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Beyond Biographical Profiles: Turning Points in the Life of Atanas Dalchev

Poza sylwetkę biograficzną: o punktach zwrotnych w drodze życiowej Atanasa Dałczewa

Abstract: The report summarizes biographical information on the prominent Bulgarian poet and thinker Atanas Dalchev (1904–1978) with the conclusion that data published in encyclopedias, poetry selections, and textbooks state facts of his professional career and publications, but do not reveal or even suggest events that most probably served as key moments in his life. In failing to emphasize the unique challenges and choices faced by Dalchev, such biographical profiles fail to achieve their educational and contextualizing goal as tools for understanding his poetry and non-fictional works by high-school and university students, or readers. The report offers an attempt to reconstruct the main turning points in Dalchev's life that had an undoubted influence on his writings, social behavior and public views. These, in the author's opinion, are his settlement in Sofia (1914), the imposition of the communist regime in Bulgaria and the severe personal consequences related to it (1944–1947), and the publishing of his aphorisms and thoughts entitled 'Fragments' (1967) that made Dalchev one of the most quoted Bulgarian authors to-date.

Keywords: Atanas Dalchev, Bulgarian poetry, censorship, communism, biography.

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The lacking highlights in Dalchev's biographical portraits

Atanas Dalchev (1904–1978) unquestionably belongs to the most influential Bulgarian poets and intellectuals of the 20th century. It seems equally indisputable, therefore, that the manner in which his life and accomplishments are presented deserves the attention of literary historians.

After 1944, Dalchev's biographical portraits¹, traditionally published in encyclopedias², reference and textbooks³, anthologies and the media were understandably reduced to a set of permissible facts in view of communist censorship. However, it turns out that after 1990, almost no corrections or new touches have been added to these data. It is logical that the Bulgarian primary sources of the author's profile indirectly influence the information appearing in foreign languages. This is evident at least in Poland⁴, where the factual canvas and the synopsis of Dalchev's works remain practically unchanged.

- 1 The most complete biographical information on Dalchev, which serves as the main source for further presentations, is published by his son Hristo: H. Dalchev, *Atanas Dalchev. Life in Dates*, in: A. Dalchev, *Collected Works in Two Volumes*, vol. 2, Sofia 1984, pp. 352–355.
- 2 See: *A Short Bulgarian Encyclopedia*, vol. 2, ed. Vl. Georgiev, Sofia 1964, p. 102; K. Kuyumdzhiev, *Dalchev, Atanas Hristov*, in: *Dictionary of Bulgarian Literature*, vol. 1, ed. G. Tzanev, Sofia 1976, pp. 302–303; S. Karolev, *Dalchev, Atanas Hristov*, in: *Dictionary of Modern Bulgarian Literature 1878–1992*, ed. by M. Shishkova et al., Sofia 1994, pp. 95–96; K. Zahova, *Atanas Dalchev*, in: *Dictionary of Bulgarian Literature after the Liberation*, BAS Institute for Literature 2018–2020, <https://dictionar-yilit-bg.eu/Атанас-Христов-Далчев>, accessed: 29.05.2023.
- 3 Compare: S. Kolarov, *Atanas Dalchev*, in: M. Tzaneva et al. *Literature for the 10th Grade of the Unified Secondary Polytechnical Schools*, Sofia 1987, pp. 268–270; R. Hadzhikosev, *Atanas Dalchev*, in: R. Hadzhikosev, *Lectures on Bulgarian Literature (1918–1944)*, Bucharest 2004, pp. 103–118; I. Inev, *Atanas Dalchev*, in: I. Inev, A. Runevska, M. Bakardzhieva, *Literature – 10th Grade*, Sofia 2019, pp. 196–197.
- 4 K. Wierzbicka, *Dałczew, Atanas*, in: *Mały słownik pisarzy zachodniosłowiańskich i południowosłowiańskich*, ed. J. Magnuszewski, Warsaw 1973, pp. 80–81; W. Medyńska, *Wstęp*, in: A. Dałczew, *Poezje*, Warsaw 1981, pp. 5–7; W. Gałązka, *Atanas Dałczew* (note), in: E. Konstantinowa, W. Gałązka, *Niewidzialne skrzydła. Antologia poezji bułgarskiej (od IX wieku do roku 1944)*, Kraków 1987, p. 402; R. Wilczyński, *Atanas Dałczew* (note), „Tygiel Kultury”, 4–6 (2001) p. 164.

It can be summarized that in general Dalchev's portraits have a strict two-part structure. The dry biographical data (usually containing the place of birth, the relocation to Sofia in 1914, the participation in the Strelets ('Sagittarius') literary circle, official positions and translation contributions) are followed by a short synthesis of his poetry, almost always emphasizing its modest size. A characteristic topos in portraying the author turns out to be his so-called *period of silence* after 1944, while at the same time the targeted attacks of communist critics against him, if mentioned at all, are to this day couched in vastly general terms⁵.

In addition to these specifics, it is mandatory to emphasize that the biography of Atanas Dalchev itself does not register sharp career turns or impressive achievements. This leads biographers to include separate life episodes, which in comparison to the biographies of other literary figures of the 20th century seem far less important, and hence the whole portrait raises, justly or not, doubts of low informativeness. It is worth noting, for example, the regular highlighting of Dalchev's participation in the Strelets circle. This group, however, was too short-lived and only marked the debut of the poet and critic on the national literary scene. Coupled with notices of work as a school inspector (from 1930 and from 1938) and as an officer of the Ministry of Information and the Arts (1944–1947), the Strelets period appears as a mere technical element to fill numerous gaps in the life path of such a significant author. Similarly, the information on the Soviet Badge of Honor (1967) and the collection of poems published in the USSR (1974) only add to the impression of a biography composed of incomplete and inconsistent information. Are these, indeed, the crucial facts worth remembering about Dalchev? Also, what benefits would the Bulgarian high school student have, expecting to extract from such a presentation a comprehensive approach to interpreting the author's works? Probably the most logical conclusion would be of a correspondence between what was read in the textbook and the verses from 'Novella': 'My life ebbs away with no trace / Of a single love or incident'⁶.

5 A notable exception from this trend is presented by Roman Hadzhikosev (*Lectures on Bulgarian Literature*, pp. 105, 107).

6 Transl. by Christopher Buxton: <https://www.christopherbuxton.com/index.php/writing/translations/atanas-dalchev/>, accessed: 31.05.2023.

The trouble with Dalchev's biography

For the literary historian, the biographical portraits of Dalchev are drawing attention with their *selectivity* of events, which leads to suspicion of internal incoherence. It turns out, for example, that the poet's stays in Italy (1927) and France (1928–1929 and 1936–1937) were of key importance for his artistic development. This would be a perfectly acceptable conclusion if it did not contradict the facts that the lyricist drew inspiration from his native urban reality⁷ and did not in fact 'import' from abroad 'anything current (or opportune!), anything striking' or 'containing mysterious philosophy'⁸. There is a consensus among critics about the monolithic nature of Dalchev's legacy⁹ with an early-formed 'aesthetic creed'¹⁰, 'with no childhood periods'¹¹. And yet, perhaps the author stopped writing poetry after the Second World War precisely because he stopped traveling? It is, therefore, by no means unfounded to raise doubts that something in Dalchev's portrayal continues to be out of place, and certain details are constantly missing.

The situation is similar to the awarded honors. Along with arguably the most significant of them, the Herder Prize, the Soviet Badge of Honor is constantly reported. The most detailed portraits of the author include information about the awards from the Bulgarian Ministry of Education in the 1920s, as well as the socialist titles of Honoured ('Zasluzhil', 1967), People's ('Naroden', 1974), and the Order of the People's Republic of Bulgaria (3rd degree

- 7 According to Ivan Bogdanov, the most essential part of Dalchev's works reflects typical moments from the native reality and from the life of Bulgarian intellectuals, and even the volumes 'Paris' and 'The Angel of Chartres' do not refute this (Atanas Dalchev. *From Alienation to Humanism*, in: I. Bogdanov, *The Word. Solace and Anxiety. Studies, Profiles, Polemics*, Sofia 1993, p. 223).
- 8 R. Ralin, *With Atanas Dalchev Forever*, in: Dalchev A., *Poems. Selected Fragments and Translations*, Sofia 2006, p. 11.
- 9 P. Danchev, *Atanas Dalchev*, in: Danchev P., *Selected Works*, vol. 1, Sofia 1975, p. 39; I. Bogdanov, *Atanas Dalchev. From Alienation to Humanism*, p. 223.
- 10 R. Rusinov, *Notes on the Language and Style of Atanas Dalchev*, in: Rusinov R., ed., *Masters of Bulgarian Literature*, Sofia – Veliko Tarnovo 1996, p. 45.
- 11 S. Iliev, *Atanas Dalchev*, in: Iliev S., *Literary Portraits*, Veliko Tarnovo 1999, p. 9.

in 1974)¹². The reader, therefore, is left with the impression of a combination of significant and negligible (albeit for various reasons) facts, which naturally provokes speculation: either Dalchev's few honors should be given importance due to the lack of other touches in his presentation, or the sifting of the most valuable information, the creation of a kind of a *canonical portrait* of the author is still in the making? In other words, Dalchev is undeniably a significant figure in national culture, but the achieving of consensus on the question of *what is truly significant* in his life path remains an open process.

The main problem in summarizing the biographical information about Dalchev, in my view, does not even lie in the unevenly spaced periods of his career or in the scarce evidence of literary recognition during his lifetime. It lies in *omitting the highlights*, which, in the first place, would filter the essential from secondary events, and, on the other hand, would shed some light on the themes, style and the very messages of Dalchev's lyrics, criticism and essays.

Considering the above context, I find it appropriate to propose *three turning points* in the life of Atanas Dalchev, which – from the perspective of the third decade of the 21st century – allow us to explain a number of private and artistic choices of the possessor of impressive literary works and an unimpressive curriculum vitae. These are the relocation to Sofia (1914), the imposition of the communist regime (especially the period 1945–1947), and the publication of the modest book entitled 'Fragments' in 1967.

The relocation to Sofia (1914)

It is more than natural to interpret the relocation of a family of a prominent Bulgarian lawyer, teacher and member of the Ottoman Parliament to the homeland – and, in addition, to its capital – as a *return* to the roots or the native habitat. However, it should be strongly emphasized that in 1914 Atanas Dalchev in no way (even figuratively) returned, but, on the contrary, *arrived* in Sofia, falling

12 Among the studied profiles in encyclopedias, books and anthologies, the most complete data is presented by K. Zahova in the online dictionary of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

into a completely different socio-cultural milieu.¹³ The ten-year-old son of Hristo Dalchev grew up in the cosmopolitan Balkan metropolises of Thessaloniki and Istanbul, and also spent several months in Dedeğaç (the modern Alexandroupolis). Along with the origin of the parents (from the Macedonian towns of Kilkis and Prilep) and the burned Thessaloniki house (1914), it seems indisputable that settling in Sofia was perceived as a hard trial for the whole family. Moreover, the challenge was imposed by the tense military circumstances and certainly limited the prospects of the brothers Lyubomir, Atanas and Boris for upbringing and contacts in elite multi-ethnic circles. The move from the collapsing empire to the young kingdom ruptured childhood ties and the primary worldview, built in the impressionable mind of the future poet.

The first significant consequence of living in Sofia is that the grown-up Atanas would have 'no sense of a native home, nor of a native city'¹⁴. The roots of loneliness and the obsessive feeling of alienation, typical of all his work, can undoubtedly be traced back to this biographical fact.

The second key consequence is that Sofia becomes the place to which Dalchev will invariably return after his youthful wanderings in Italy and France, and after the end of the Second World War. What's more – even in the cases when he intended to leave Bulgaria for a certain time, the poet would find himself forcedly bound to Sofia (for example, the refusal by Turkish authorities to work as a teacher in Istanbul in 1937 or the impossibility of meeting brother Lyubomir in Vienna in 1970 because of a negative assessment of the communist services¹⁵).

A third effect may be sought in a certain fatalistic repetition of childhood experiences in Sofiate decorations. Thirty years after the burning of the house

13 In addition, Dalchev's grandson, Todor Ignatov, states that after the Balkan wars 'several [Bulgarian] governments oppressed the settlers' and 'they were not welcome' (A. Atanasova, *Dalchev's Grandson: I Regret Not Becoming a Technocrat* [interview], „Standart“, 07.07.2016). On the other hand, Ivan Bogdanov testifies that in his youth Dalchev didn't know the meaning of 'need' (I. Bogdanov, *The Word. Solace and Anxiety*, p. 227).

14 L. Georgiev, *The Intellectual Poetry of Atanas Dalchev*, in: L. Georgiev, *Literary Classics. Studies and Portraits*, vol. 6, Sofia 1992, p. 58.

15 This fact was revealed to me in a conversation with the poet's eldest daughter Maria Dalcheva in May 2010.

in Thessaloniki, the family home was destroyed again, this time by Anglo-American bombing (January 10, 1944). The evacuation in Lyaskovets ended with a return to the capital. Similarly, the disintegration of a child's universe with the outbreak of the Balkan Wars, and the interrupted career of the father are reflected in the events after 1944, when Atanas himself was left homeless with his large family and limited chances to find work as a teacher or ministry officer.

In summary, the future poet's relocation to Sofia in 1914 and the subsequent events leave the impression of a certain predetermination of the place where his life would continue, regardless of the family's desire to settle down. All of Dalchev's poetry and criticism testify to personal effort and responsibility in forging one's own destiny alongside the existence of insurmountable circumstantial limitations. Perhaps the clearest illustration of such sentiments is the opening verse 'I never chose you on the earth' from the late poem 'For My Homeland' (1965)¹⁶.

The consequences of the Communist regime (1945–1952)

The imposition of the Communist regime in Bulgaria had negative repercussions for all free-thinking artists, but the effect on Dalchev was particularly sharp. It is my strong belief that downplaying this fact today borders on historical injustice.

Atanas Dalchev is among the first prominent figures in Bulgarian culture to receive *personal accusations* that are, of course, ostentatious and, at the same time, allegedly wholly of an aesthetic nature. In the spring of 1945, the young Party critic Panteley Zarev attacked the poet at a session of the Union of Bulgarian Writers and published his report in its organ newspaper shortly after¹⁷. It

16 Transl. by Christopher Buxton: <https://www.christopherbuxton.com/index.php/writing/translations/atanas-dalchev/>, accessed: 31.05.2023.

17 P. Zarev, *Subjectivism and Realism in Poetry*, „Literaturen Front”, no. 30, 24.05.1945, pp. 3–5. Zarev's accusations contain statements that Dalchev's poetry is 'alien to the people', 'personal' and 'subjective', 'of the private world', 'of personal experiences', and as such maintaining 'the old tones of pessimism, hopelessness, disbelief in life', 'individualistic humanism' and 'abstract philanthropy'. The mentioned features completely discredit the author as a potentially tolerated figure by the regime.

is precisely this fact and the personal role of Zarev that are inexplicably omitted in the biographical data about the poet, while in essence it should be stressed out that Dalchev was the leading victim of the imposition of socialist realism in Bulgaria¹⁸. The consequences came with some delay, however they completely coincided with the processes in the USSR following the notorious Zhdanov resolution of 1946¹⁹. After the reorganization of the Ministry of Information and the Arts, Dalchev remained without a job, and within the reach of the People's Republic he could not find a new full-time position. This is where the popular image of the tireless translator, forced to feed his family through fees from uncertain commissions (1947–1952), began to be built. The obtaining of an editorial position in the 'Plamache' journal should be regarded as equally humiliating, although this episode is mentioned in his biographical portraits as a noteworthy career step. The paradox, however, remains: a translator of several languages, a prominent pre-war literary figure ended up in the children's periodical of the Central Committee of the Dimitrov Communist Youth Union (DKMS).

After Panteley Zarev's attacks, Dalchev understood the hopelessness of his life, professional and intellectual position in the country. Hence his refusal – essentially the practical impossibility – to publish without gratifying the regime. The period commonly labelled as *Dalchev's silence* is therefore a direct consequence of these relatively soft repressions, but also evidence of an atypical choice between emigration and dissidence. The poet assumed the role of a silent witness of the regime, who would not compromise himself with a single line of praise to the authorities²⁰, albeit without criticizing the Party. In making this choice, he accepted an obvious risk: to be allowed to exist as an ordinary citizen of the socialist republic, on whose behalf, however, the regime could benefit indirectly as of a person who uncomplainingly accepts the conditions of the new order.

18 The Polish-Canadian scholar Edward Możejko is the first to explicitly emphasize this aspect in the monograph *Socialist Realism: Theory, Evolution, Decline* (Sofia 2009, pp. 178–179), first published in German in 1977.

19 V. Chernokozhev, 'I Simply Lived...' *From an Unpublished Literary Survey with Radoy Ralin – April 1983*, „LiterNet”, no. 7, 05.07.2005.

20 According to Bozhidar Kunchev, Dalchev has not written a single line that would compromise him morally (*Metaphysician in the Concrete*, in: B. Kunchev, *Human Fate in the Works of Atanas Dalchev, Aleksandar Vutimski and Aleksandar Gerov*, Sofia 2003, p. 44).

Having decided on such a compromise, Dalchev lived through the short existence of the cliché *dalchevshchina* (Bulg. 'далчевщина')²¹. Denoting all things negative from the previous era, from which arts and literature in the People's Republic should be cleansed, this concept testifies to the shameful public position assigned to the person who embodied it – a supposedly failed intellectual, a living negative example for future generations, who should yet serve them as a mere technical supporter through his otherwise indisputable competences as a translator and editor. The oblivion over the literary figure of Dalchev goes so far that his second daughter herself admits how she only accidentally learned from her school teacher that her father was once a poet²².

In everyday terms, the Communist period brought to Dalchev the need for extreme vigilance, amounting to panic fear of administrative services and politics²³, as well as household difficulties, immortalized in the fragment about the writer's kitchen cluttered with laundry and giant insects²⁴ or in the private confessions of a lack of food and domestic utensils²⁵.

A separate issue to which Bulgarian literary historians remain indebted concerns the clarification of the joint translation activity with Alexander Muratov. Although Dalchev widely emphasized his sincere friendship with the editor-in-chief of the 'Plamache'²⁶ journal and even avoided uncomfortable

21 S. Igov, *Bulgarian Literature in the 20th Century: From Aleko Konstantinov to Atanas Dalchev*, Sofia 2000, p. 262.

22 The memories of Victoria Dalcheva are documented in various interviews after 2014. Compare: *БНТ представя – Атанас Далчев. Думите и мълчанието на поета*. Bulgarian National Television, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XNGS3Xio3kw> (24:56; published: 01.02.2023); private interviews: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FCET3y1b54s> (16:32; published: 10.06.2014), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eakWG6d6wFc> (00:43; published: 20.02.2023).

23 B. Delchev, *Meetings and Conversations with Atanas Dalchev*, „Literaturna Misal”, 3 (1986) p. 148.

24 No. 217 in „Fragments” (*Collected Works*, vol. 2, Sofia 1984, p. 68).

25 See the letters to Atanas Smirnov from May 1947 to December 1952 (A. Dalchev, *Letters*, Sofia 2006, pp. 23–51).

26 The most notable examples are two speeches from 1974: *The Unenviable Lot of the Translator* and *My Friendship with Muratov* (A. Dalchev, *Collected Works*, vol. 2, pp. 302–303, 304–306).

questions about their work process²⁷, it should not be forgotten that as a poet Muratov does not come close to the status of his collaborator. Doubts therefore remain about a certain compromise that Dalchev made in the name of his family and professional survival. As the direct superior of the disgraced author in the children's journal and a prominent member of the Communist Party, Muratov undoubtedly provided political support. Neglecting this fact today does not honor scholars, especially since in the Bulgarian context it evokes inevitable parallels with the case of Dimitar Dimov, who was practically forced by the Union of Bulgarian Writers to revise his novel 'Tobacco' under the supervision of editor Yako Molhov in 1953. Dimov's case coincides precisely with the first joint translations of Dalchev and Muratov. At present, it seems extremely difficult to establish the actual individual contribution in this long-standing partnership. In any case, Dalchev managed to survive the painful decade of his proverbial *silence* and even live through a kind of rehabilitation in 1965. Apparently, the authorities reassessed the already 60-year-old author, replacing the label *Reactionary* with *Safe*, if not even *Reeducated*²⁸.

The release of 'Fragments' (1967)

In 1965, Dalchev was again able to publish poetry, including a collection volume, while literary criticism on his works also reappeared²⁹. His rehabilitation culminated in the publication of critical thoughts, impressions and aphorisms entitled 'Fragments' in 1967.

The editor of this small book was Boris Delchev³⁰, the person who supervised the release of 'Poems' in 1965. In his memoirs, Delchev revealed several

27 See A. Dalchev, *Notes*, in: Dalchev A., Muratov A., *Selected Translations*, Sofia 1978, pp. 389–391.

28 In the 1970s Panteley Zarev declares that Dalchev 'refutes himself [his pre-war ideas] with the path he traveled as a lyricist and citizen' after 1944 (*Atanas Dalchev*, in: P. Zarev, *Panorama of Bulgarian Literature*, vol. 3, Sofia 1978, p. 610).

29 The renewed critical interest in Dalchev was formally marked by his 60th anniversary (see no. 25 of the weekly paper 'Narodna Kultura'). The first book on Dalchev was published in 1966 by Atanas Lazovski (*Atanas Dalchev. A Literary-Critical Study*, Sofia 1966); it is worth noting that it does not contain biographical information on the poet.

30 As the author of the first attack on Bulgarian intellectuals after the 1944 coup d'état (*Fascism in Our Literature*, „Rabotnichesko Delo”, no. 15 (1944) p. 4) an influential lit-

of his attempts at discreet censorship of the aphorisms, but in general it is clear that the author was granted an unthinkable freedom until that moment³¹. In his short notes on Bulgarian and European literature, criticism, the art of translation and the ethical dimensions of life, Atanas Dalchev reveals the maximum worldview openness permissible during the era.

It should be pointed out that 'Fragments' was released by the prestigious 'Bulgarian Writer' publishing house, albeit in the modest circulation for the time of 3,600 copies. Although containing only 96 pages of small print and on poor paper, the publication paved the way for the subsequent awards in the country and the USSR, which began in the same year.

The authoritative assessments of 'Fragments', with which today it is still difficult to argue, come from voices outside the socialist canon: Georgi Markov describes them as 'a strange form of poetry in prose ... the main thing in them being the truth', and claims that they represent Bulgaria better than 'more than a dozen thick novels amassed together'³², Svetlozar Igov calls them 'Dalchev's masterpiece', 'perhaps the best probe of Bulgarian essayistic-lapidary reflection'³³. It is also worth noticing that the latest Bulgarian literature textbooks for the 12th grade, concentrating on thematic cores and not on a historical principle, present the author not through excerpts from his poetry or memories of him, but through selections of fragments³⁴.

In essence, this book, which produced a 'shock effect' among the public³⁵, turned Atanas Dalchev not only into a well-read, but also a particularly popular and quoted author. Unquestionably, its publication proved to be the late turning point in both his career and personal life.

erary editor and Party member, B. Delchev serves as the highest authority for Dalchev's re-legitimation.

31 B. Delchev, *Meetings and Conversations with Atanas Dalchev*, pp. 149–150.

32 G. Markov, *In Memory of Atanas Dalchev*, in: G. Markov, *Literary Essays*, Sofia 1990, pp. 44–45.

33 S. Igov, *Bulgarian Literature in the 20th Century*, pp. 270, 251.

34 I. Inev et al., *Literature for the 12th Grade*, Sofia 2021, p. 91; B. Penchev, I. Krasteva, *Literature for the 12th Grade*, Sofia 2021, p. 65.

35 Z. Cholakov, *The Fragments...*, in: *Reading Dalchev*, ed. by M. Nedelchev, B. Kurtasheva, Y. Efftimov, Sofia 2006, p. 230.

Conclusions

Highlighting the key events in Dalchev's life has the potential to tackle the schematic image repeatedly appearing in encyclopedias, textbooks and anthologies. Such an undertaking does not aim at adding vivid details, but rather aims at revealing cause-and-effect chains that are able to demonstrate the logic behind his personal and creative choices.

The unwillingness to emphasize such biographical points clearly testifies that Bulgarian cultural reflection still avoids naming neither the specific mechanisms for discrediting writers during the Communist regime, nor their constructors. A direct outcome of this situation is the *passing over* of problematic moments in the lives of individual writers with the help of vague formulations, the natural effect of which is a *general reticence* about discussing totalitarian traumas, as is the case, for example, in a textbook for the 10th grade from 2019³⁶. In this way, readers, unintentionally or by momentum, are led to perceive information that is true in itself, but at the same time remains *misleading*, insofar as it omits unflattering facts.

On the other hand, the case of Dalchev's rehabilitation after 1965 in no way diminishes his significance as a leading figure on the national literary scene. On the contrary, it uncovers the power mechanisms providing the official recognition of the importance or insignificance of writers and artists in communist Bulgaria.

It appears that half a century after his passing Atanas Dalchev remains an intriguingly problematic author, not only with his multi-genre literary legacy, but also with his apparently 'uninteresting' biography.

Streszczenie: Artykuł podsumowuje informacje biograficzne o wybitnym bułgarskim poecie i myślicielu Atanasie Dałczewie (1904–1978) z konkluzją, że dane publikowane w encyklopediach, zbiorach poezji i podręcznikach szkolnych w Bułgarii i Polsce podają fakty z jego kariery zawodowej i publikacji, ale nie ujawniają ani nawet nie sugerują wydarzeń, które najprawdopodobniej stanowiły kluczowe momenty w jego drodze życiowej. Takie profile biograficzne, które nie podkreślają wyjątkowych wyzwań

36 I. Inev, *Atanas Dalchev*, in: *Literature – 10th Grade*, Sofia 2019, pp. 196–197.

i wyborów, przed którymi stanął Dałczew, nie osiągają swojego celu edukacyjnego i kontekstualizującego jako narzędzia do zrozumienia jego poezji i utworów niefikcyjnych przez uczniów szkół średnich, studentów lub czytelników. Referat jest próbą rekonstrukcji głównych punktów zwrotnych w życiu Dałczewa, które niewątpliwie wpłynęły na jego twórczość, publiczne zachowania i poglądy społeczne. Są nimi, zdaniem autora, jego osiedlenie się w Sofii (1914), narzucenie reżimu komunistycznego w Bułgarii i związane z tym dotkliwe konsekwencje osobiste (1944–1947) oraz opublikowanie jego aforyzmów i myśli zatytułowanych „Fragmenty” (1967), dzięki którym Dałczew stał się jednym z najczęściej cytowanych bułgarskich autorów.

Słowa kluczowe: Atanas Dałczew, poezja bułgarska, cenzura, komunizm, biografia.

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