



The Ecological Values of Ibsen's Works:

Proceedings of Green Ibsen International Symposium

易卜生创作的生态价值研究：
绿色易卜生国际学术研讨会

论文集

Edited by Nie Zhenzhao and Zhou Xin

聂珍钊 周 昕 主编



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序：易卜生创作的生态价值

2009年5月19日，“绿色易卜生国际学术研讨会”在华中师范大学举行。此次研讨会围绕易卜生戏剧的生态思想、易卜生戏剧的生态伦理价值以及对易卜生戏剧的生态评价等议题展开。挪威驻华大使馆大使司文·塞特爾(Svein Ole Sæther)先生及夫人艾莲(Eli Barstad)女士、文化专员欧德琳(Tone Helene)女士、挪威泰勒马克郡郡长玛丽·海尔金森(Marit Helgesen)女士及其率领的易卜生家乡代表团等，同国内外众多研究易卜生的专家一起，参加了此次研讨会。

易卜生是欧洲现代戏剧的创立者，他的作品描写广阔的社会现实，表达深厚的人道情怀和深刻的哲理思想，对政治体制、人类命运、个体精神表现出深切关注。20世纪尤其是21世纪以来，影响人类生活的环境问题日益突出。因此，从生态角度对易卜生的作品进行研究，显然具有重要的现实意义。对于这次会议，司文大使从挪中文化交流的角度积极评价了易卜生戏剧对于保护生态环境的意义。大使先生说：“今天的大会议题和昨日戏剧都是围绕环境这一主题展开的。易卜生是当代的作家。”大使先生提出要使环境问题得到解决，“必须有一个各抒己见的交流平台”，他因此感谢华中师范大学以及《外国文学研究》的所有同仁提供了这样一个平台。海尔金森女士从易卜生的家乡泰勒马克郡专程赶来，对易卜生作品所体现的恒久的文化意义和交流价值发表了热情洋溢的讲话。华中师范大学校长马敏教授、文学院院长胡亚敏教授也发表讲话，高度评价易卜生戏剧对于保护人类生态环境的启示意义，认为易卜生关于生态的观点体现了人类文明的进步，是我们今天保护自我生存环境的战斗武器，能够帮助我们提高公众的环境意识，帮助人们在日常生活中作出有益于环境的伦理选择。

易卜生介绍到中国已逾百年，他不仅深刻影响了中国的文学创作，而且也影响了中国的思想。在20世纪，易卜生戏剧主要通过社会问题剧表现其揭露和批判社会丑恶的现实主义价值，当人类历史进入21世纪以后，易卜生戏剧创作的价值得到更深入的发掘，多方面的价值在研究中被发现，而其中蕴藏的生态价值则是被发现的众多价值之一。可以说，生态问题是人类在21世纪需要面对的生存危机，是需要人类认真解决的最紧迫问题。同

时,如何解决当前的生态问题,我们不仅需要从社会、伦理、科学等方面寻找出路,也需要从文学、哲学中寻找启示。尤其是文学,它以生动的生活范例从现实和历史的角度的为我们提供借鉴,为我们解决今天的现实问题提供有益的经验。易卜生就是这样一个通过戏剧创作为我们提供借鉴的文学家。

易卜生是一位伟大的现实主义戏剧家,但是我们仅把他看成一个揭露社会现实和批评社会丑恶的剧作家是不够的,因为在他的创作中,可以找到许多能够在今天给我们以启发的因素。例如,他创作的《人民公敌》、《社会支柱》、《约翰·盖勃吕尔·博克曼》等剧作,不仅讨论了工业化后现代社会出现的自然生态问题和技术进步导致的人的异化问题,而且还对违背自然规律和破坏生态环境的人类活动进行了深刻的哲理反思。再如《野鸭》,它可能是我们在现代社会中无法正确处理生态问题的象征。野鸭在戏剧中是一个非常重要的形象,它总是在人物命运的关键时刻出现,或者使事件出现转折,但是野鸭从何处飞来,又要飞到何处去,它是一只什么样的鸟,人们对它的身份却知之甚少。后来海特维格决定打死野鸭,解决自己面临的危机,然而一声枪响过后,海特维格没有把野鸭打死,而是打死了自己。这实际上象征性地说明,人们通过牺牲环境而解决自己面临的生态问题的企图,不仅不能解决生态问题,相反可能毁灭了自己。《野鸭》发表后已经过去了120多年,今天重读这部作品,仍然能够给我们以新的启发。站在今天的生态立场上看问题,易卜生的许多创作都是同生态问题有关的,例如《玩偶之家》和《海上夫人》对达尔文的立场表达,《群鬼》和《罗斯莫庄》对进化论的思想阐释,《培尔·金特》和《建筑大师》对人和自然和谐关系的追求等。

总之,这次会议以“绿色易卜生”为主题,是对易卜生研究的新的推动。在易卜生研究历史上,这是第一次召开以生态为主题的易卜生研讨会。在这次会上,与会学者从生态的观点多层面地对易卜生作品进行研究,深入挖掘其中蕴藏的生态价值,再一次证明了易卜生作品的丰富性。我们相信,随着易卜生研究的不断深入,易卜生作品还会有更多的价值被发掘出来。

聂珍钊

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Prologue: The Ecological Values of Ibsen's Works

Nie Zhenzhao

On May 19, 2009, the "Green Ibsen International Symposium" was held at Central China Normal University (CCNU). Topics of the conference include ecological ideas in Ibsen, the eco-ethical value of Ibsen's works, and eco-critical approach to Ibsen's drama. The symposium was attended by the Norwegian Ambassador to China Mr. Svein Ole Sæther, his wife Ms. Eli Barstad, the Cultural Attaché Ms. Tone Helene, and the Mayor of Telemark Ms. Marit Helgesen with her delegation from Norway. More than one hundred scholars on Ibsen from home and abroad participated in this symposium.

As the founder of modern European drama, Ibsen has produced works that cover a wide range of social realities and reveal his deep humanistic concerns and profound philosophical thinking. His works are also heavily engaged in matters of political system, human destiny and individual spirit. Since the beginning of 20th century, especially as we come into the 21st century, environmental problems that affect human life have become an increasing concern. It is therefore significantly relevant to realities to take an ecocritical approach to Ibsen's works. Speaking from the perspective of cultural communication between Norway and China, Norwegian ambassador Svein highly praised the value of Ibsen's drama for its significance to environmental protection. Mr. Ambassador remarked that "the topic of today's conference, and yesterday's cultural performance, the importance of environmental awareness, shows that Ibsen is a contemporary writer and dramatist". In his view for our time "we need an open debate that has room for different voices and opinions" in order to find solutions to the environmental problems we face today. He then expressed his gratitude to CCNU and to all working with *FLS* for

providing such a platform. Ms Helgesen who came all the way from Ibsen's hometown-Telemark to this symposium delivered an enthusiastic speech on the enduring cultural significance and transcultural values of Ibsen's works. Professor Ma Min, President of CCNU, and Professor Hu Yaming, Dean of Humanities School at CCNU, were the next speakers. They spoke highly of Ibsen's works for the enlightenment they give us about the need of ecological and environmental protection. They suggested that Ibsen's ecological ideas which he expressed in his works mark the progress of human civilization and are solid weapons for us to protect the environment crucial for human survival. His idea may help to arouse the public's awareness of the environment and make us wiser in making environment-friendly ethical choices in our daily lives.

Since the introduction of Ibsen's works into China one hundred years ago, Chinese literary writing and Chinese thought have received significant influence from his works. In the 20th century, Ibsen's drama had its value mainly in revealing and criticizing the vices of social realities. With the opening of the 21st century, his works are further probed for new values in other and diverse aspects including the ecological aspect. It is no exaggeration to say that the ecological crisis is the most urgent survival crisis that human beings have to deal with in the 21st century. Meanwhile, it is important to realize that the solution to ecological problems invites not only social, ethical, and scientific measures, but also those in literary and philosophical respects. Literature helps in this case for it provides us with vivid life examples from both the present and the past and it offers good experience to tackle the realistic problems we face today. Ibsen is such a writer who helps us with his drama writing.

Ibsen is a great realist dramatist, but we cannot simply regard him as a writer who reveals and criticizes realities of his time, because his drama certainly contains elements that may enlighten us in many ways at the present time. For instance, in his works like *An Enemy of the People*, *Pillars of Society*, and *John Gabriel Borkman*, Ibsen discussed such issues as the crisis of natural ecology in a post-industrialized modern society and human alienation resulting from technological advancement.

Moreover, he made deep philosophical reflections upon those human behaviors that run against natural laws and were ecologically destructive. Another example is *The Wild Duck*, in which we may probably find the modern futility in solving ecological crises in a justified way. As a key figure in the play, the wild duck always appears in fatal moments of the characters or at turning points in plot development. But nobody knows where the duck comes from or is going to, or what identity it has as a bird. Later in the play, Hedvig decides to shoot the bird in attempting to get out of her own crisis, which, however, only results in shooting herself dead. This actually symbolically illustrates that the human attempt in sacrificing the environment to solve human problems is not only futile but could also be self-destructive. Now 120 years have passed since the first publication of this play and it still inspires us every time we read it again. Today we realize from the ecocritical perspective that many of Ibsen's works are concerned about ecological issues, as we see the Darwinist views expressed in *A Dolls House* and *The Lady from the Sea*, the explication of evolutionism in *Ghosts* and *Rosmersholm*, and the pursuit of harmony between man and nature in *Peer Gynt* and *The Master Builder*.

In conclusion, this symposium has opened up a new area in Ibsen studies by focusing on the topic of "Green Ibsen", for it is the first time to have such an ecology-oriented conference on Ibsen in the complete history of Ibsen studies. Participants at the symposium attempt ecocritical studies of Ibsen's works from various particular angles. And by digging out the hidden ecological values of his works, they prove once again the richness of Ibsen. We have good reasons to believe that as our studies go deeper more treasures in Ibsen's works are to be discovered in the future.

Nie Zhenzhao

Vice President, China National Foreign Literature Association

Vice President, Chinese/American Association for Poetry and Poetics

Chief Editor, *Foreign Literature Studies*

Professor of Humanities, Central China Normal University

Opening Remarks at the Green Ibsen Symposium

(Wuhan, May 19, 2009)

Ambassador Svein Ole Sæther

Dear President^①, Professors, Researchers, Friends of literature,

It is a great honour for me to be here today and open this Ibsen seminar. To see so many distinguished researchers and professors in China engaged in Henrik Ibsen and his writings, makes me proud.

Yesterday night we saw one revised version of Ibsen's play *An Enemy of the People*^②. Ibsen wrote this play in 1882 and it is a reminder, that questions concerning the environment is something we have struggled with in many countries for a long time.

Ibsen and his plays are well known all around China, and he has a well earned place in many Chinese's minds. His ability to raise current social issues and shed light backwardness was welcomed by the Chinese readers in a time of change in China. In numbers, in 2009 there are probably more readers of Ibsen in China than in Norway, and we regard this as a great honour.

The topic of today's conference, and yesterday's cultural performance, the importance of environmental awareness, shows that Ibsen is a contemporary writer and dramatist, even though he wrote his

① The President referred to here is the President of Central China Normal University, Prof. Ma Min.

② All the participants in the Green Ibsen Symposium were invited to see the play *An Enemy of the People* at Fiddle-Platform Theatre, Wuhan, China on the night of May 18, 2009. This show was an event of "Call for Green China" series sponsored by Royal Norwegian government and the World Bank.

plays more than 100 years ago. Ibsen's plays have challenged conventions for more than a century.

Ibsen raised a number of issues in his dramas. He also criticised his compatriots for being selfish and without principles. He was not popular in certain circles. Today we have a responsibility to try to find answers that are appropriate for our time, answers that will meet the aspirations and needs of our generation and generations to come. To do so, we need an open debate that has room for different voices and opinions, voices that may express truths we may find uncomfortable. This can also be said about many of Ibsen's topics and is certainly valid for the topic we are discussing here today. The concern for our environment and a sustainable development of our society, is something that should, and must, be an issue for all countries and people.

I want to thank all of you at *Foreign Literature Studies* at Central China Normal University, for your great commitment and contribution in realising this seminar. It is encouraging to notice the interest for Ibsen and his writing, and I wish this seminar a great success.

Thank you!

Remarks at the Green Ibsen Symposium

Gunn Marit Helgesen
Mayor, Telemark County, Norway

Dear Guests and Friends of Henrik Ibsen!

Skien is the capital of Telemark County. It was here where Henrik Ibsen was born in 1828, and lived through his father's bankruptcy and family's fall.

Three months before his 16th birthday, he left his family, hometown and childhood, and never returned. If it had been possible for him to see the progress and daily life in Telemark and Skien today, I believe he would have stayed.

At Henrik Ibsen's time, Skien was a provincial town in Europe's most northerly outskirts. Skien was characterized by its great expansion within shipping, timber and timber mills. The town had a large surrounding area/district and became one of the industrial power centres during the formation Norway's industrialization. Henrik Ibsen was therefore born into an environment which was already quite European. The increasing middle class over the entire continent was about to transform the 1800s into its era. This was the era of freedom and rights for individuals where all privileges and barriers were soon to dismantle.

Later on in his adult life, after his first successes, he left Norway too, and stayed abroad in Italy and Germany for 27 years.

"To be a poet is to see," maintained Henrik Ibsen, and in his plays the focus is always on individuals (and their lives). In our western individualistic societies of today, all of us live our complicated lives. Every individual belongs in a context, a family, a clan, an environment. Every individual has obligations. An individual's choice of freedom may be costly

for his or her closest family.

A person who seeks freedom does not automatically find happiness, and if you give priority to your own freedom, problems may arise for others.

“He who stands most alone, is the strongest man,” that’s Doctor Stockman in *An Enemy of the People*.

“All or nothing,” that’s from *Brand*, and the name means fire. Idealists can be fascinating, and it’s easy to be moved by the fire, the force and the restlessness that often characterise burning idealism. But when idealism burns you up from the inside, you are in reality your own worst enemy!

And at least in practical politics and negotiations, a little progress is better than nothing!

Peer Gynt travels bravely out into the world to seek his fortune in the strangest places, seen through the eyes of that day and age. Today, we travel more, faster and further than ever before.

A well known Norwegian journalist (Ragnar Kvam jr.) spent some years sailing around the world. In one of his novels he concludes: *The same problems you left behind, will still be there when you return*. I think Peer Gynt had the same lifelong experience.

Ways of thinking that suppress women exist in all cultures, religions and social strata. Ibsen wrote of such ways of thinking more than a century ago, and we still recognise these today. Women lack economic rights, millions suffer violent abuse from their partners and are excluded from the halls of power. Today, Nora from *A Doll’s House*, has given a name to the Chinese name for feminism: *Noraism*.

Then back to Skien and Telemark. Telemark is the cultural treasure chest of Norway. When we as a poor nation struggled for our freedom, most of the collected elements of our common national identity came from our county; folktales, music and ballades, lullabies, dancing, the art of knife making and the silversmith, rose painting and national costumes.

All these traditions must have been well known for Henrik Ibsen and we find pieces of it through his complete works. And of course you can’t

fly from your childhood experiences or your mother, even if you are 16!

A Norwegian female poet (Gro Dahle) once wrote:

You can never escape from your mother. She is within your head, behind your eyes and between your ears, your entire life.

I am proud to give this introduction at this international Ibsen symposium today. I'm sure it will be a wonderful presentation, and I also take the opportunity to wish you all welcome to Telemark and the city of Skien, the homeplace of Henrik Ibsen!

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