

through comparison, experience, unconscious stimuli or a study of the above-mentioned works.“ (p.218) Thus in many cases similarities of topics or characters exist without direct influences. In other cases Gálík makes suppositions lacking clear evidence, which of course is justifiable. Sometimes, however, Gálík is led astray by exactly that feature which qualifies him to write this book: his deep knowledge of Chinese and European literatures. Thus in his eagerness to find influences from European literature in the Chinese works Gálík occasionally goes too far, e.g. when he suggests a possible influence of Hesiod's „Theogony“ on Pa Chin's „Cold Night“ (pp.209–210).

A general and most impressive feature of Gálík's book is the precision and penetration of his search for literary traces of a given work or author. Generalizations are not Gálík's way of thinking. On the contrary, very often he discloses the questionableness of widespread generalizations by a close look into the texts. It is most clearly revealed by Gálík that the works generally considered to be milestones of modern Chinese literature at the same time are milestones of interliterary contact between China and the West. The important novels, dramas, and poems would not have been possible without a close encounter with Western literature. On the other hand, one should not forget that despite all the influences many of these works are genuinely Chinese. As Ts'ao Yü once put it, he accepted that he had „stolen threads of golden yarn from the masters' houses“ in order to mend his own garments, (p.110) Here a sensitive point is touched, the question whether under the impact of the West Chinese literature has lost its unique national features or not. With the present book Gálík has done a great deal to clarify this question. Until today, however, the problem is felt by many Chinese critics to be a fundamental challenge.

Bernd Eberstein, Hamburg

Elisabeth ELDE: *China's Ibsen – From Ibsen to Ibsenism*. London: Curzon Press 1987 (Scandinavian Institute of Asian Studies Monograph Series.55).

Disillusioned by the downfall of their own tradition and looking for road signs towards a modern China the Chinese were looking abroad. Particularly they did so since the May Fourth Movement. Thus Ibsen and Marx became the most influential intellectual heroes as critics of the existing social order – Ibsen as representative of individual freedom and responsibility as well as political liberalism, Marx as representative of an Utopian social order. Chinese Marxism has been studied abundantly. Thus a study of Ibsen and Ibsenism in China was overdue. Ibsen's influence on the Chinese stage has been discussed by Elisabeth Eide in several articles before.<sup>1</sup> In this book she has broadened her approach: Ibsen's influence upon the history of ideas is discussed, not his effect on

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1 In this context two further bibliographical notes should be added: YI Xinnong / CHEN Pingyuan: „Wanou zhi jia“ zai Zhongguo de yinxiang“ (The influence of *A Doll's House* in China), in: *Zhongshan daxue xuebao* 1984/2, pp.129–140; XING Mao: „Nuola he Lin Daojing ,Wanou zhi jia‘ he ,Qingchun zhi ge‘ nu zhurengong bijiao fenxi“ (Nora and Lin Daojing A comparative analysis of the heroines in *A Doll's House* and *Song of the Spring*), in: *Liaoning daxue xuebao* 1988/1, pp.58–60.

the Chinese theatre. Only one chapter is devoted to some examples of Ibsenism/Noraism in Chinese modern drama and fiction.

The iconoclast idols of many Chinese intellectuals in the 1920s were created in Norway in the 1880s. Who could be better qualified to write this study than a Norwegian sinologist and expert of modern Chinese literature. And which time could be better than the present when the dominant influence of Marxism in China is gradually and not without serious conflicts and setbacks coming to its end and individualism is being rediscovered, when the Chinese themselves are recalling Ibsen and his Chinese spokesman Hu Shi.

The title of the book (*China's Ibsen*) has a dual sense: Discussing Ibsen as interpreted and adapted by the Chinese it is simultaneously mainly a book on Hu Shi.

The most influential single copy of a Chinese journal in modern times probably was the *Xin qingnian* special issue on Ibsen in 1918. It opened a new world of ideas by the translation of „A Doll's House“ and „An Enemy of the People“ and by Hu Shi's famous essay on „Ibsenism“. By the way: How important this essay was for Hu Shi's intellectual development is demonstrated by the fact that he has written it in English already in 1914 during his time at Cornell University and that he again revised it in 1921. The Chinese conceptions of the individual in society, of woman in family were considerably changed by this essay. Thus this copy of *Xin qingnian* is the starting point for Elisabeth Eide. In particular she analyses Hu Shi's essay and his interpretation of Ibsen. Other representatives of modern Chinese individualism, as Fu Sinian, Luo Jialun, and Wu Kang are mentioned only incidentally. Only Yuan Zhenying, who came forward with an article on Ibsen in *Xin qingnian* 1918 and with a book 1928, is introduced in greater detail.

Eide breaks new ground by placing Hu Shi's ideas into a historical and philosophical framework. The „Self in society“ of Neo-Confucianism thought is most lucidly introduced as a factor of modern Chinese individualism. Eide points out that many of Hu Shi's ideas have not only been inspired by the West but were also deeply rooted in the Chinese tradition, that he tried to combine Western ideas and Chinese tradition. His individualism focussed on the question, what the individual can do for and what are its duties towards society. Thus in a certain sense Nora fulfilled the ideas of Zhu Xi and especially Wang Yangming.

The improvement of the society can only be achieved by the creation of the free, critical individual fighting against the unenlightened majority. Individualism thus is the central topic of Ibsenism. Eide inquires into Hu's main problem of the individual's critical and socially responsible relation to society, his retaliation of escapist individualism. This kind of individualism is mainly personified by Dr. Stockmann, the protagonist of „An Enemy of the People“, and by Nora from „A Doll's House“. Their impact on Hu Shi and other intellectuals is demonstrated in two long chapters. While Dr. Stockmann remained a hero for a handful intellectuals only, Nora achieved some popularity, culminating in the „Nora Year“ 1935. So many happy and unhappy – in any case very determined and idealistic – daughters and sisters of Nora came forward in China, that Ibsenism became synonymous with Noraism.

The Chinese were nearly exclusively interested in Ibsenism, not in Ibsen. That means the main points of interest were the iconoclast, anti-traditional, liberal social and political ideas of Ibsen, not the more sophisticated subtleties of his literary style and aesthetics. Nora was transformed from a woman of flesh and blood to a simple but most effective symbol of antitraditional protest. Eide's book is a most important and substan-

tial contribution to the history of modern Chinese thinking. She does not confine herself to a profound accumulation of facts, but throughout the book she presents her own stimulating ideas. Especially those chapters, which are modestly called „Summing up of part I or II“, comprise very deep thoughts and interpretations. Modern Chinese individualism would not have been possible without Ibsenism. Thus one of the most exciting chapters of Sino-European intellectual relations has finally been written down.

Bernd Eberstein, Hamburg

Günther DIEHL: *Bei den Tapferen. Diplomatische Reisen in die Äußere Mongolei*. Frankfurt a. M.: Societäts-Verlag 1988.

In der deutschen Literatur nehmen Reiseberichte keinen prominenten Platz ein. Der Hang zum Provinzialismus, gefördert und gerechtfertigt durch diverse geistige und politische Traditionen, macht im allgemeinen den Deutschen wenig empfänglich für Fremdes, ja verleitet selbst einen Goethe, sich auch dann noch für das Maß aller Dinge zu halten, wenn er einer ihm überlegenen Kultur begegnet, etwa wenn er Italien bereist. Mangelhaftes Geschichtsbewußtsein und, daher, eine alles beurteilende Besserwisserie hindern ihn daran, das allermeiste auch nur wahrzunehmen, läßt ihn Sottisen schreiben, Banalitäten berichten. Man sage nicht, das sei der Geist der damaligen Zeit. Solches mag als Grund gelten, nicht aber als Entschuldigung, denn, so man sich entschlossen hat, der Goethe zu sein, sollte man sich über den Zeitgeist erheben können, auch in den Ferien, auch auf Reisen.

In anmutigem Plaudertone, betont persönlich und ichbezogen, erzählt Botschafter Diehl von seinen beiden Dienstreisen nach Ulan Bator, woselbst er, Hauptposten Tôkyô, mitakkreditiert war: vierzehn Tage im Sommer 1977 und ebensolange im Winter 1980. Die Sache ist also nicht mehr ganz aktuell. Vielleicht auch weil Berufspflicht es dem Diplomaten verwehrt, das Eigentliche zum Besten zu geben, werden vornehmlich Belanglosigkeiten geschildert, ein geplatztes Heizungsrohr z.B., oder ein verspäteter Abflug. Ja, man erfährt sogar des Autors Sternzeichen und von der schönen Komplexion der Haut der stellvertretenden Protokollchefin des mongolischen Außenministeriums, und deren Namen gleich dazu (S. 133). Manche Rückblendungen – der Adenauer-Besuch in Moskau – wären interessanter; doch kaum erwacht des Lesers Interesse, wird abgeblendet und etwa über die Vorteile eines Altbaus gegenüber einem Neubau philosophiert (S. 12–14 & al. Semper).

Nun soll keine Buchbesprechung den Fehler begehen, dem Autor vorzuwerfen, er hätte nicht ein anderes Buch über einen anderen Gegenstand verfaßt – zumal im gegenwärtigen Falle (und das sei zum Lob des Buches gesagt) die Beobachtungen durchaus akkurat sind und die Schilderungen treffend und humorvoll. Allerdings, zuweilen empfand ich diesen Humor nicht hinreichend abgegrenzt nach Seiten der Taktlosigkeit und der Indiskretion, und so vermittelte mir die Lektüre ein prickelnd-peinliches Vergnügen, ähnlich dem Genuß einer leicht vergorenen Flasche.

Doch es hapert auch an Sachkenntnis. Z.B. S.28, der vormalige Name der mongolischen Hauptstadt, Urga (in der alten mongolischen Schrift *örge* geschrieben), bedeutet nicht „soviel wie Burg oder befestigtes Lager“, sondern Thron-Zelt (nämlich des mongolischen Groß-Lamas); und der sogenannte „Held“ im Staatswappen trägt nicht eine