classical period during the history of slave-owning society in China.

Following this, while the transition to the later stage of antiquity— the epoch of the empire—was taking place, learning and enlightenment were "cast into the Ch'in flames", as the *Sung History* designates the burning of Confucian manuscripts in the first years of the empire, and then "torn to shreds" by scholiasts during the Han dynasty. The authors of the *Sung History* are referring here to Han philologists, who conducted laborious researches on the surviving manuscripts, restoring those that had been lost, elaborating the ancient texts and writing commentaries on them, that is, doing work similar to that undertaken by the Alexandrian scholars on the heritage of their own classical period. From the standpoint of Renaissance thinkers who valued most of all ideas, this textological work, undertaken on various documents isolated from each other, led to the "tearing to shreds"—that is, the reduction of the "true learning" to a mass of unimportant detail. Then came "the Wei and Liu-ch'ao times"—the 3rd to the 7th centuries—when learning and enlightenment were "plunged into oblivion", and the light of learning was not rekindled until the opening of the Sung epoch. Could there be a clearer expression of the conception of the intermediate "Middle Ages" between "antiquity" and "modern times"—the Middle Ages that were regarded as "dark"?

Taking this attitude into consideration, it seems to me fully comprehensible why the Renaissance thinkers rejected not only the times that are often termed "medieval" — the early period of feudal society—but also late antiquity. This transitional period, which in Italy was the Hellenistic epoch and the later period of the Roman Empire, and in China, the Han Empire, especially its latter half, was as much a part of the Middle Ages, which it foreshadowed, as of antiquity, from which it

stemmed.Since the Middle Ages were despised by Renaissance thinkers in Europe and the "Wei and Liu-ch'ao times", by their colleagues in China, this attitude in both countries extended to the epoch that foreshadowed the Middle Ages.

3

What was it that Renaissance adherents found so alien to their ideas in this medieval period, in the "Wei and Liu-ch'ao times", the "Dark Ages", as they considered them? Let us attempt to answer this question, at first on the plane of a general ideology.

Analysing the standpoint of Han Yu, with whom, I think, we should begin the history of the Renaissance movement in China, we find that he was definitely opposed to Buddhism and Taoism. But • it was in the "Wei and Liu-ch'ao times" (from the 3rd to the 7th centuries), the "Dark Ages", that these systems of thinking had acquired extraordinary power. During that time Buddhism, with its well-organised and ramified system, its innumerable priests and monastic sects, had become well-nigh the most widespread religion in China. The beliefs usually known by the name "Taoism" were transformed into a real religious teaching, complete with its own dogmas, cult and temple organisation. In both cases, these were religions possessing a many-faceted and highly-developed philosophy.

Han Yu opposed their philosophical principles. He objected to what he considered the most unacceptable: the conception of nirvana in Buddhism, and the conception of quiescence in Taoism,

> Both of these, he held, distracted people's attention from the main things: from life, activity, from service to society. In contrast to Buddhism and Taoism, he set up "the true learning", Confucianism. His ideal was Mencius, the most active zealot in antiquity of "the true learning", carrying on an unwearying struggle with all that represented the social evil of his day, and unafraid to expose even the rulers of the country. Han Yu regarded himself as the Mencius of his own time. But if one praised Mencius it was equivalent to praising antiquity, and if one rejected the things of the "Wei and Liu-ch'ao times", it was equivalent to disparaging the "Middle Ages".
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> As we know, in those ages Mencius' work had been far from popular. Even the *Lun-yix,* the book in which Confucius' own words were recorded, had not been in the foreground then. Sources given prominence in those days were mainly the *I-ching, Shih-ching, Shu-ching, Ch'un-ch'iu* and *Li-chi*—all of which (with the exception of the *Ch'un-ch'iu*, the annals of the Lu state) dating from pre-Con- fucian times. In Han Yu's day attention was not directed towards developing the principles contained in these works, but towards the establishment of the "correct" in them, correct both as regards the restoration of the genuine text and also the interpretation of it. As far back as the first half of the 7th century, Yang Shih-ku had published the text of the above-mentioned five ancient treatises he had edited, while K'ung Ying-ta had selected from all the existing commentaries those he considered the best. This had been accompished not only with the approval, but at the order of the

rulers, who required ideological support for the established regime. The text of the "Five Books" edited by Yan Shih-ku was proclaimed "official" *(ting-pen),* and its interpretation in K'ung Ying-ta's version pronounced "correct" *(cheng-i).* This same collection of the "Five Books",both the text and its interpretation,became the *summa sum- marum* of all the learning of that age.

This evokes a memory of the appearance of the *Summa theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas in the history of the philosophical- religious thought of medieval Catholicism. And could not the juxtaposition of these two disparate facts contribute towards a clearer understanding of what actually took place at that time in the Confucian philosophy of China and the Catholic philosophy of Italy? Should we not discern in these facts the formation—a process natural and inherent in any doctrine having vital power—into an integral and universal system, that is, the attainment of the height of development? Simultaneously, this system having been enclosed within sharply defined interpretative limits, excluding all digression, did not the inevitable transformation of the system into dogma take place? In this case, was it not this ideological dogmatism, already established by that time and inadmissible to the minds of the Renaissance thinkers, that lay at the basis of their negative attitude—both in China and Italy—to the "Middle Ages"?

With regard to China, it seems to me this is quite clear. Han Yu, a professor of a state university, was under an obligation in his official position to teach the "learning" in its officially accepted text and interpretation. Yet he undertook wholly independent researches. He did not write new versions of the commentaries to the classics, but treatises on those problems that he considered most important. The chief of these are three, entitled *On Man, On the Way* and *On the Nature of Man.* These constituted a free, genuinely creative, treatment of themes which, though present in the classics, had either remained undeveloped in general, or had not been presented in the aspect that Han Yii thought most essential.

The Sung philosophers active during the 11th and 12th centuries, that is, at a much later period, when the Renaissance movement had entered upon a new phase, were inspired by the same spirit as Han Yii. Their attitude to Buddhism and Taoism—to the philosophical conceptions in these teachings—was mostly negative. As cults, Buddhism and Taoism had no appeal for philosophers of the Confu- cian persuasion, to whom the phenomena of the religious cult had always been totally alien. —

This was evident from the indignation expressed by Han Yii in his notable pamphlet *On the Bone of Buddha,* and his invective directed at the court circles for the pomp with which they housed in the palace a bit of bone, this "relic" brought from distant India and alleged to be that of Buddha. "It is merely a fragment of decayed bone!" Han Yii exclaimed. But as a rule, the Chinese Renaissance thinkers conducted their struggle against that which they regarded as of really great importance in these cults—their philosophic conceptions. A glance at the concluding part of the *Tsin-ssu-lu,* the well- known collection of the most important works of Sung philosophers, compiled in the 12th century by Chu Hsi

and Lii Po-kung, is sufficient to show that even three centuries after Han Yii Chinese'[1] Renaissance philosophers still protested against those same conceptions of nirvana and quiescence, regarding them not only as antisocial, but contradictory to the very nature of man.

Nevertheless, the principal object of their protests lay in Confucianism itself, within that same system of philosophical thought of which they were adherents: they were struggling against what is known to history as *hsiin-ku.* This term denoted the work that had been carried out on the classics throughout the later period of antiquity,the early Middle Ages and even the initial stage of the Renaissance. Actual mention of *hsiin-ku* is made in one of the treatises by Ch'eng I, a philosopher of the 11th century.

What did this *hsiin-ku* constitute in itself? Commentaries, and nothing more: *hsiin* stands for the interpretation of sentences, *ku* for the interpretation of words. How this was accomplished is evident from the words of Nakamura Tekisai (1629-1702), a Japanese disciple of the Sung school. In the introduction to his edition of the above-mentioned *Tsin-ssu-lu,* he wrote:

> "It is considered that a new era opened in the sphere of Confu- cian ideas with the beginning of the Sung period. It is founded on the fact that Chou Tung-i, the Ch'eng brothers (Ch'eng jHao and Ch'eng I) and Chang Tsai proclaimed the teaching of Nature and the Law, while Chu Hsi, who followed them, collected and brought this to completion. It w'as done because during the Han and T'ang dynasties scholars considered that the most important thing was to give as many interpretations (*hsiin-ku.—N. K.)* as possible. So far did they go that in the interpretation of the four hieroglyphics at the beginning of the 'Yao tien' in *Shang-shu* they expended more than 30,000 words and even then did not attain to the sense of those four characters."[6] This was the manner in which the *hsiin-ku-hsiieh,* "the science of interpretation", was created. To my mind, it was the same that was known as exegesis in Europe during the Middle Ages.
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> The Sung philosophers objected to the exegetic and hermeneutic methods in the study of the classics, opposing to it the teaching of "Nature and the Law", i. e., the study of the spirit and not the letter; not the texts as such, but the problems posed in them. The above- named Ch'eng I expressed this idea as follows: "In ancient times there was but one teaching; at present there are three _____ I ignore alien teachings (Buddhism and Taoism.—*N. K.).* One teaching concerns the text, another, the interpretation *(hsiin-ku-hsueh*), the third is that of the scholars. Whosoever desires to attain the Way (true knowledge.—*N. K.),* cannot do so without this teaching." [7]
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> To what can we compare this in Italy? The attitude of the Italian Renaissance philosophers to religion was different from that of the Chinese Sung thinkers. The most widespread attitude was indifference, which in some cases took the form of disbelief and even ridicule.Few of the Renaissance leaders turned to pagan ism: let us recall the great attraction that some humanists of the second half of the 15th century found in Plato's works. Notwithstanding differences, one feature characteristic of many Italians of the time reminds us of the Chinese

Renaissance philosophers. It is the feature known to some research scholars of the European Renaissance as the secularisation of theoretical thought, i. e., its detachment from the orbit of religion. [8] This secularisation meant, in effect, a complete break with theology, with dogma, and, consequently, was one of the forms taken by the struggle against dogmatism. With regard to this essential point Renaissance thinkers in China and Italy were in agreement, and this meant that the struggle to release man's intellect from the fetters of dogmatism—religious in Italy, philosophical in China—constitutes the principal feature of the Renaissance in the realm of ideology. It is necessary to point out not only the resemblance, but also the divergence in these two historical instances. In China, the Renaissance created a philosophy of breadth and originality; in Italy, the Renaissance created no original philosophical system. In the beginning, there was a marked slackening and loss of interest in the metaphysical side of philosophical theorising on the part of Petrarch and the early humanists in general, and also a tendency to reduce the entire philosophy to ethics. Later, in the second half of the 15th century, original thinkers appeared due to the special attention paid to the teachings of Plato and Aristotle, but they did not succeed in founding an integral system, such as had been created during the Chinese Renaissance.

Notwithstanding this divergence, a comparison may be drawn, and, moreover, in the most essential respect—method—between the Renaissance philosophical thought in China and in Italy.

Many scholars conducting researches in the Italian and in the West European Renaissance as a whole have remarked upon the presence of elements of rationalism [9] in the theoretical-cognitive outlook of the humanists. It is usually considered that the "age of reason" was inaugurated by the Renaissance humanists: it was they who directed human thought towards rationalism. It seems to me indisputable that the same process took place in theoretical thought during the Chinese Renaissance. The principal category of the Sung philosophers was the "law" (*li*), a purely logical conception; cognition amounted to the elucidation of the "law" inherent in "all things", i. e., in all the objects and phenomena of reality, while the stages and the results of this cognition were perceived on a purely intellectual plane and were expressed in rationalistic terms. To my mind, it is this, and not the question of whether an integral system had been created or not, that is the most essential feature of the revolution wrought in people's minds during that remarkable epoch known both in East and West as the Renaissance.The switching over of thought to rationalistic lines produced the basis upon which arose all that is usually regarded as pertaining to the Renaissance: the protest against dogmatism as a principle of world outlook, against exegesis and hermeneutics as methods of cognition, against scholasticism as a form of cognition.

It should be pointed out that rationalism, which reconstructed the entire system of thought, revealed its full strength in Europe much later, during the Age of Enlightenment; in China this took place during the Renaissance, in the Sung school of philosophy, but the rationalism of this school found no further development such as was observed in

Europe in the philosophy of Descartes and other great European rationalists of the 17th and 18th centuries. Social conditions in China in those ages gave rise to a certain development of rationalism on the lines of the "critical school" (*kao-cheng-hsii- eh*)—the Chinese version of the Enlightenment philosophy, but could not ensure so rapid a development of theoretical thought as took place in Europe during the pre-bourgeois centuries.

4

It is often considered that the advancement of man to the foreground is practically the most important feature of the Italian Renaissance. Man became the centre of everything as a higher category

with the highest rights, as the highest value; all the rest—society, history, the world—were considered valuable and important only in so far as concerns man. This conception, it is thought, was a reaction against the attitude typical of the mood of the Middle Ages which regarded the nature of man and the external world as a source of temptation, the cause of ruin; against the attitude to reason as a dangerous principle which could only lead people to intellectual pride, i.e., to deadly sin. The external world in its association with man was also regarded as a source of temptation. Hence the conclusion that one should retreat from the world and constantly struggle against the needs of human nature.

This widespread interpretation of the Italian Renaissance seems to me in part true, in part false. It is true in the main fact that during the Renaissance the attitude to man differed from that prevailing in the Middle Ages: man came to the forefront. But it is not true that the essence of this advancement of man was visualised as permitting free development of all the inherent traits of his nature, especially the sensual, as though the root of all evil had lain in monastic "mortification of the flesh". The essence of the Renaissance attitude, I believe, lay in something far more significant.

The fact that man was brought into the foreground during the Renaissance in Italy is beyond doubt. But the essential thing in this was by no means the acknowledgement of his right to satisfy his needs, especially "the needs of the flesh". If it had amounted to no more than this, then there would have been no reason for the traditional admiration of the Renaissance. The most important in the new attitude was what Michelet and Burckhardt termed "the discovery of man"; the former in his formula "the discovery of the world and man", the latter in his "discovery of man and nature".

In what particular way was this "discovery of man" manifested? First of all, in the idea that he was capable of thinking for himself as his reason dictated. In this lay the core of the "secularisation" of theoretical thought that took place during the Renaissance. Western historians understand this as the liberation of human consciousness from the formulae of religious dogma and as the transition from religious to secular thought. "Secularisation" is a term applied to ethics as well, taking this to mean the disassociation of ethics from religious conceptions.

If we are to take the prominence accorded to man as one of the most characteristic features of the Renaissance—and this is actually the case—then the most genuine Renaissance must be that which took place in the social consciousness of Chinese society between the 8th and 15th centuries. We have previously spoken of three treatises by Han Yii: *On Man, On the Way* and *On the Nature of Man.* The titles indicate that HanYii's chief subject of philosophical speculation was man. In the first-named work it is affirmed that man is the master of all that lives on earth. The second explains why he

occupies such a place in the world: it is because he possesses "man's way" and this way consists in "love for everything". In the third treatise it is affirmed that human nature is good. [10] "Han Yii was the first to proclaim Renaissance ideas in the philosophical field, and these principles of his were accepted and comprehensively developed in the future. Chou Tun-i (1017-1073) said that among all that existed, man had the utmost spirituality. Ch'eng Hao (1031-1085) expressed it differently: "Not only man has the utmost spirituality in the world. My soul is as the soul of grasses, trees, birds and beasts. Man ... is born having accepted the mean of Heaven-Earth." [11]

A detailed elucidation of this principle cannot be given here, but it is necessary to point out that in the language of the Sung philosophers, the "mean" is something that does not incline to any side, is not one-sided hut comprehensive, is of full value. This idea of the validity of human nature constitutes the basis for the advancement of man to the foreground of existence. And this is done not by contrasting him to all else, but by uniting him with all else. Chang Tsai (1019-1077) held the view that man was a manifestation of the "universal spirit", that this spirit was identical in people and in "things". He expressed his idea in graphic language in the opening sentence of his famous *Western Inscription:* "Heaven is my father, Earth, my mother. People are my brothers, things—my associates." Therefore, if we apply to the Chinese Renaissance Burckhardt's formula "the discovery of man and nature", it should be understood as "the discovery of man in nature", and simultaneously as "the discovery of nature in man".

As is well-known, two followers of Petrarch—Coluccio Salutati (1331-1406) and Leonardo Bruni (1369-1444)—launched the word *humanitas,* which they had found in antiquity, in Cicero. They considered that it expressed most satisfactorily the distinction between their own time and the Middle Ages. They understood *humanitas* as that particular characteristic of man which determines his human dignity and urges him to knowledge. This same word, which in Chinese is *jen,* was selected by Han Yii to distinguish "the Way" of his time from "the Way" known before his time. He, too, had found the word in antiquity, in Confucius. The meaning it held for Confucius is clear. When asked about the meaning of *jen,* he replied, "love for man". Han Yu's reply was different, "love for all".

According to Han Yii, *jen* stands as a category of social ethics, and this means that it is the foundation of the whole human society. The later Renaissance philosophers, those of the Sung school, endowed the word with a different sense. As we have mentioned above, the Sung philosophers advanced the conception of the "law" *(li)* — the "natural law" (*t'ien-li*) of being that was active in "all things" *(wan-wu),* i. e., natural objects. Ch'eng Hao, the first to advance this category, thought that the nature of man in its universal aspect permitted him to understand the content of this "natural law".

Since he considered the principal characteristic of man's nature to be /'ere—*humanitas,* then it followed that *humanitas* was the general law of all that existed, the law active in "all things". Ch'eng Hao expressed the idea in a simple definition: "/ere embraces all things".

But what is this "humanity", in the concrete sense? Ch'eng Hao expressed his conception of it in a series of judgements, as follows: "humanity in man has a place beside his other characteristics". These are: the inherent sense of "duty", i. e., the endeavour always to do what ought to be done; the sense of "lawfulness", the understanding of the necessity for always keeping within the bounds of certain norms, or a kind of inner discipline; the thirst for knowledge and the ability to attain it; finally, rectitude. *Jen—humanitas* is among these characteristics, but Ch'eng Hao considers that it embraces them all.

This is by no means the same conception of /'ere as in antiquity, when /ere was accepted only as a commandment to love one another, i. e., as a purely ethical law. Now it was raised to the degree of the fundamental law of all existence; it had acquired an ontological sense, and in its ethical aspect it had become a demand to love (i. e., to treat humanely) not only people, but also "grasses, trees, birds and beasts", all living things in nature. Then, should not Han Yu's formula be translated as "love for everything", and not as "love for everyone"?

If humanism, even in the interpretation of the Italian Renaissance, was regarded as the most striking feature of this new epoch, should not humanism, as understood by these Chinese thinkers, be taken as evidence that their epoch has every right to be called the Renaissance in the same comprehensive historical sense?

5

In studies on the Italian Renaissance, the authors invariably mention poetry when enumerating the features of cultural life most characteristic of the spirit of the times. Not infrequently, poetry occupies the foremost place. This view is prompted by the special importance that poetry was accorded in the minds, hearts and activities of the humanists: not only did they set a high value on poetry, they called themselves poets, and many of them *were* poets. Succeeding generations saw in Petrarch the first great poet of the Renaissance and also the initiator of the new trend of thought that determined the whole epoch. This trend is seen most vividly in lyrical verse which thus became, as it were, the genre most typical of Renaissance poetry. A similar picture, it seems to me, may be observed in China.

The epoch of the Chinese Renaissance began, I suggest, with the time of Han Yu (768-824), i. e., in the 8th century. Among his contemporaries were Wang Wei (699-759), Li Po (701-762), Tu Fu (712-770); Po Chii-i (772-846), too, partly belongs to this period. An acquaintance with these poets is sufficient to strengthen the impression that a new era opened with their works. Not in poetry alone, for if the new age had not been manifest in everything, poetry could not have attained the level of those genuinely great poets of old China. They were succeeded by a number of remarkable poets like Ouyang Hsiu, Wang An-shih, Su Shih

and Lu Yu, and especially Su Shih (Su Tung-po, 1036-1101) who deserves to be called great. We should add that practically all scholars who were known for their work in other fields—philosophy, science and art—wrote verse, that many were worthy of the title of poet, and some were outstanding poets, as, for] example Han Yu. Such were the famous authors of novellas, Yuan Chen and Po Hsing-chien, among others. In this field the parallel with the Italian Renaissance is obvious.

The period extending from the 8th to the 13th centuries, a time when poetry truly flourished, has been well studied. This needs no further explanation. What is required is to define the new trend that this poetry brought into the general history of Chinese poetry, and the reason why this new trend is linked with the Renaissance.

In the first place let us take the question we referred to in speaking of the philosophical thought of the epoch: was the poetry of that time realised as something new, distinct from its predecessors? An answer to this question might be given by somewhat extending the boundaries of the survey to include not only verse but poetry in general, i. e., poetry expressed in prose, or, in other words, fine literature in the sense that was then widespread among educated circles of Chinese society.

In the year 530, two centuries previous to the time of Li Po and Han Yu, a comprehensive anthology entitled *Wen-hsuan* (*Selected Literature)* appeared. It was compiled by "Ten Scholars of the High Cabinet", a group of literary men who gathered in the Tower of Wen-hsuan and in the Palace of Joy and Wisdom.The patron of this group was Hsiao T 'ung, a prince of the royal house of Liang, then reigning in southern China—the last independent part of the country, since the whole of the northern half had been overrun by the *hsien-pi* ("barbarians"). The anthology included works in verse and prose dating from the 2nd century R. C. to the 6th century A. D., i. e., from late Chinese antiquity to the Middle Ages. Only the verses of Ch'ii Yuan (340-278 R.C.), a poet of the end of antiquity, were selected from the literature of the classical period of antiquity. Consequently, the literature of classical antiquity is not found in the anthology.

As may be supposed, the selection was made from a definite standpoint. This is stated in the introduction to the *Wen-hsuan*, written by Hsiao T'ung himself. He explains why he included nothing written by the sages of antiquity, such as Chou-kung, so highly praised by Confucius, or by Confucius himself: "I have not included works of Chou-kung or K'ung, our father. For they are with us as the sun and the moon in the heavens, supernally profound, as though they would reason with the divine powers ... nor did I select anything from the annals and chronicles, inasmuch as they do not answer my purpose by the doctrinaire nature of their judgements upon right and wrong, by their eternal endeavour to praise some and humiliate others. But whatever was compiled exclusively of elegant phrases, and, furthermore, particular narratives written in artistic language,
I included in the *Wen-hsiian,* as writings profoundly thought out in content and attaining to refinement in language." [12]

It is easy to discern, through this explanation of Hsiao T'ung, the serious changes that had taken place by that time; the entire conception

of what was termed *wen* (literature) had undergone reconstruction. A work was regarded as literary only when it proved to he artistic. Artistic merit was manifested in the language in a specifically literary form. It follows, then, that profundity of thought, i. e., the supreme significance of the content of a work, did not constitute in itself a claim to literary merit from the viewpoint of the High Cabinet group.

There is no doubt that such a conception of literature was then widespread, at any rate in circles that were in contact with the feudal nobility, and may be regarded as typical of the courtly lyric of medieval China on the eve of the Renaissance.

Although the eve of the Renaissance, this period had many features clashing with that same Renaissance. As a collection of the best examples of literature, the *Wen-hsiian* became at a later time, during the T'ang Empire, the principal material of instruction in the training of future government officials. Those taking government examinations had to write a composition on the pattern of those included in the anthology. What had once taken place in philosophy was now taking place in literature: literature of a definite range of constituents, a definite conception of its essentials and its methods, had become canonical.

The phenomena observed in Chinese poetry on the eve of the Renaissance involuntarily remind us of the changes observed in literature on the eve of the Italian Renaissance in the literary centre, Florence. Here, too, an association existed of writers with specific views on poetry: a group of poets of *the dolce stile nuovo.* This school also considered exquisiteness of ideas, refinement of feelings and emotion, fluency and harmony in verse the chief things in poetry. Officially, the principles of this school were not recognised as canonical in Italy, but the methods of the *dolce stile nuovo* became the criterion of poetry without any official interference. At the end of the 13th century, the eve of the Renaissance, the *novellino* appeared in Italy. These were collections of fables, anecdotes of incidents in daily life, short novellas narrating various subjects taken from antiquity, the Middle Ages, the Bible, the Orient. The compilers of these collections claimed, in almost the same words as Hsiao T'ung had used, that they offered here "the flower of elegant speech, excellent courtesies and witty rejoinders".

Han Yu, who was the first to oppose the canonisation of definite formulae in philosophical thought, carried the war into the literary

sphere, protesting against canonical standards. Naturally, his protest was expressed primarily in proclaiming other principles for literary work. According to the compilers of the *Wen-hsiian,* the content of a work was important, but its literary value did not stand or fall by this. Han Yu put it otherwise: "What is known as literature is in ourselves. That is why the *tsiin-tzu* (enlightened man.— *N. K.)* is so attentive to the content of his work".

The literati of the High Cabinet group evidently admitted that exquisite artistic form might disguise the insignificance of the content. Han Yu did not agree: "The beauty or the ugliness of a subject, once it is manifest, cannot be disguised in any way." It may be said, then, that he visualised the promise of truly high literary merit in the significance of the idea it contained. "When the tree trunk is rooted deep in the earth, the branches grow thickly"; "When a musical instrument is large, the sound from it is loud". One may even go >o far as to say: since the quality of the ideas is determined by the personality of the author, then the pledge of the literary significance of a work will rest, in the ultimate analysis, in the author's humane qualities: "When a man's heart is pure, then his spirit is also harmonious"; "When a man's deeds are worthy, then his words are strong"; "The body ... if some part of it is lacking, cannot be transformed into a man. The word ... if something in it is lacking, cannot become a work of literature." [13] "The spirit is as water, the word is as an object floating upon it. Where there is much water, everything— great or small—that can float, will float. Such is the relation between spirit and word." [14]

It will be seen from these and many similar sayings of Han Yu's that, in his opinion, the literary value of a work is determined by the personality of its author. Can we imagine anything more dissimilar to the views of the literati on the eve of the Renaissance?

Yet Han Yu could not have been regarded as a Renaissance thinker had he not exhorted his contemporaries to learn from the ancients. He considered that he himself learned from them: "I plunge into the strong wine (of ancient literature.— *N.K.);* saturate myself in it. I swallow its ripening buds, taste its opening flowers; and in this manner I create my works", he wrote in the treatise *On the Way.* He points to the sources of his learning. "Above", i. e., in early antiquity, his exemplars were the *Shu-ching*, *I-ching*, *Shih-ching, Ch'un- ch'iu* and *Tso-chuan.* These formed not only the earlier line of ancient literature, but became classics for the Confucianists. "Below", i. e., during the later period of antiquity, his teachers were Chuang- tzii (4th century B. C.), Ch'ii Yuan (4th-3rd centuries B. C.), Ssu-ma Hsiang-ju (2nd century B. C.), Ssu-ma Ch'ien (2nd-lst centuries B.C.), Yang Hsiing (1st century B.C.). Not only is this a much later line of ancient literature, it is, in fact, the line that in the future could not be confined within the framework of Confucianism. This viewpoint highly recommends Han Yii, who, notwithstanding his reverence for Confucius, could recognise the merits of Chuang-tzu,

a classic of Taoism, and Ch'ii Yuan, [15] a poet of great originality.

Besides enumerating those from whom contemporary writers should learn, Han Yu also defined what they should learn: "If a thought is followed to its culmination—this is all," he said, repeating Confucius.

Yet it seems to me that it is not precisely this that constitutes the new element introduced by Han Yu into the literature of his day. The most essential contribution was the principle of the writer's freedom and independence (*tzii-yu tzu-tsai)* as a creative personality. In this respect Han Yii was in perfect accord with his epoch.

In Han Yu's lifetime, the poetry of Li Po had come to be estimated at its true worth. Although this poet belonged to the preceding generation of writers, his work manifested that spirit of freedom and independence of which Han Yii spoke. If Petrarch was hailed as the first poet of the Italian Renaissance, Li Po may be called the first poet of the Chinese Renaissance; and like Petrarch, not only in regard to time but also to spirit.

A great deal has been written about Li Po in our country, and so there is no need to enlarge upon his work here. His verse, familiar to our readers in many translations, speaks for itself. The love of liberty and the sense of independence inherent in the creations of this poet have also been remarked upon by all who have written about him. But I would like to point out that his path was far different to that indicated by Han Yii. The two men possessed in common their awareness of the need for complete liberty and independence—spiritual, creative independence, but the paths by which they sought spiritual freedom were divergent.

I believe that the key to the inner world of Li Po, to the deep roots of his creative work, is to be found in the verse treatise on the nature of poetry, written by Ssu-k'ung T'u (837-908), poet and theoretician of poetry, wTio lived at a time when Li Po was no longer with the living, though his poetry still reigned over the minds of men.

V. M. Alexeyev, who translated this treatise and wrote a commentary, gave a correct and, I consider, exhaustive elucidation of the author's conception. In the opinion of V. M. Alexeyev, Ssu-k'ung T'u believed the writing of creative poetry to be the outcome of inspiration, born of association with "Tao"—the "Way"—the innermost, truest being in the Taoist conception of that category. [16]

Here we have a conception which is the direct opposite of the rationalistic, since man is conscious of his innermost experience not in the terms of reason, but in those of supra-sensual cognition, i. e., mystics. It goes without saying that Li Po's poetry is a subtle and many-faceted phenomenon, [17] and it is possible to find in it obvious elements of rationalist thought, but still, illumination as the outcome of direct contact with being plays an immense part in his creative work. The chief thing is that along this path Li Po acquired the

freedom of spirit, the sense of independence that Han Yu sought on the paths of rationalist thought.

So it appears that Chinese data confirms the phenomena that the investigators found in the Italian Renaissance—the presence of both rationalism and mysticism. The one and the other are merely different paths leading to the same end: to the liberation of man's consciousness from the power of dogmas, to an outlet into the sphere of completely spiritual, and therefore creative, freedom. This was essential for the advance of human thought, social life, culture and science.

But mysticism should not be understood solely in the sense of religious awareness. It may have been this in certain trends of the Italian Renaissance, but not in the Chinese: here a philosophical mysticism that had no immediate bearing on religion existed.

It is necessary to remind the reader once more that the path of rationalism proved to be the most fruitful for the further progress of social thought and social life.

6

It seems to me that in order to understand the nature of the fundamental changes wrought in social consciousness during the Renaissance epoch, the important thing is to consider the change that took place in philosophy and poetry. [18] All the rest, no matter how significant, fits within the same framework, including the processes taking place in literature as a whole.

One of the most expressive signs of the Renaissance in Italy and other European countries, pervaded by Renaissance influences, is considered to be the blossoming of literature. It is well known, too, that during the Chinese Renaissance an immense creative force was at work in literature. Here we encounter a phenomenon of a peculiar nature, typical of the Renaissance epoch in Europe, but given particularly vivid expression in China. A mass of literature appeared of a character which we would call publicist, philosophical and scientific, in forms which might be termed essays, sketches, articles, treatises and epistles, of high literary merit. These forms were alluded to by the collective term *lcu-wen.*

Translated literally, *leu-wen* means ancient literature, fbut since it included particularly the works of Han Yu, Liu Tsung-yuan (and other Renaissance writers of the 8th to the 12th centuries), it was not the literature of antiquity. It was "ancient" only in spirit but not in time. As a matter of fact, it was the literature that arose along with the movement known as *fu-ku*—"return to antiquity", which gave to that historical epoch its specific and original colouring. In view of this, the term *leu-wen* may be understood to mean exactly the literature of the Renaissance.

That it was so may be seen from the following. A collection of literary works entitled by its compilers *Ku-wen chen-pao (True Gems*

of Ancient Literature) has been preserved to us. The earliest of the editions known to us dates from 1366, but its first appearance, research scholars suppose, must have been about the end of the 13th century, when circumstances permitted of a partial summing up of what had been achieved in literature by the "return-to-antiquity" movement.

First of all, writers of the period extending from the 8th to the 12th century are included. These were the centuries marked by the development of the movement, and the writers are represented by a large number of their works. There are also writers of the past, from the 3rd century B. C. to the 6th century A. D., but these are few, and a very limited number of their works are given. Essentially, this is a collection of Renaissance writers. The writings of the ancient and medieval authors are included, in the first place, to show that ancient masterpieces were highly estimated by the Renaissance intellectuals and, in the second place, that their own works actually revived the brilliance of that past, that the new "ancient literature" was a worthy successor of the old classics.

The collection is in two volumes. The first is devoted entirely to poetry, the second, to prose, of the kind mentioned above. Here are some examples: *On History*, a philosophical-historical treatise by Su Hsiin; *On a Subject's Right to Criticise the Ruler*, an article by Han Yu; *On Field Work,* a didactical treatise by Su Shih; *Against Revenge,* an article by Liu Tsung-yuan; *The Pavilion of an Intoxicated Elder,* by Ouyang Hsiu, a poetical description of a pavilion built by the author in a picturesque spot where he could meet his friends. We find here, too, prefaces to anthologies of the works of some other authors, epistles, biographies and epitaphs. This prose was regarded as literature in the exact sense that Han Yii conceived it. During the Renaissance in China, this literature not only knew a prodigious blossoming, but was elevated to the height of true art. It is possible to speak of the remarkable poetic style, genres and forms, the techniques of this literature, which may be considered as belonging to poetry in a prose form.

Another literary-prose trend was that of the narrative, which was of no less importance for this epoch, and of even greater importance for the subsequent history of Chinese literature.

The narrative prose of the Chinese Renaissance was represented by the novella genre. It had been represented by this form during the first stage of its history, from the 8th to the 9th centuries, and during the second, from the 10th to the 13th centuries. In the first stage, it was known as the T'ang novella, since it related chiefly to the days of the T'ang dynasty; and in the second stage, as the Sung novella, since it took shape at the time of the Sung dynasty. Taken as a whole, it was a single line of development in belles-lettres, with clearly marked phases. The T'ang novella was aristocratic; the Sung, democratic. The first came into existence in a circle of the enlightened, highly-cultivated literary men and was intended for

the educated stratum of society, the second was of a more popular nature both in its origin and its suitability to a wider circle of readers.

The existence of these two phases in the novella's history was in itself evidence of characteristic features in the Chinese Renaissance. The movement was initiated by the educated and enlightened social circles, the spiritual aristocracy, but later the general tendencies of the Renaissance penetrated to wider circles, since, during the second phase of the Renaissance (from the 11th century) a rise in democratic culture was manifested. [19] Consequently, the history and destiny of the Chinese Renaissance novella are vividly illustrative of the epoch as a whole, and also of its inner development. At the same time, this novella-form helps us to discern the lines of the Renaissance in other fields, above all in the drama. The relation between the novella, especially the T'ang novella, and what is known as the Yuan drama, the first outstanding form of the Chinese theatre, is incontrovertible. And this is not merely because many of these plays, including some of the most remarkable of the 13th- and 14th-century dramas, were based on the plots of novellas (a tendency also typical of European Renaissance drama), but, in a greater measure, because the creative principles on which the novella was constructed proved applicable to drama.

The fact that the T 'ang and Sung novellas belong to the Renaissance epoch is obvious. The Sung novella, and partly the T'ang novella (*pien-wen*) are closer to folklore, to popular tales; but still, it is not folklore, especially the T'ang novella. These novellas are the genuine stuff of fine literature with its specific qualities.

It is evident in their language; they were written in literary language, as this category is understood in present-day linguistics. [20] We know from the subsequent history of the Chinese language how long this literary language, i. e., the language elaborated during the Renaissance, remained unchallenged in Chinese society. Actually, it lasted until the 20th century, at the beginning of which another, modern literary language came into use. That it was in use for so long a time is fully accounted for by the fact that it was evolved and developed by Han Yii, Li Po, Liu Tsung-yuan, Tu Fu, Ouyang Hsiu, Su Shih, Wang An-shih and other remarkable writers.

In the second place, and this, of course, is the most essential, the fact that the novellas belonged to the Renaissance is proved by their subject-matter. The personage presented in them is the man who was the centre of all the Sung philosophers' attention, the man for whom Han Yii and Liu Tsung-yuan were fighting. Now, for the first time in Chinese narrative literature, man had appeared as an individual, with a psychology, emotions and a destiny of his own. In the novellas one may even find a reflection of something characteristic of the philosophy of that time —the discerning of a dual nature in man: the "universal", which meant good, and the "material", which was, potentially, good and evil. The general humanistic

mood of the epoch is represented just as plainly. Novellas of these centuries were created in the same current of humanistic ideas as the whole of progressive social thought.

It appears, then, that there is ample foundation for including the novella and the drama within the sphere of Chinese Renaissance literature: the drama, because it presents in perhaps a more vividly impressive fashion the individual, the personality, the human character, and thus reflects the humanistic mood of the progressive strata of Chinese society.

A great deal more may be included in this sphere. Since it is impossible to dwell on this here, I will confine myself to a brief enumeration of the fields wherein the Chinese Renaissance spirit was manifested. First of all, historical science, in which a new, critical trend [21] appeared in those times. From this stemmed the new conception of the philosophy of history. [22] It is necessary, too, to mention art. T'ang portraiture and Sung landscape and genre painting occupy the same place in the history of the art of China, and also of Korea and Japan, as Renaissance art occupies in the history of European art. I cannot forbear to mention that the time has come to consider in the light of Renaissance ideas the new tendencies that pervaded the sphere of Buddhism both as a religion and a philosophy. It should not be forgotten that if Buddhism is omitted, it is impossible to understand the origin of many principles in the Sung school of philosophy; no matter how negative the attitude of these philosophers to Buddhism, they could hardly have attained to their basic principles without an acquaintance with Buddhist philosophy. Apart from this association with Sung philosophy, Buddhism is important because at that time a new spirit was at work in it, reminiscent of the Reformation, which had been one of the most typical manifestations of Renaissance ideas in Europe. Unless we link the teaching known in Chinese as *ch'an* (in Japanese, *Zen)* with Renaissance ideas, it will be difficult to understand this teaching, which gained such wide influence both in China and Japan and in many respects determined the aesthetics of the Renaissance. [23]

All these phenomena are still awaiting research, and without thorough investigation of them we cannot hope to advance from the traditional, settled positions we occupy. These researches, I am convinced, would yield data of immense importance for the study of the Chinese Renaissance—its content, its scope, its historical significance, and by this means, for an understanding of many phenomena in the cultural life of the neighbouring countries, Korea and Japan.

7

A comparison of data on two of the historical instances of the Renaissance we have discussed, instances that have arisen and taken shape entirely independent of each other, makes it possible,

it seems to me, to distinguish certain common features of this epoch in its cultural-historical content.

The most important manifestation in this field was the spirit of^humanism. But to confine ourselves to. this statement is not enough; in the history of mankind the humanistic principle has always dominated, to a greater or lesser degree, people's minds and activities; otherwise they would not have been the makers of history and culture. The conception of *humanitas* was actual to Cicero, the conception of *jen*, to Confucius, long before the Renaissance epoch; it was, moreover, identical at opposite sides of the civilised world. What is important, therefore, is not the conception of humanism as such, but its content. Historically, this content differed: let us recall that man was proudly declared to be created in the image of the deity; that man was the possessor of the fire, wrenched from the hands of the deity. May we take this to signify that man possessed the same powers as were attributed to the deity—unlimited powers, according to the ideas of that time? Such, apparently, was the most ancient conception of humanism, a conception of immense importance, since without this faith in his own powers man would have found it hard to build up life and culture. The significance of this consciousness is indicated by the fact that the conception assumed shape through a medium most forceful to the minds of people of those ages—the creation of myths. Let us recall the commandment "love thy neighbour," the precept of "charity and compassion", etc., which were acclaimed also in antiquity, though at a somewhat later stage, when social life and culture were already highly developed. These commandments expressed awareness of the equality and fraternity of all people, their equal value and their ethical community. That this conception was of prime importance is borne out by the fact that it was established through the medium most imperative for people of that time—the medium of religion. This conception reflected an idea of the utmost importance in that epoch, the idea of the untenability of the then prevailing division of people into superior—free, and inferior—slaves. Progress in life and culture, that is, in history itself, was impossible without a struggle against this differentiation.

Even if we hear in mind this alone, it will be clear that the conception of humanism formed during the Renaissance was, [historically, at least the third of its kind. But its content was its own. Renaissance humanism consisted in the individual's assurance of his own value from every aspect; of the value of his own reason, senses and will power. Furthermore, this value was associated with the autonomy of the human personality, its freedom and independence. This third conception of humanism assumed its form in categories that were philosophical rather than mythical or religious. Humanism in this content, as I see .it, constitutes the salient feature of the Renaissance epoch in the cultural-historical plane indicated.

It should not be thought that this conception of humanism displaced the former; it could not have accomplished this because the former conceptions were too precious to human life and culture and to history

itself. But it supplemented them by something new and essential—something indispensable to historical progress.

Not only what it affirmed, but what it rejected, was characteristic of Renaissance humanism. Both historical instances of the Renaissance, the Chinese and the Italian, indicate with the utmost clarity that whatever hampered man's spiritual freedom, freedom in every manifestation of his nature, was rejected. The main obstacle in the path of freedom at that time consisted in dogmatism as a principle of the attitude to truth, and scholasticism as a method of the cognition of truth. The negative attitude was directed, concretely, towards that which, in the given society, had proved a refuge for these two phenomena: in China this was Confucianism, i. e., philosophy, in Italy, Catholicism, i. e., religion. In no case was philosophy itself or religion itself the object of opprobrium, but only the claims that each laid to constituting the sole source of truth—moreover, in its specific formulae, claims supported by the ruling powers: the state in one case, the church in the other.

Nevertheless, there wa snothing new, as far as history was concerned, either in the emergence of humanism during the Renaissance or in the ways by which it was established. Dogmatism, and its inevitable associate, scholasticism, had taken shape in the history of human thought in earlier times, and even then the struggle against them had begun. Both the one and the other were historically and logically justified. All doctrine is evolved gradually, and so by degrees formulae are elaborated to set down the essence of the said doctrine; it is perfectly natural, therefore, that at a certain stage these formulae assume a finished, fully defined form, both in idea and language. If the teaching is rooted in social being, i. e., has a historical foundation, this process is inevitable and even serves as a symptom of its vitality. Hence, the appearance of dogmas as strictly defined conceptions is not only a logical development but also evidence that the given doctrine has reached the peak of its development. From this standpoint, the Confucian *summa summarum* given- in the collection of K'ung Ying-ta, and the Catholic *summa summarum* given in the *Summa theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas, represent the peak of all that had been attained by Confucian and Catholic thought in the preceding ages. But these peaks belonged historically to a definite epoch, the Middle Ages. Consequently, when changes took place in the historical setting, K'ung Ying-ta and Thomas Aquinas could uphold their principles solely by obligatory means: inwardly—-by declaring their dogmas to be the only verities, and outwardly—by employing the authority and force of the ruling power. Hence, dogma bred dogmatism. The founding of dogma is a phenomenon historically legitimate and, in a way, progressive; the founding of dogmatism is a phenomenon historically natural but always reactionary.

The struggle against dogmatism was observed in history at earlier dates. Take, for instance, the efforts of Confucian thinkers of the Middle Ages to emerge beyond the bounds of Han Confucianism and to endow it with a new content by introducing elements borrowed from Taoism and Buddhism. Take, again, the heresies in medieval Catholicism,

evidencing the effort to escape from canonical bounds. The point is not in the struggle against dogmatism, but in the way it was conducted. It was at this juncture that the Renaissance contributed something new; previous to this, the struggle against dogmatism had been waged with the aid of dogmas, one set against the other. In the Renaissance epoch, at all events during its rise, it was not a question of setting up new, strictly defined dogmas against the existent ones, but of the outburst of protest against the spirit of dogmas, i. e., against dogmatism as the principle of thought. Dogmatism was confronted by free thought, scholasticism by the creative principle. It was this, I consider, that constituted the new idea introduced into the history of thought by the Renaissance epoch.

This epoch, in both its western and eastern versions, showed us the paths by which the creative freedom of thought was attained. There were two ways, directly opposite to each other—the rationalistic and the mystical.

In the given historical circumstances these were two divergent paths to cognition. Rationalism led to cognition of being by the study of it—through experience interpreted in the categories of logical thinking, the categories of reason. The mystics considered that cognition could he attained straightforwardly by direct contact with what is cognised, realised not only through reason but also through intuition. Both paths were observed in the Renaissance in China and Italy. During the Chinese Renaissance the rationalist principle was manifested mainly in the channel of Confucianism and partly Buddhism (in its reformational trends). The mystical principle followed the channel of Taoism and some Buddhist trends. Not infrequently both paths led to one and the same end. Chang Tsai spoke of all mankind as his brothers and sisters, and all other living things—"grasses and trees, birds and beasts"—as his "associates." Francis of Assisi looked upon fishes and birds as his brothers and sisters. Both men arrived at the same conclusion, the first, by way of rationalism; the second, by way of mysticism. As history was to show, the first way proved the more effective; succeeding progress, both social and cultural, was associated with rationalism (in its new development, of course), rationalism as the principle of cognition, and with experience as its method.

It should not be forgotten that the humanism of the Renaissance had its own destiny. The time came when Renaissance humanism itself became the stronghold of dogmatism. A striking instance of this is afforded in the history of Renaissance philosophy in China. This philosophy which, in its time, had built up one of the most integral, complete and socially necessary, that is to say, progressive,

systems for its time, beginning with the 16th century turned into a system of dogmas, a system upheld by external means—the ruling power, which permitted of no doubts about its truth. On the whole, the same thing occurred in Europe, where, in the 16th century, a crisis in humanistic thought in its Renaissance form became apparent. Both in the East and in the West the humanism of the Renaissance gave place to that of the Enlightenment. But this turning- point, like the hist ory of the Renaissance epoch in general, is a subject for a separate study.

What is known as the Renaissance is closely associated with humanism in its concrete historical content. The name Renaissance became the principal title of the whole epoch. Since the terminological name of this epoch is so firmly established, we do not infringe upon it, but we wish to show that whatever is understood by this name is of secondary importance in characterising this epoch and, though inseparable from the main thing—humanism, is nevertheless no more than an accompaniment to it.

As we have already indicated in this article, the Chinese term *fu-ku* refers not only in its general meaning, but even in the lexical sense, to the restoration of antiquity. The European terms for the epoch—Rinascita, Renaissance—do not express "antiquity" in the lexical sense, but are understood if not as the rebirth of antiquity itself, then at all events as the rebirth of sciences and arts on the basis of antiquity. Both in the East and in the West Renaissance humanists turned their attention to antiquity. To find what? Inspiration and help. Where? In the "classical" antiquity.

Renaissance humanists desired something new in life and culture. They felt and understood what it should consist of, but they needed help in working out their views, and, what was no less important to them, they needed someone's authority to support their views. This authority they found in the ancients.

It was necessary at the same time to strengthen this authority in the eyes of their contemporaries. This the Renaissance humanists achieved. Strictly speaking, the effulgence that the West Europeans visualise around Graeco-Roman antiquity, and the East Asians visualise around Chinese antiquity, if not wholly created by Renaissance humanists, was at least strengthened by them. It was an effulgence that disguised a great deal of the true picture of antiquity, and proved so serviceable that traces of Renaissance idealisation of antiquity have survived until our times.

Antiquity is a very wide field and shows great variety in its different epochs. The period of antiquity, in which the humanists of the epoch sought inspiration and support, characterises their outlook. Both in China and in Italy it was the classical period that attracted them. The Chinese looked to the *lieh-kuo,* i. e., the middle period of their antiquity; the Italians, to the last period of the republic and the beginning of the empire in Latin antiquity, and the period of the city-states in Hellenic antiquity, which were likewise middle

periods. Earlier antiquity was recognised and revered, but late antiquity was rejected, or at any rate played a far less important part. The explanation of this'is to be found, I believe, in what has already been mentioned: in the dependence of the attitude to antiquity upon the attitude to the Middle Ages. These two attitudes are two sides of the same historical outlook. The conception of the Renaissance emerged in the process of struggle for free thought, for free and all-round development of human nature. But these were hampered by dogmas in philosophical guise, secular in China, religious in Italy. It was necessary to escape from their power. Since these dogmas had been created in a previous epoch, that epoch was to blame for everything. When had it begun, though, this epoch? The beginning had to be traced, and it was found: the epoch had begun at the moment when the luminous period of antiquity was dimmed.

It must he admitted that a certain historical reality lay behind this historical conception. Late antiquity, the last phase of the history of slave-owning society both in East and West, merged with the early Middle Ages, the first phase of the history of feudal society. Many phenomena in medieval culture, particularly in religion and philosophy, were developed in late antiquity. As one instance of this, we may point to the history of Taoism in the East and Christianity in the West.

The universal religious-philosophical system of Taoism took shape in the "Wei and Liu-ch'ao times", in the Chinese Middle Ages, but its initial period of development dates from the time of the Han Empire. Christianity was transformed into a religious-philosophical system in the early Middle Ages, but its sources, both Hebrew and Hellenic, are to be found in antiquity. And indeed there is a great deal in Christian dogma that assumed its form in the late period of this antiquity. It was because late antiquity proved to bo in some way intermingled with the phenomena brought by the Middle Ages that the Renaissance humanists were attracted by the classical phase of antiquity.

This fact must be looked into further.

We are well aware that the search for aid and inspiration in antiquity was by no means confined to the Renaissance epoch. Both before and after this epoch, people in the Orient and the Occident had looked to antiquity. The essential point is, to whom or to what they looked. The humanists of the Italian Renaissance sought Plato, not Plotinus; the Chinese humanists sought Mencius, not Wang Pi. Theologians of the Middle Ages and humanists of the Renaissance turned to Aristotle—the former, to build up the edifice of scholasticism with his aid; the latter, to pull down and destroy this edifice with his aid. In China, in the Middle Ages as in the Renaissance, thinkers looked to the conception of the five primary elements of material nature, but in the first instance it was done for the purpose of building up a mystical-magical doctrine on this basis; in the second instance, to attain with its aid to a materialist interpretation of the

process of being. Mankind, which had become detached in some way from the earlier ages of its history by late antiquity and the early Middle Ages, was brought once more into contact with those ages by the Renaissance. In other words, the conception of continuity in mankind's historical existence was resuscitated; perhaps, this conception of continuity was even created anew, and it was founded upon a humanistic basis, a basis that treated man as the free agent in history.

In conclusion, it should be borne in mind that no actual rebirth of antiquity took place, nor could take place. After all that mankind had suffered in the struggle against the division into freemen and slaves, it was unthinkable that people would willingly return to the slave-owning past,. This was on the social-economic plane. It was likewise unthinkable to return to the ideological systems of antiquity. The paganism of the fanatical disciples of Plato in Italy at the end of the 15th century was only an episode in the history of Renaissance religious-philosophical thought; actually, its most characteristic feature was the endeavour to build a new system of world outlook. The close attention that Sung philosophers devoted to the ancient *I-ching* by no means signified a return to the naturalistic conception of being, but was merely a sign of their increasing awareness of "being" as a dialectic process.

The same thing is to be observed in literature. Although the Italian humanists admired the writings of the ancients, Petrarch's sonnets do not resemble the *Amores* of Ovid either in form or content. Han Yii, who advocated the "return to antiquity" and visualised antiquity through the prism of its manuscripts, termed all that he considered genuine in contemporary literature "ancient". Yet even those genres which were elaborated by him and his associates—genres that included articles, treatises, studies, etc.— bore little resemblance to parallel elements in the literature of antiquity, not to mention verse and narrative prose. A particularly striking indication of the fact that no restoration of antiquity had taken place is observed in China, where the ancient classics were actually replaced by new classics.

8

Humanism and renascence: these were the most general and, at the same time, the fundamental moving forces of the Renaissance epoch in the history of mankind, where it appears in two versions—the Italian and the Chinese. All cultural phenomena of this epoch either owed their origin directly to these forces, or were wholly determined by them. Philosophy and poetry were created by them; literature as a whole, historical science and art were determined by them; and under their influence natural sciences developed. They determined the very mode of living. Characteristic of the humanists in both Italy and China was the new interest in practical activity, in the spread of their ideas. The media for their pro-

pagation were the same in both cases: public speaking, teaching, conversation with friends, disputes with opponents of their ideas; epistolary and pamphlet writing, articles, treatises—all that constituted scientific and publicist literature; researches, commentaries to the classics—all that constituted peculiarly Renaissance philology. The whole of this many-sided activity is evidence of the existence of a separate social stratum—the intellectuals, who, in social status, in the nature of their work and in type, differed greatly from the cultural leaders of olden times—the prophets, sages, teachers. The writers, scholars and artists who were Renaissance humanists were the prototypes of modern intellectuals, and the range of their energetic efforts determined, to a considerable extent, the range of intellectuals of succeeding epochs.

It is often remarked that the Renaissance intellectuals, having wrought a complete change in the minds of the educated strata of their time, exercised no serious influence upon the masses, inasmuch as they were out of touch with the people. Evidence in plenty has been produced and corroborated by many writers. If this is so, then wherein lay the generally acknowledged great historical significance of the epoch? History itself, it appears to me, answers that question.

In the foregoing we outlined the common features typical of the cultural-historical side of the Renaissance epoch in China and Italy. Their reproduction in each country and their appearance largely independent of reciprocal influence leads us to conclude that here some historical regularity was at work; the fact that these features typify the most important things relating to spiritual activity, leads us to treat them as the key to an understanding of the role played by the epoch in the general history of these nations.

As it has been pointed out, the Renaissance epoch in China extended, in my opinion, from the 8th to the 15th centuries; the Renaissance epoch in Italy is regarded as extending from the 14th to the 16th centuries. Roth China and Italy were feudal countries at that time. If the consolidation of the feudal system in China is dated by the 3rd century (following the Yellow Turbans rebellion at the end of the 2nd century), then that country had already known five centuries of feudalism. If the consolidation of the feudal system on Italian soil is dated by the 5th century (the time of the Ostrogoth kingdom of Theodoric the Great), then that country must have already known eight centuries of feudalism. Thus, by the time the Renaissance arrived in China and Italy, the feudal system had lasted far beyond the early stage of its history.

Without going deeply into those changes that took place in the feudal structures of China in the 8th, and of Italy in the 14th century, I will permit myself to quote Marx's words: "In the Middle Ages (the Germanic epoch) the village as such was the starting point of history, the further development of which proceeded subsequently in the form of the contradictions between town and country." [24] It seems to me that the word "subsequently" relates precisely to the

Renaissance epoch. It is a generally-known fact that this development of the towns with all its consequent economic, social and cultural effects was one of the most characteristic aspects of the Renaissance in Italy. A no less important fact in the economic, social and cultural life of Renaissance China was the development of the towns not only as political-administrative and military centres, but also as centres for trade, crafts and cultural activities. It is often pointed out that certain forms of capitalist production began to make their appearance during this epoch in Italy. Rut here we must bear in mind the observation made by Marx: "Although we come across the first beginnings of capitalist production as early as the 14th or 15th century, sporadically, in certain towns of the Mediterranean, the capitalistic era dates from the 16th century." [28] Italy was a Mediterranean country, and her Renaissance epoch covered the 14th and 15th centuries. It follows, then, that this epoch still belonged to the feudal era of her history. This may be asserted with still greater foundation about the Renaissance period—the 8th to the 15th centuries—in China. But it is, nevertheless, a special stage in the history of feudal society. I would suggest naming it transitional.

In its main lines the historical process is uninterrupted. In the case of a phenomenon such as the substitution of a social-economic system, the decline of one of its forms and the emergence of another are actually a prolonged process. Therefore, the frontier zones in the history of slave-owning society and of feudal society merge into one another. We observe this in the so-called Hellenistic epoch, merging into the history of the early period of the Roman Empire. This was the last stage in the history of slave-owning society in that zone of the Old World, and the first in the history of feudal society. Beginning with the 4th century, the centre of political and cultural life was transferred from Rome to Byzantium, and with the elevation of Constantinople and the fall of Rome, antiquity came to an end, as Engels pointed out. For this reason the history of feudal society in Italy cannot be detached from that preparatory stage, that transitional period. The same may be said in regard to the history of feudal society in China. The system was consolidated in the 3rd century but took shape earlier, during the latter part of the Han Empire. This constituted the transitional stage.

An identical situation arose during the transition from feudalism to capitalism: here, too, a long transitional period ensued. If we take the whole of Western Europe, not Italy alone, then the transitional period concludes with the end of the 18th century—the consolidation of capitalism in France. If we take the whole of Eastern Asia, not China alone, then the transitional period closes in the mid- 19th century with the consolidation of capitalism in Japan. A point of particular interest is that the countries where elements of the transitional stage were observed earlier than in others (China and Italy) proved to be more backward than younger countries. In Italy the capitalist system was consolidated only in the 19th century; in
China, only at the end of 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, and, moreover, it had not time to reach full development.

The Renaissance epoch enters this transitional period of history as its first phase; the second is that known in the West as the Enlightenment epoch. An epoch closely resembling this in its character took shape in China's history. It follows that the Renaissance epoch remained still feudal, but was passing already to the new, urban stage of its history. It was not yet capitalism, but without it, capitalism could not have emerged.

What, then, had it accomplished—this Renaissance epoch? It had brought about a revolution in people's minds. Without this there could have been no ideology that impelled the builders of the future social system, capitalism. Capitalism in the circumstances of the time was a natural development, a further advance on mankind's long, arduous road. That this revolution in thought was confined mainly to intellectuals goes without saying. But, as Lenin remarked, the intellectuals are called intellectuals because they re fleet and express with the greatest awareness and acuity the development of class interests and the political groupings in all societies.

We know from history that what the Renaissance humanists were aiming at was, historically speaking, progressive. They might not have been in direct, immediate contact with the masses, but all the same, inasmuch as they were in accord with the demands of the epoch, they expressed the objective interests of society as a whole. It is understood, of course, that this revolution in minds was determined to a certain extent by the rudiments of the new that appeared in the social and economic spheres of the life of peoples, but it took place before these rudiments had time to develop. That the intellectual revolution is one of the most essential conditions for the transition to a new social system is proved by the fact that the preparatory change in ideas necessary for the transition from capitalism to socialism was accomplished long before the initial establishment of the socialist system. It seems to me that if we have grasped the historical content of the Renaissance epoch in precisely this way, it will be easy for us to determine its place in history and its historical meaning. Since the same epoch proved to be as clearly marked in China as in Italy, the question arises of what this epoch was from a general-historical standpoint: was it peculiar to the history of one country or two countries? Was it a historical fortuity? Or was it inherent in the history of other countries, where historical life evinced characteristics identical with those of China and Italy—countries that had passed through a prolonged stage of the slave-owning system with a many-sided, well-developed culture, and had experienced as long (and as many-sided in its development) a stage of feudalism? Was it a historical regularity in these instances? If this could be convincingly shown on the basis of various data, it would play a very important part in our general understanding of the historical process.

We know, however, that the Renaissance epoch—in Europe, at any rate—embraced other countries, not only Italy. At the same time, we are well aware that the first country where the epoch made itself felt was Italy. We know, too, that the Renaissance in other countries was determined to a great extent by the changes that took place in Italy. There can be no doubt that the Renaissance in these countries was historically independent of that in Italy. As soon as this has been decided, the question arises of autochthonic and reflected Renaissance epochs. Whereas the former arose, evidently, in the history of ancient peoples, the latter arose in the history of younger peoples, who entered the arena of history when the slaveowning world was in its decline. For this reason, they had no antiquity such as belonged to the older peoples. Rut, as they advanced rapidly along the path of feudal development, they reached the same realisation as the older peoples, namely, that an intellectual revolution—in the sense indicated—was necessary. They had their Renaissance epoch in their own shapes and on their own levels, and the absence of a "classical" antiquity was compensated by assimilating the antiquity of the older peoples. Hellenic and Roman antiquity became the antiquity of all other European peoples; Chinese antiquity assumed the same place in the history of the culture of other East Asian peoples.

Thus, the question of the Renaissance epoch ceases to be that of the history of any particular country and becomes a problem of world history. At the same time, it gives rise to another problem— that of the concrete shape and level of this epoch in various countries. We know, for example, that the Renaissance spirit in Germany found its most vivid expression in the Reformation—the reshaping of religious views. Possibly, the same process took place in Rud- dhism in Japan. In short, it is far from being a rule that the Renaissance elements in other countries should develop within the same spheres as in the first Renaissance country. Neither is it the rule that the highest attained in any field by this movement should be, of necessity, in the first country to know a Renaissance epoch. Wo know that Renaissance drama reached its peak not in Italy but in England, where the movement was only a reflection. The same may be said, evidently, of Renaissance drama in Eastern Asia: it first took shape in China, where it reached a very high level of development, but attained its peak, apparently, in the Japanese drama of the 17th and 18th centuries.

The historical content of the Renaissance, therefore, can only be understood on the basis of a general survey of its manifestations in every country where the movement was known. These should be grouped, according to their historical connections, into definite cultural-historical zones, for example, the European, East Asian and Middle Eastern. As a phenomenon of world history, the Renaissance is only revealed in its full historical significance when the phenomena of this movement are compared in different countries

and also in each of the possible zones. Seen in this light, the Renaissance phenomena in each country, their quality, significance and historical role will become far more distinct.'

I cannot but add that in this comparative method of study the movement of world history might become perfectly concrete; we observe the geographical trend and the consecutiveness of the movement, as well as its sporadic, even fitful nature. This, perhaps, will put an end to attempts to obliterate the Renaissance by proving that it stems from the Middle Ages and, thus, depriving it of any title to originality; it may also foil attempts to prove that it had no connection at all with the Middle Ages. Without the Middle Ages there could have been no Renaissance; but it undermined the Middle Ages not by obliterating everything, including the great things that had been created during the Middle Ages, but by making a bold advance.

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NOTES

[1] The most interesting of the modern writers on problems of the West European Renaissance as a particular historical epoch is, in my opinion, Huizinga, the Dutch historian (1872-1945). Readers who admire and value his works have called him "the Burckhardt of the 20th century". For fuller information about this author see K. Roster's introductory article in *Johan Huizinga, Gescliichte undKultur, Gesammelte Aufsatze,* Stuttgart, 1954.

[2] The interesting work on the Italian Renaissance and Slavonic literatures of the 15th-16th centuries by I. I. Golenishchev-Kutuzov marks a decided advance in this field (II. H. r'o.TemiruoB-KyTyaoB, *HmajibaucKoe eoapoMdeuue u cjiaenncKue Jiumepamypu XV-—XVI ee.,* Mocraa, 1963).

[2] See V. I. Semanov's article on the historical basis of literary periodisa- tion (B. H. CeMaHOB, *06 ucmopunecnou ocnoee jiumepamy pnou nepuoduaayuu,*— «Hapo^u A3HH ii A$PHKH», 1963, N° 5, cip. 118-134).

[4] See **the anthology of** Chinese **literature: «KnTauci;an jiHTepaiypa.** Xpe- **CTOMaTHH», т.** I. **«flpeBHOCTb. CpegHHe BeKa.** HoBOe **BpeMH», MocKBa,** 1959, **crp.** 305-311.

[6] See the article on "The Philosophy of the Chinese Renaissance" in this volume (pp. 69-100).

[6] *Tsin-ssii-lu,* with a commentary by Nakamura Tekisai, was reproduced in 1912 (the 45th year of Meiji), in vol. 8 of *Kanseki kokuzikai zensho,* a collection of the Chinese classics with commentaries by Japanese Confucianists of the 17th and 18th centuries, published by the Waseda University, Tokyo.

[7] *Tsin-ssii-lu,* chapter 2 ("Wei-hsiieh lei").

[8] See M. S. Korelin's studies on the Italian Renaissance (M. C Kopejura, *Onepnu umajibancKoeo BoapoMcdeuun,* MocKBa, 1910).

[9] Huizinga, in his work *Le Declin du moyen age* (Paris, 1948, p.[278 ff.), advances an original conception of "formalism".

[10] See the article on "The Philosophy of the Chinese Renaissance" in this volume.

[11] This assertion is to be found in one of Han Yu's philosophical epistles, included in *I Shu,* I, the collection made by Ch'eng Hao.

[12] Quoted from a translation by Y. M. Alexeyev *(06 onpedejienuu Kumau- CKOU jiumepamypu u o6 ouepedimx aadanax ee ucmopuna,*—«7KypHaji MnmiCTep- CTBa HapoflHoro npoCBemeHHH», 1916, Ns 6).

[13] Quoted from the epistle *Ta Wei Chih-sheng shu* ("Answer to Wei Chih-sheng").

[14] From the letter *Ta Li Ao shu* ("Answer to Li Ao").

[15] See «KmaiicKaH jraTepaTypa. XpeCTOMaTHH», т. I.

[16] See B. M. AjieKceeB, *Kumaucnasi nosMa o noame*, IJeTporpa/i, 1916.

[17] For this aspect of Li Po's verse see 0. JI. <I>HniMaH, *Jlu Bo. TKuam u meopnecmeo,* MocKBa, 1958.

[18] With reference to this, see N. I. Konrad's article on three T'ang poets (H. 11. Koupa^, *Tpu mancKux noama,* in the book «Tpii TaHCKHX noaia. Jin BO, BaH Ban, fly ®y», MOCKBS, 1960).

[19] See N. I. Konrad's survey of the history of Chinese literature in: «KII-TaiicKaH jmrepaTypa. XpecxoMaTHH», т. I, cip. 35-37.

[20] See N. I. Konrad's article on the literary language in China and Japan (H. II. Koiipa/i, *O jiumepamypHOM naune e Kumae u Hnonuu,*—«Bonpocu H3HKO-3HaHna», 1954, N» 3).

[21] Since this question cannot be dealt with here in the necessary detail, I shall confine myself to pointing out that I regard the "critical school" in Chinese historical science of that time as the trend initiated by Ouyang Hsiu's works on the authenticity and authorship of certain ancient writings. The development of this trend is seen in the historical works of Su Shih and Su Cheh.

[22] Evidence of the formation of such a conception is found in the philosophical-historical treatises, for example, *Ch'un-ch'iu lun* by Ouyang Hsiu, *Cheng-tung lun* by Su Shih, *Shih lun* by Su Cheh and *Cheng-tung lun* by Chu Hsi. Naturally, the historiographic corpus *Tzu-chuh tung-Chian* by Ssu-ma Kuang, and its abbreviation, *Tzu-chih tung-chian kang-mu,* compiled by Chu Hsi, are of great importance. In this connection I wish to call attention to what is, from my standpoint, a notable circumstance: the new school of history, characteristic of the Renaissance epoch, arose in China during the second stage of this epoch.

[23]From this standpoint, the teaching of Tsung Mi (780-861), in particular his treatise *On Man (Yuan jen lun),* seems to me typical. The study of this treatise and of the entire system of ideas to which it belongs should be one of the most urgent tasks in studies on various aspects of the Chinese Renaissance.

[24] See K. Mapnc, *(PopMbi, npediuecmeyimyue KanumajiucmunecrtoMy npoua-eodcmey,*— <<BecTHHK apenHeii HCTopHH>>, 1940, N» 1, CTp. 15.

[25] K. Mapnc H cp. BurenbC, *COHUHHHUH,* т. 23, **MockBs,** 1960, CTp. 728.