

of European realism of the turn of the century. And this is precisely the goal Folejewski is seeking to achieve: to analyze and demonstrate the realistic features of her prose. He goes even further in proving the transition she made from the tradition of the nineteenth-century novel to modern psychological fiction, combining those two methods first in her cycle of short stories *Ludzie stamtąd*, and later, more fully, in *Noce i dnie*. Particularly interesting is Folejewski's analysis of the structural character of the short stories which, thus far, have been regarded by most critics either as loosely related to each other or discussed as sketches for the novel. Here once more Folejewski relates the structure of *Ludzie stamtąd* to Turgenev's *Zapiski okhotnika*, composed in a similar manner.

He finds, to be sure, more links between Dąbrowska and Russian literature, although not all the comparisons are convincing. He places her stories written in the 1950s close to the once-famed novel *Not By Bread Alone* by Dudintsev, while in fact *The Village Wedding*, published in 1955, played in the history of contemporary Polish literature a role more comparable to that of Ehrenburg's *The Thaw* in Russia. In general, however, Folejewski's presentation of Dąbrowska is not only impressive but proves beyond any doubt her status as a major author of our time.

With *Noce i dnie* available by now in Bulgarian, Chinese, Czech, German, Hungarian, Russian, Serbian, and Slovak, one can hope that the time has come for its translation into English. The four volumes of criticism presented here clearly establish Dąbrowska's literary importance and demonstrate an acute need to fill that gap in our program of making available the best in world literature to English-speaking readers.

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ORAL EPICS OF CENTRAL ASIA. By *Nora K. Chadwick* and *Victor Zhirmunsky*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969. 366 pp. \$12.50.

This book is a curious conglomerate of two studies. The first (pp. 1-267) is a reprint, with small adjustments, of Nora K. Chadwick's survey, "The Oral Literature of the Tatars," which appeared in her and her husband's voluminous work *The Growth of Literature* (vol. 3, 1940). This reprint is not very well suited for a book on the "oral epics" of Central Asia: only about half of it is devoted to epics, whereas the other half deals with nonepic genres of folklore—laments, proverbs, riddles, wedding songs, and even shamanism. Although the scope of the survey is broad, its sources are limited. It is based primarily on only one collection—V. V. Radlov's monumental *Proben der Volksliteratur der türkischen Stämme Südsibiriens* (1866-1904), supplemented by A. Chodzko's *Specimens of the Popular Poetry of Persia* (1842) and some other available works, published mostly in Russia.

Because of the nature of the material found in Radlov's collection, the main emphasis of Chadwick's survey is on the Kirghiz epics (*Manas*, *Joloi*, *Er Töshtük*) and the Kazakh epics (*Sain Batyr*, *Kyz-Zhibek*, *Kosy Körpösh*, etc.). The author characterizes them and discusses their milieu and their historical and unhistorical elements. In many cases she has just a single text of a poem at her disposal. Therefore she is necessarily confined in her analysis to comparisons of the variant traditions in different poems and of variant passages within a single poem (p. 196). Her familiarity with the epics of many nations enables her to make frequent references to non-Turkic poems.

Unfortunately for Chadwick, the publication and study of Central Asian epics began to flourish only in the years following the appearance of her survey. At that time numerous modern collections of the major epics were published, such as *Alpamys-Batyr* (1961), *Manas* (2 vols., 1958) with its continuations *Semetei* and *Seitek* (1959 and 1960), *The Book of My Grandfather Korkut* (1962), and so forth. Also many significant studies of epics appeared, such as I. T. Sagitov's and K. Maksetov's studies on Karakalpak epics (1962 and 1965), I. V. Pukhov's work on the Yakut heroic epic (1962), several studies on *Manas*, and others. These works have put the whole problem of the Central Asian epics and their inter-relationships into a completely different light, and we have reason to question the advisability of the republication of Chadwick's survey, adequate in its time, but outdated now.

The second part of *Oral Epics of Central Asia* (pp. 269–339), written by V. M. Zhirmunsky, complements Chadwick's survey with the results of more modern research. Zhirmunsky, who settled in Tashkent after the evacuation of Leningrad in 1941, has become a leading scholar and the moving spirit in the study of the Central Asian epics. In the book under review he gives an informative bibliographical survey, discusses the "epic tales" and the singers of tales. Zhirmunsky's contribution, though concise, forms the most significant portion of the book. In the chapter on the epic tales he deals with those Turkic epics that were either omitted by Chadwick or treated inadequately by her—*Alpamysh*, *Edigei* (*Idige*), *Köroglu-Gorogli*, *Manas*, and *The Book of My Grandfather Korkut*. Zhirmunsky's discussion of the origin of the individual epics, of the historical events integrated into them, of their spread from one nation to another, and of the transformation of the epics due to the historically determined social structures is, I think, the best that has been written on this subject. The author's masterly synthesis squeezed into some twenty pages would merit expansion into a full-size book on the Central Asian epics.

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SELECTED PASSAGES FROM CORRESPONDENCE WITH FRIENDS.

By *Nikolai Gogol*. Translated by *Jesse Zeldin*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1969. xxvii, 271 pp. \$5.95.

Selected Passages is one of those famous books that are read only by scholars and critics. For more than a century it has been ransacked for clues to Gogol's mind, character, and art. It has been adjudged both an aberration from and a logical culmination of its author's "true" gifts. But as yet it has not been treated seriously as a work of literature in its own right. Some forty years ago, V. V. Vinogradov suggested that it represented a conscious search for a new style. But as far as I know, nobody has gone on to study its links—structural and imagistic—with Gogol's earlier works, not merely the articles and letters, but especially the fiction. Virtually the only readers who have taken the book as a respectable intellectual monument are those of religious or philosophical bent, such as Gershenzon, Mochulsky, Zenkovsky, and Florovsky. But even Mochulsky disapproves of Gogol's theology, and most of the others wince at the pietism.

Certainly no other work of Gogol's has generated more impassioned but less perceptive commentary. Of course, it is not a great book. But it is an important book, not merely because it came from a great artist, but because it falls within a tradition (some say it founded that tradition) of Russian religious writing that