

in a rich, flowing style. A poetess in her own right, she already has to her credit previous translations of Shevchenko's poetical works. Three larger dramatic works are included as well as one epic poem and four short poems. Random comparison with the Ukrainian text leads one to believe that the translator tried as much as possible to retain the rhymes and meters of the original.

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PIĘĆDZIESIĄT LAT TWÓRCZOŚCI MARII DĄBROWSKIEJ. Edited by *Ewa Korzeniewska*. Warsaw: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1963. From the publications of the Instytut Badań Literackich Polskiej Akademii Nauk. 432 pp. 50 zł.

MARIA DĄBROWSKA. Edited with introduction and notes by *Zdzisław Libera*. Warsaw: Państwowe Zakłady Wydawnictw Szkolnych, 1963. Biblioteka *Polonistyki*. 334 pp. 28 zł.

MARIA DĄBROWSKA. By *Andrzej Kijowski*. Warsaw: Wiedza Powszechna, 1964. 144 pp. 10 zł.

MARIA DĄBROWSKA. By *Zbigniew Folejewski*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1967. 123 pp. \$3.95.

The literary fate of Maria Dąbrowska (1889–1965) may appear singular, but it is characteristic of many Polish writers of the older generation. Generally recognized as a major author in her own country, she had to wait half a century for official appreciation of her achievement, while abroad her name has only recently begun to achieve the recognition long due. The four publications under review contribute significantly to our understanding of Dąbrowska's importance and pay deserved tribute to the grand dame of Polish letters.

Although Dąbrowska's bibliography includes more than a hundred short stories, a major novel (*Noce i dnie*, 1932–34), two historical dramas, almost three hundred critical essays, articles, and publications dealing with sociopolitical topics, and her translations of such authors as Chekhov, Gorky, Pepys, and J. P. Jacobson, for many years she did not receive the critical attention her literary output deserved. It was not until May 1962, when she was nearly seventy, that the Polish Academy of Sciences organized an international conference in Warsaw and Kalisz, honoring the fiftieth anniversary of the beginning of Dąbrowska's literary career. The proceedings of the conference, *Pięćdziesiąt lat twórczości Marii Dąbrowskiej*, published a year later, constitute the first many-sided evaluation of her work, comprising twenty papers presented by leading Polish scholars and a few foreign critics, mostly from Eastern Europe. The scope of the volume covers almost all aspects of Dąbrowska's literary activities. Naturally, the main interest centers on *Noce i dnie*, her major work, which Henryk Markiewicz discusses as a novel firmly established in the Polish literary tradition of that genre, while Zdzisław Libera presents its artistic merits. An analysis of the narrator's position in the structure of the novel is given by Janusz Sławiński. A Belgian scholar, Charles Hyart, devotes his paper to the discussion of the epic qualities of the novel. The other participants in the session discuss Dąbrowska's short stories, plays, literary criticism, and her use of language. Reports on the reception of her work in the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Hungary follow. A bibliography

and a list of translations into foreign languages (including *Noce i dnie* in Chinese, published in Peking in 1959) close the impressive volume, which unfortunately does not contain even brief summaries in languages other than Polish.

In 1963 there appeared another important collection of materials, *Maria Dąbrowska* (2nd ed., 1965), compiled by Zdzisław Libera, who gathered in a compact volume a few of Dąbrowska's own essays and criticism together with a selection of critical studies on her work written by various scholars and critics in the last thirty years. Intended mainly for students at Polish universities, Libera's collection provides a well-balanced cross section of the novelist's own comments on her creative method, dealing in particular with *Noce i dnie*. Among the materials one should note Dąbrowska's essay written for Joseph Conrad's centennial and later included in her *Szkice o Conradzie* (1959). Dąbrowska was one of the few Polish authors who made a firm stand in defending Conrad against the violent attacks of Marxist critics in 1946; her interest in Conrad dated back to 1914, when Marian Dąbrowski, her husband, was one of the first to be granted an interview by the author of *Lord Jim*.

Among the critics who began to pay attention to Dąbrowska's work early in the 1930s, Karol Wiktor Zawodziński was the first Polish scholar to recognize the epic qualities in *Noce i dnie* while that novel was still in progress. His short essay reprinted in this collection links Dąbrowska's cycle of short stories, *Ludzie stamtąd* (1925), with Turgenev's method of composition. The collection as a whole is carefully edited and well annotated and should be considered a useful source for any student of Dąbrowska.

Andrzej Kijowski's *Maria Dąbrowska* can only be regarded as a very general introduction to her art. Popular in approach, apparently intended for the general public rather than students of literature, Kijowski's book is an attempt to see Dąbrowska against the background of the social and economic changes that took place in Poland between 1863 and 1963. So broad a scope is perhaps too ambitious for such a short study, and as a result the critical discussion dissolves among the factual data on revolutions, workers' strikes, social changes, and philosophical theories. Although there is no doubt that all those phenomena had a significant effect on Dąbrowska, particularly evident in *Noce i dnie*, Kijowski overemphasizes the background at the expense of the literature.

Taken together, the three volumes of Polish studies form a solid body of criticism and place Dąbrowska in a proper perspective as a major author of modern literature.

Thus it seemed proper to present Dąbrowska in a study intended for English-speaking readers who so far had been able to read only a few of her short stories (*The Village Wedding and Other Stories*, Warsaw, 1957) and learn about the author from a short essay by Zbigniew Folejewski in *Books Abroad* (Winter 1964). This task was undertaken by Folejewski and resulted in a book published in Twayne's World Authors series under the title *Maria Dąbrowska* (the diacritical marks have been omitted throughout the book). Folejewski limited his study to a discussion of Dąbrowska's fiction, thus focusing on her most valuable accomplishment. Having dedicated his book to the memory of K. W. Zawodziński, he follows that scholar's comparatistic approach, placing Dąbrowska's fiction in a broad context of world literature, against whose background her prose appears equal if not superior in some cases to the great novels of the twentieth century. Closely related to the Polish literary tradition on the one hand, her short stories and her novel also show, on the other hand, a close affinity with the best writings

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.