

für die Mittelklasse, erreichen ließ. Die Wechselwirkung zwischen beiden Aggregaten erlaubte es den Frauen dabei, sich dank sozialen Einsatzes der Mittelklasse zuzurechnen. Enrique Garguins Untersuchung Argentiniens in der Zeit vor Juan Perón belegt wiederum, wie race Basis der Selbstwahrnehmung der Mittelklasse im Raum Buenos Aires wurde. Hatten sich die Argentinier mit europäischen Wurzeln hier bis in die 1920er Jahre als die wirklichen Argentinier verstanden, schwand dieses Selbstbewusstsein, als Perón begann, die Arbeiter politisch zu mobilisieren. Erst in indignierter Abgrenzung zur Mehrheit der Arbeiter, den *cabecitas negras*, den „kleinen Schwarzköpfen“, formierte sich eine Mittelklasse. Dies führte dazu, so Garguin, dass jene, die sich zuvor als einzig wahre Vertreter Argentiniens gesehen hatten, sich plötzlich ihrer zahlenmäßigen Unterlegenheit bewusst wurden. Erst jetzt sahen sie sich als sozial abgegrenzte Gruppe, als (Mittel-)Klasse.

Die vier Kommentare zu den jeweiligen Teilbereichen üben Kritik an den Beiträgen und setzen diese in Beziehung zueinander. Es fällt auf, dass der Sammelband kein geschlossenes Narrativ anbietet. Dass man eine einheitliche Definition des Begriffs Mittelklasse vergeblich sucht und stattdessen Bourdieu genauso zu Rate gezogen wird wie Marx, Engels und Habermas, ist jedoch kein Manko. Vielmehr spricht dies für das eingangs angekündigte Bemühen, den Begriff aus dem jeweiligen Diskurs heraus zu erfassen. Bemängeln ließe sich eher, dass die meisten Beiträge auf bereits veröffentlichten Materialien beruhen. Denn dies führt dazu, dass die vier jeweiligen Teile des Sammelbandes selten in sich geschlossen wirken. In vielen Fällen

hätte eine konzentriertere Ausrichtung der Beiträge am Thema der jeweiligen Teilbereiche für mehr argumentative Konsistenz und Klarheit gesorgt. So bleibt am Ende die Frage, was all diese verschiedenen Mittelklassen verband. Der Ansatz zu einer Antwort findet sich wohl am ehesten in den einleitenden Hinweisen der Herausgeber: Sie sehen die Moderne als unmittelbaren Effekt von transnational verbundenen Geschichten. Folgt man dieser Auffassung, lässt sich das Phänomen der Herausbildung von Mittelklassen ebenso als Begleiterscheinung der Moderne wie auch des transnationalen Austauschs verstehen. Fundament und Ausgangspunkt weiterer Vertiefungen eines solchen Verständnisses sind mit „The Making of the Middle Class“ gelegt.

Bogdan Góralczyk (ed.): Polska – Chiny. Wczoraj, dziś, jutro [Poland – China. Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow], Toruń: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, 2009, 422 pp.

Rezensiert von
Malwina Talik, Leipzig

“No one who is familiar with Chinese realities can deny that China has made a great breakthrough in the past three decades. [...] An attempt to negate the ongoing processes in China is nothing more than sticking one’s head in the sand, or the proverbial tilting at windmills.” (p. 418). This statement reflects best the leitmotif of

the publication *Polska – Chiny. Wczoraj, dzisiaj, jutro* edited by Bogdan Góralczyk. This collection of articles was published on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the commencement of Sino-Polish diplomatic relations. It proves to be a successful attempt at presenting the brief history of Sino-Polish relations in the period of 1949–2009 from perspectives of diverse fields including political science, diplomacy, culture, academia, trade, etc. The book seeks to define the position of Poland in the time of changing global power relations by drawing conclusions from the past Sino-Polish cooperation.

The authors are leading academics in the field. They come from different academic, social and cultural backgrounds but all have a considerable expertise in Chinese affairs. Jan Rowiński, Bogdan and Zdzisław Góralczyk, Krzysztof Gawlikowski are only a few of the names representing the most prestigious Polish research institutions. Some of the contributors were raised in China (E. Kajdański, Pei Yuanying), studied there (a.o. D. Mierzejewski, K. Gawlikowski) or worked there as diplomats (K. Szumski, J. Rowiński, B. and Z. Góralczyk). Thus, their first-hand knowledge and extensive experience add greatly to the overall value of the book.

The volume comes in five sections: forewords by the Polish and Chinese ambassadors, Sun Rongmin and Krzysztof Szumski, an introduction, “Praktyka” and “Analizy”, followed by a general conclusion. I will focus in the following shortly on the most representative contributions. The opening thematic unit consists of two chapters. The first one is “A Pendulum: the Sino-Polish relations” by Jan Rowiński. The author is currently a professor emeritus

at the University of Warsaw. In his paper, he provides a comprehensive overview of Sino-Polish relations, which he defines as a pendulum due to their instability. In a well-balanced manner he presents the stance of both sides during the most significant events of the second half of the 20th century. Moreover, he underlines the decisive role of China’s supportive involvement in the times of two Polish crises: in 1956 and in the 1980s. Furthermore, Rowiński expresses the opinion that despite tensions, Sino-Polish relations have been developing correctly and Poland seized well its opportunity to enhance the mutual co-operation. This positive attitude differs greatly from other opinions in the publication.

The second chapter presents “The Image of China in Polish Media: a critical reflection” by Dominik Mierzejewski, a research associate at the University of Łódź. His research indicates that China is portrayed in a biased manner. The news coverage refers mainly to dissidents, Internet censorship, death penalty, corruption, cultural revolution, human rights, Tiananmen, Chinese village and women. Nevertheless, China’s political system and violation of human rights are just fragmentary pictures of a complex reality. In Mierzejewski’s view, this clear-cut image of China in Polish media results from a lack of Polish journalists knowing Chinese and a heavy reliance on non-Chinese media.

One of the most valuable essays of the whole publication is “Memories of changes in Poland”. It is a private account by Pei Yuanying on the developments in Poland in 1980s including *Solidarność*, Martial Law, free elections and the Round Table. The author was working for the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and was an

ambassador to Poland, India and Lithuania. In a concise and balanced manner he depicts the strengths and weaknesses of *Solidarność* and Polish authorities. He emphasizes that those who lost the trust of people, lost the power and thus ignoring Polish national features and the importance of the Church proved to be one of the largest negligences of the former Polish authorities.

Another paper is particularly worth reading. The essay by Jan Rowiński analyses the developments in Poland during the October 1956, the Chinese role in resolving the crisis and suggests plausible factors, which could have contributed to China's positive approach towards Warsaw. The main research question is if the Chinese saved Poland from a Soviet invasion. Rowiński holds a strong belief that the role of China was far more significant than it was usually assumed. Additionally, he maintains that China might have acted in that manner not because Poland was regarded a victim of Soviet "big-chauvinism" but rather in order to strengthen Chinese position in the Communist camp and oppose the growing importance of Moscow.

The final part contains a closing article by Bogdan Góralczyk: "Poland-China: What is to come?". Góralczyk sees his publication as a chance to reflect on which actions to take in order to be able to successfully cooperate despite all the differences. He encourages an enhanced economic, cultural and academic exchange and underscores that still much must be done in that respect.

The assessment of Sino-Polish relations over the past 60 and particularly the last 20 years is according to majority of the contributors rather negative. The Polish side is

criticised for a lack of essential knowledge about Chinese mentality and gentle political issues. This led to a commitment of numerous mistakes and undermined previous successes. Polish authorities and media "overslept" the raise of a new superpower and were not interested in a close cooperation with China due to ideological reasons and did not understand the growing role of China in Asia and in the world. In consequence, the Chinese perceive Poland as a small country in Eastern Europe with a strange anti-Chinese attitude, known mostly thanks to Fryderyk Chopin and Maria Curie-Skłodowska. Moreover, the situation is difficult to improve due to the unfriendly approach of Polish media and authorities. Institutions promoting Chinese culture are often regarded as a part of Chinese propaganda e.g. Chinese embassies, the "Polish-Chinese" Friendship Association (PCFA). Promotion of friendly relations with China may be seen as a relict of the communist past or even an immoral co-operation. Another vital issue is the membership of Poland in the EU, which is generally perceived as a chance for Poland to reconstitute its relations with China, correct past wasted chances and attract its new interest. It opens many co-operation opportunities: in terms of culture, education and academia, trade and investment. The Chinese side is less interested because the previous enthusiasm for Poland disappeared as time went by, but China may be more interested in Poland due to the EU membership. The Polish image of China is far from truth and China is imagined as an isolated communist regime. Thus, the Polish side must learn more about China and put more effort into changing China's image and have a more inquisi-

tive insight into Chinese political reality. A positive development is that the young Polish generation, aware of the growing role of China on the international arena, is interested in learning Chinese and more open to China. Moreover, the policy of Polish authorities has been recently more China-friendly. One of the “bridges” of Poland to China could be culture because the Chinese are particularly fond of Chopin. Out of the initiative of the PCFA and the Chinese side a monument dedicated to Fryderyk Chopin was erected in Shanghai in the Sun Yatsen Park and all the costs were covered by the Chinese side. It was the first monument of a foreigner erected by decision of the Chinese authorities.¹ Moreover, Poland and China are joined by the similarities in the past history (for instance the troublesome history of the 19th century) and strong patriotism – a factor, which made Chinese interested in Polish literature in the past.

The definite advantage of the publication is a comprehensive analysis of Sino-Polish relations in the past 60 years. The editor selected experienced contributors of the field with various academic backgrounds, representing different views and opinions. Furthermore, there are not many publications on that subject in Polish. There has long been a need for a broad publication of that kind. Moreover, the publication is a diligent description of the current problems in the Sino-Polish relations. The authors do often not avoid certain gentle issues, even if those mirror past and present mistakes on the Polish side – they call a spade a spade. They also offer plausible solutions to the problems that they outline. Additionally, the book in question emphasises the significance of a dialogue

with China in different fields and on various levels and a definite need to be more open to China instead of a ‘messianic’ condemning approach.

However, the publication has also weaknesses. One of them is a lack of consistency in certain facts, e.g. in one of the essays it was claimed that Poland was the 7th country to accept PRC in another it was said to be the 2nd. Moreover, the thematic division of papers is at times vague and unclear and most related chapters were located randomly in irrelevant sections. This is not a serious disadvantage but it slightly hindered reading the volume.

Despite these weaknesses the book can be a valuable addition to the library of anyone with interest in China, the history of Polish international relations, as part of a syllabus in university international relations seminars as well as a great foundation for further research in the field.

Note:

- 1 There is also a bust of Pushkin in Shanghai dating back to 1930s and thus before the PRC period.

Mark Gamsa: The Reading of Russian Literature in China. A Moral Example and Manual of Practice, Basingstoke: Plagave Macmillan Publishing, 2010, 227 S.

Rezensiert von
Yvonne Schulz Zinda, Hamburg

Die Oktoberrevolution hatte bei den Intellektuellen das Interesse an Russland und mithin an der russischen Literatur erweckt.