

V. G. BELINSKIJ: DIE ENTWICKLUNG SEINER LITERATURTHEORIE. Vol. 1: DIE WIRKLICHKEIT EIN IDEAL. By *Sigurd Fasting*. Scandinavian University Books. Bergen, Oslo, and Tromsø: Universitetsforlaget, 1972. 470 pp. \$19.00, paper.

Hegel would have liked this work. Not only because it presents, in the fullest account in any language, the German philosophic background of Belinsky's thought, but also because it undertakes a detailed demonstration of Belinsky's literary theory as an evolving aesthetic system. Belinsky himself would have been proud to see such a work (even though unable to read it), laying out in extensive philosophic German argument the principles that undergird his critical theory.

The present volume is the work of many years, culminating in a 1970 doctorate at the University of Bergen in Norway, where the author is professor of Russian literature. It covers Belinsky's critical activity from 1834 to 1840/41, from the "Literary Reveries" through the succeeding phase of "reconciliation with reality." A second volume will cover the third and final phase, lasting until Belinsky's death.

This is a work of meticulous scholarship, offering no new materials but providing the reader with a full analysis of Belinsky's writings in chronological order. Long and numerous quotations from the Russian text of critical articles are given, followed by translation into German in a lengthy appendix. The serious student of Belinsky will find this study useful, but perhaps he would be wise to come to it only after acquainting himself with the original articles—unless he would prefer the aid of Ivanov-Razumnik, whose commentaries (cited favorably here) are not so much burdened by the abstract effort to put Belinsky's separate works into a coherent whole.

The author has a discerning eye for the twists and turns of Belinsky's thinking: for the paradoxical, in which Belinsky's thought abounds; or for seeing, for example, how much of Belinsky, and especially his central conflict between celebration and rejection of "reality," is already foreshadowed in the first critical article, the "Literary Reveries."

Perhaps this study is too studious. Too objective, too neutral. One misses any indication of the author's own judgments—for example, of Belinsky's poor job on *Hamlet*, or his good job on *Revisor*. Perhaps the sequel to this first volume will add some drama to the story. Something is lost in any account of the "violent Visarion" that remains too abstract and academic, that does not show something of what might be called Belinsky's intellectual violence.

But the academic virtues of the present work are real and solid—not only in its grasp of Belinsky's thought but also in numerous elucidations of key terms and concepts, so often of German origin.

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STARETZ AMVROSY: MODEL FOR DOSTOEVSKY'S STARETZ ZOS-SIMA. By *John B. Dunlop*. Belmont, Mass.: Nordland Publishing Company, 1972. 176 pp. \$4.75, paper.

Western interest in the religious phenomenon of *starchestvo* (spiritual guidance exercised by an elder of a monastic community) originated after World War I, primarily in German scholarship and undoubtedly in connection with an increased

interest in Dostoevsky. Since that time every work devoted to Eastern and Russian spirituality as a rule has contained a section on *starchestvo*. The book under review is one of the first monographs published in the West devoted to the specific image of one of the *startsy*: the justly renowned Amvrosy of Optina Monastery (1812–91). The author avoids repeating general, sufficiently known descriptions of *starchestvo*, and, after a brief biographical introduction and an outline of Eastern spiritual tradition, introduces the reader to the inner world of Amvrosy, portraying his personal attitudes and his methods of spiritual guidance. The material used—derived from Amvrosy’s letters and conversations—is skillfully arranged. Amvrosy’s deliberately simple and clear language is well rendered in English translation. The literature on *starchestvo* and on Amvrosy himself is amply used, with the exception of a few references to him in belles-lettres which are not taken into account by the author. All this makes the book very valuable for those who are interested in nineteenth-century Russian monasticism and even in questions of spiritual life and pastoral guidance.

The subtitle of the book gives the impression that the work contains elements that would be of interest in the study of nineteenth-century Russian literature as well. However, Amvrosy’s acquaintance with prominent figures of Russian nineteenth-century culture, such as Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Leontiev, and Rozanov, and his influence on them are portrayed very schematically. No effort is made to analyze this influence or even to describe Amvrosy’s relations with them in detail. In the chapter devoted to the nun’s convent of Shamordino, founded and led by Amvrosy, the author does not even mention that Tolstoy’s favorite sister Maria was a nun there. To understand the role which she played in Tolstoy’s life, it is sufficient to familiarize oneself with their correspondence, or even to recall that it was to her that Tolstoy went on the eve of his death. Amvrosy’s influence on the personal development and literary work of Leontiev and Rozanov was also immense. Rozanov devoted a major section of his book *Okolo iserkovnykh sten* (St. Petersburg, 1906) to Amvrosy. Meanwhile the book under review merely mentions Leontiev in passing and Rozanov not at all. This narrows the scope of the book, but by no means deprives it of value.

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THE OTHER TURGENEV: FROM ROMANTICISM TO SYMBOLISM. By Marina Ledkovsky. Colloquium Slavicum, Beiträge zur Slavistik, no. 2. Würzburg: Jal-Verlag, 1973. 170 pp. DM 24, paper.

Like his friend Flaubert, Turgenev has suffered from the restrictive reputation of being a realist, which, coupled with his perceptive rendering of sociopolitical themes (which made *Fathers and Sons* seem so startlingly prophetic during the 1960s), has “attenuated critical interest in a very different direction of his literary work.” So says Marina Ledkovsky in *The Other Turgenev*. By the “very different direction,” she means Turgenev’s interest in the elusive and irrational elements of human consciousness and of the outer world.

The neglect of this “other Turgenev” has not been quite so complete as Ms. Ledkovsky suggests. Other writers have discussed his romanticism, his interest in the supernatural, his debt to men like Pascal and Schopenhauer; this her own bibliography shows. But no one has yet fitted the mosaic to show this darker of