

ReviewsBOOK                      REVIEWS

DREVNII MINSK (Ancient Miensk), E. M. Zagorul'skii, Gos. izd. BSSR, Minsk, 1963, 120 pp., illustrated (in Russian).

This is a short, layman's account of the historical and archaeological evidence relating to the early history of the present-day Byelorussian capital, which was probably prepared in anticipation of the forthcoming 900th anniversary (1067) of the first recorded mention of Miensk in the Chronicles.

After a brief discussion of such Chronicle evidence, and an outline of the history of archaeological excavations in Miensk, the author outlines the form of the ancient city, giving photographs of excavations and reconstructions of wooden structures such as fortress-towers and houses. Such stone building as survives seems to have been of ecclesiastical origin — the remains of the stone church (shown on page 42) incidentally, show many features in common with the 11th century cathedral excavated on

the Brough of Birsay (Orkney). Plans and sketchmaps are given.

The chapters on the economy and life of ancient Miensk are treated in a "popular" manner, and there are numerous illustrations of archaeological finds — including tools for wood- and bone carving, household vessels, combs, jewellery and other personal adornments, chess-men and stone ikons.

In conclusion the problem is discussed of "how and when" Miensk was founded, and the principal unsolved problems of the early history of the city are indicated.

This is, generally speaking, a clearly-written and informative little book, and would be well-worth translating into English.

V. R.

DYALEKTALAHIČNY ATLAS BIEĻARUSKAJ MOVY (Dialectological Atlas of the Byelorussian Language) — Ak. Navuk BSSR, Ed. R. Avaniesau, K. Krapiva & Ju. Mackievič, II Vols. Miensk 1963.

Much has been written on the development of the Byelorussian literary language, and many pre-conceived ideas have been discredited by modern philological research. The two volumes of the Dialectological Atlas, which includes 338 maps and 970 pages of commentary represent the most comprehensive survey of the spoken Byelorussian language yet to appear. Both by its content, which must have involved immense research, and by the excellence of the illustrations and maps, the Atlas is a most

impressive work. Students of the Byelorussian language will be grateful for the reproduction of Karski's authoritative ethnographic map of 1903. It is a pity that the editors restricted their study to the present day territory of the Byelorussian S.S.R., and did not deal with the Byelorussian dialects of the Smalensk, Vilmia and Bielastok areas. But apart from this omission the Atlas is an outstanding contribution to philology and deserves the highest commendation.

KNIAZ I LAPAC (The Prince and the bark-shoe), Vincuk Advažny, London 1964, pp. 256.

Although the peregrinations of Advažny's hero, Symon Duk, might at first evoke a rustic *Odyssey*, on reflection it is Grimmelshausen's *Simplicissimus* which springs to mind. In his satirical epic poem the author relates the adventure of a Palesian emigré who is persuaded to return from America to his native Byelorussia,

only to be speedily dispatched to a Siberian concentration camp. The story is entertaining and the verse is witty and easy-flowing. The poem is not without a certain documentary value insofar as it is largely based on the authors personal experiences in America and in Siberia.

NA BERAHOCH PAD SONCAM, Ūladzimir Hlybyunny, Byelorussian-American Scientific and Literary Center, New York, 1964, pp. 190.

A collection of "Tales and Stories", presumably autobiographical in inspiration, by a prominent emigré Byelorussian writer. The book is provided with an impressively large biblio-

graphy of the author's work published in emigration and of miscellaneous articles and material relating to his life and writings.

V. R.

NAVUKOVY ZBORNIK (Scientific Collection), Bielastok 1964, pp. 294.

Published by the Byelorussian National Cultural Association of Poland, the *Zbornik* is a very significant and valuable collection of studies. V. Skluboŭski deals with a few aspects of the Byelorussian National movement which are too often passed over in silence in publications elsewhere (39-60).

M. Peciukievič gives some fresh

material on the culture of the Sokulka area, with particular reference to the architecture and lay-out of farms, and to the form and style of farm implements, pottery, weaving and basket-work (215-260).

There is a revealing study of the poetic works of Janka Kupała in the Polish language by A. Barščeŭski (153-179).

SHAKESPEARE NA BELORUSKOJ SCENE, T. Borisova, Minsk 1964, pp. 103, illustrated (in Russian).

In a short but useful study Borisova gives a brief survey of the performance of Shakespeare's plays in Byelorussian Theatres, both in the Byelorussian and in the Russian languages. There are interesting accounts of the interpretations of the

best-known Shakespearean roles by such leading Byelorussian actors as P. Malčanaŭ, A. Ilynski. I. Ždanovič and others. The author also deals with the historical aspect of Shakespearean translations in the field of Byelorussian literature.

VYTAUTAS THE GREAT, GRAND DUKE OP LITHUANIA, J. Koncius, Miami (Fl.), 1964, pp. 211.

Dr Koncius has written a popular but well-documented life of a figure who played a capital role both in Byelorussian and Letto-Lithuanian history. It is at times difficult to keep track of historical and ethnical realities through the complexities of Lettish orthography. The author fails to point out that the Grand Duke

himself used Middle-Byelorussian and Latin and not Lettish in all his official documents (Cf. Chr. Stang: *Die Westrussische Kanzleisprache des Grossfürstentums Litauen*, Oslo 1935, pp. 3-21). It is a pity that these nationalist aberrations should mar an otherwise interesting and informative book.

ZBOR TVORAŪ (Collected works), Jakub Kołas, Akademija navuk BSSR, Miensk.

In 1964, two further volumes, X and XI, of this twelve-volume edition appeared. Vol. X contains Kołas' plays and translations. Vol. XI is a collection of articles covering his whole

literary life (1906-1956). The volumes are beautifully produced, illustrated with many photographs of Kołas', and are furnished with brief but informative notes.

V. R.

ZODČESTVO DREVNEGO SMOLENSKA, M. Karger, Leningrad 1964, pp. 138, illustrated (in Russian).

This excellent, well-produced study of the architecture of old Smalensk is a publication of the University of Leningrad. There are many fine

illustrations largely reproduced from XVIIIth century engravings, and photographs of recent archeological excavations in this principal city of Eastern

Byelorussia (now incorporated in the Russian Federal Republic). The author shows how in the early period the architecture of the Polack-Smalensk school, whilst having its origin in Byzantine models, developed along its own particular path. Of considerable

interest is the section dealing with the cruciform Church of St. Michael the Archangel which already reveals strong western influences on Byelorussian art as early as the XIth and XIIth centuries.

BIELAVIEŽSKAJA PUŠČA, V. Volski and Ja. Siemiažon, Miensk, 1964, pp. 96, illustrated (in Byelorussian and English).

This is primarily an album of photographs, illustrating, as it were, a year in the life of the Belaviežskaja Pušča, one of the last remaining tracts of Europe's primaevial forest and now a nature preserve. Illustrated by V. Hipenrejtar, with commentaries in English and Byelorussian, we see the whole annual cycle unfolding in gentle, northern colours. Exquisitely

photographed to catch every phase of the seasons and every mood of the land, its commentaries are in charming if sometimes a little picturesque English to complement the illustrations. One felt that those producing this volume were in love with their work and spared no pains to present their country in all its beauty.

E. A. H.

#### REVIEWS OF PERIODICALS

BIELARUŠ (Byelorussia), Miensk, 1964.

This journal is a popular style magazine with coloured illustrations and short readable articles. It is published monthly by the Writers Union of Soviet Byelorussia of which it purports to be the official organ. Articles range over a variety of subjects — history, painting, sculpture and literature rub shoulders with civil engineering, agriculture, household tips and atheism. An undue amount of space is devoted to Russian culture.

The chief interest of the publication lies in its photographic reproductions in colour of the works of Byelorussian painters and folk-artists, and in its selections from the works of contemporary poets. However, to judge by the illustrations which the editors

of *Bielaruš* offer to its readers, modern painting in Byelorussia has little to commend it. M. Savicki in his oil study *Gymnasts* (HI/17) makes a timid attempt to depart from the banality of photographic realism. *Braslau landscape* by V. Sachnenka betrays, as it were, a certain influence of Van Gogh. The rest of the works depicted are indescribably dull.

A few articles are not without interest. The quadricentenary of Shakespeare is duly commemorated (IV/22) and a valuable biographical note deals with the activities of the ethnographer Aleš Seržputoŭski in the Miensk, Stuck and Palesia regions (VII/28).

LITERATURA I MASTACTVA (Literature and Art), Miensk, 1964.

It is impossible in a short space to review all the interesting material which appears in this official Journal for the promotion of Literature and Art in Soviet Byelorussia. Most of the articles are unfortunately too short to justify comment. There is however much useful information, including an article on the work of the Viciebsk historian Aleš Sapunaŭ (80/4) and the Byelorussian elements in the works

of the Russian composer Alexander Gretchaninoff (86/4). I. Hrableŭski writes a short study on the national instrument — the cymbaly (88/1) and there is a sound article — published too late, alas, to save the face of Miensk — on the merits of simplicity in architecture (93/3). J. Cikocki contributes an useful critical appreciation of the operatic genre and its problems (103/2).

## MAŁADOŚĆ (Youth), Miensk, 1964.

This review of the Central Committee of the Byelorussian LKSM and the Byelorussian Writers Union gives some literary and a great deal of political material. There are cycles of poems by established young poets such as Kazimier Kamejša (104-107), Michaś Rudkoŭski (3/43-46) and Ryhor Siemaškiewič (9/12-15) and numerous

essays and short stories. Marat Bacvinnik contributes a short article on the influence of Byelorussian printing on the early Russian printers (3/143-145), and there is a good article on the cymbaly or dulcimers of the Byelorussian State Folk Orchestra by Marat Rubinstejn (4/118-120).

## POLYMIA (The Flame), Miensk, 1964.

Polymia is the official organ of the Union of Writers of the BSSR describes itself as a literary-artistic and social-political journal. In fact, the main bulk of material published consists of poetry, belles-lettres and literary criticism.

In general, the standard is high. Poets published include Maksim Tank, Piatruś Broŭka, Jeŭdakija Loś, Piman Pančanka, Edzi Ahniacviet and Ryhor Niahaj. Frequently a group of poems by a single poet appears together, either as a cycle (e.g. *From a Mother's Diary*, by Jeŭdakija Loś — no. 3), or as a group of individual poems (e.g. the selection from Maksim Tank's book *Hlytok vady* in no. 2).

Foreign literature is well represented, but is mainly that of other Slavonic or Soviet countries. There is however, in no. 4 a selection of Shakespeare's sonnets translated by Ŭładzimir Duboŭka. No. 9 contains a special feature on modern Ukrainian literature, and there are in addition articles on and translations from Polish, Russian, and Lithuanian literature. There is the usual commemorative material for anniversaries — in this case the sextacentenaries of the births of the Russian M. Yu. Lermontov and the Ukrainian Taras Shevchenko.

The literary criticism is generally

somewhat pedestrian in approach, calculated to inform rather than to inspire. More interesting, perhaps, is the publication of literary "background material", in particular some extracts from a diary of Jakub Kołas.

The fiction is of a fairly high standard, the most notable work being, perhaps the novella *Lonva* by Ivan Ptašnikaŭ (nos. 4 and 5).

There are the usual book-reviews and Chronicle, the latter including items as diverse as the acquisition by the Burns Memorial Museum in Dumfries of a copy of the Byelorussian translations of the poet's works (no. 1) and the seventieth birthday of Nikita Khrushchov (no. 5).

Political material is represented mainly by news items, and articles on the "Partisan Front" of 1942, and the usual commemorative material for the anniversary of the October Revolution. One must also, in conclusion mention the two-part reportage (nos. 3 and 4) "Two months in New York", by a member of the Byelorussian Delegation to the 18th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations — an interesting and unusual insight into the working of the organization, which although, naturally, politically biased, is remarkably free from prejudice.

V. R.

## VEŚCI AKADEMII NAVUK BSSR (Serija Hramadskich Navuk) — Journal of the Academy of Sciences of the BSSR (Social Science Series), Miensk, 1964.

Since 1929 the Byelorussian Academy of Sciences has been the leading Cultural Institution in the land, and its publications have achieved international standing. The Journal appears in four yearly numbers.

In the first number P. Achrymenka deals with the influence of the Ukrainian Poet Taras Shevchenko's work on Byelorussian Culture (5-15). The study is significant in that it

underlines the links binding the destinies of the Ukrainian and Byelorussian people. H. Kuljašoŭ deals with Byelorussian operatic works in the thirties, paying particular attention to the operas *Michaś Padhorny* by Cikocki and *V puščach Polesija* by Bahatyreŭ (93-102). R. Paŭtarak gives the history of the infinitive in "-ti" in Byelorussian grammar (113-123). There is also a most interesting study on

the Byelorussian proverbs which were published in Latin at Liubee in 1618 by Salamon Rysinski. The authors J. Parecki and J. Prenska show how the works of this Renaissance ethnographer from Mahileu influenced the great Czech pedagogue Jan Komenski (124-133).

In the second number there is a valuable archeological survey of the monuments of the prehistoric Paraoarian culture on the territory of Byelorussia by V. Nikicin (69-77). M. Praškovič writes about Byelorussian verse in the late XVIth and early XVIIth centuries (78-88); and M. Bulachaŭ explores the subject of adjective construction in Old Byelorussian (99-109).

In the third number there is a brief article by J. Čurko on Byelorussian choreography from 1945-1963 (101-105). V. Škidan gives details of particularities in Byelorussian lyrical

folksong (113-121) and R. Paūtarak discusses the syntactical role of the dependant infinitive in the history of the Byelorussian language (122-130).

In the fourth number A. Korsunaŭ considers the link between Byelorussian Printing and the Russian master-printer Ivan Fedoroff (79-85). In the text Piatruš Mscislavec is properly described as a Byelorussian, but in the Russian-language summary he is called a Russian (85). One hopes that this is an inadvertence. T. Dubkoŭ deals with the national tradition in the works of Byelorussian composers (94-101). There is a study on phonetical contamination in the process of interdialectal exchanges by N. Vajtovič, and an article on the system of declensions and the usual form of the Mazurian speech in the village of Łamošša in Palesia province by V. Viarenič (118-128).

BIELARUSKI KALENDAR (Byelorussian Calendar), Bielastok, 1964.

This pleasant little almanach is published yearly in Poland by the Byelorussian National Cultural Association for the Bielastok Province. Its form and contents are mainly designed to appeal to a wide circle of readers, though much excellent material has been published in the Calendar in the past. The present

number includes a quota of poems and fables by V. Šved and A. Barski-Barščeŭski, together with a collection of proverbs, anecdotes, short stories and household hints. Mikoła Hajduk gives an interesting study of Byelorussian marriage customs in the Bielastok area (104-116).

ACTA BALTO-SLAVICA, Tom I, Bielastok, 1964 (in Polish).

Students of East Slav culture will welcome the appearance of this new periodical of the Bielastok Scientific Society which deals with the relations between the Baltic peoples (Ancient Prussians, Letts and Lithuanians) and the Slavs (Poles, Byelorussians and Russians). K. Musianowicz surveys the developments of the mediaeval settlement of Darahyczyn on the Buh river (77-86). The circulation of early mediaeval coins in the North-Eastern territories of present-day Poland is investigated by K. Kiersnowski (87-98). J. Wiśniewski deals with the development of settlements in the Polish-Lithuanian-Byelorussian borderland from the end of the XIVth to the mid-XVIIth centuries (115-135). The origin and development of towns in

the province of Podlasia from the XVth to the mid-XVIIth centuries are discussed by S. Alexandrowicz (137-156). J. Osmański examines the structure of feudal estates in Podlasia in the second half of the XVth century (157-163). A. Obrębska-Jabłońska, Professor of Byelorussian Philology at Warsaw University, investigates the problem of Slavistic research in the Bielastok region (199-206), and T. Zdaniewicz deals with the influences of the Byelorussian and Lithuanian languages on the Polish dialects of the Sejny area (227-246). In the same field W. Kuraszkiewicz analyses Byelorussian and Ukrainian tendencies in the dialect of the Bełaveža forest region (247-257).

BIAŁYSTOCKI ROCZNIK — TOM IV Bielastok, 1963 (in Polish).

This excellent and well-balanced publication appears under the auspices

The Bielastok Yearbook — Vol. IV),

of the Bielastok Museum and deals with different aspects of the local

culture — Byelorussian, Lithuanian (Lettish) and Polish. A. Kaminski offers an interesting study of the Polish-Byelorussian and Sudovian borderland between the Biebra and Nareū rivers (9-42). There is a topical article by D. Fajnhauz on the Underground press in Byelorussia and Lithuania at the time of the Uprising of 1861-1864. Kastus Kalinoŭski was particularly active in the Grodna and Bielastok areas (43-102). The intriguing results of archeological excavations at Navahrudak (Miensk province) are discussed by D. Guriewicz (341-354).

The exceptional wealth of this city was evidenced by the widespread use of glazed windows as early as the XIIIth century. W. Kochanowski gives valuable material on the history and ornamentation of the Monastery of the Annunciation at Supraśl, dealing specifically with the Baroque art of the post-Basilian period (355-396). It is curious indeed to learn that the great iconostasis, unhappily destroyed by the Germans in 1944, was constructed in the Hanseatic city of Gdansk in 1664.

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BIELARUSKI INSTYTUT NAVUKI I  
(Byelorussian Institute of Arts and

The *Annals* of the Byelorussian Institute of Arts and Sciences were first published in New York during the years 1952-1954. They now reappear in a far more substantial and impressive form, and it is no exaggeration to say that this emigré publication compares very favourably with the cultural periodicals of the Byelorussian Academy of Sciences in Miensk. The Editor, Dr. St. Stankievic, is well-known authority on Byelorussian Philology.

In a well-documented study Symon Braha deals with a little known aspect of the life of Francis Skaryna, the great Byelorussian humanist of the renaissance period, namely his visit to Moscow in the years 1525-1533 (9-36). The young historian Paval Urban deals with the activity of the National Hero Kastus Kalinoŭski in connection with the clandestine newsheet "Mužyckaja Praŭda" during the uprising of 1863 (37-73). One of the literary

MASTACTVA: ZAPISY, KNIHA II —  
Sciences: Annals, Vol. II), Munich 1963.

lights of the emigration, Antony Adamovič, develops his ideas on the history of Byelorussian literature (74-94). Jan Stankievič contributes a catalogue of Byelorussian Christian names (95-127), and Professor J. Stankievič studies the prefix "v" in the Byelorussian language (128-134). In the section dealing with newly published material, Adam Varlyha adds to the seemingly inexhaustible stream of Byelorussian proverbs with a selection of saws and sayings from Lahoysk in the Miensk District (135-180). Finally, a very valuable contribution is made by J. Zaprudnik who publishes documents relating to the history of the First All-Byelorussian Congress in 1917 — a movement which led up to the proclamation of Independence and the establishment of the Byelorussian Democratic Republic (BNR) (181-204). His work is of particular value in a field in which objective study plays all too small a part.

BIELARUSKAJA MOŁADŹ (Byelorussian Youth), New York, 1964.

This slim quarterly magazine is edited by the Byelorussian Youth Association of America, and contains short articles in both the Byelorussian and English languages. B. D. publishes

memoirs of the Byelorussian Officers Academy in Miensk during the year 1944 (no. 20) which cast interesting light on this ill-fated venture.

BACKAŪŠČYNA (The Fatherland), Munich, 1964.

The newspaper *Backaŭščyna* which has appeared regularly since 1947 is the leading Byelorussian newspaper in Emigration. Its contents are serious and well-presented, and it provides interesting comments on current affairs from the viewpoint of the BNR, whose policies the editors support.

The most recent issue includes the continuation of P. Syč novel *Smierc i salaŭi* (No. 1-2/615-616); a valuable historical study of the events of 1918-1919 in the Grodna region by V. Panucievic (No. 3-4/617-618, 5-6/619-620, 7-8/621-622, 9-10/623-624); an article on the rehabilitation of the literary critic M. Harecki (1893-1939) (No. 3-4/617-

618) and a critical study of the Policy of denationalisation of national minorities in the USSR (Nos. 9-10/623-

624). The death of the journalist and poet Peter Syč is also commemorated (No. 9-10/ 623-624).

BOŽYM ŠLJACHAM (On God's Highway), London, 1964.

This year marks the resumption of publication of the excellent Catholic bi-monthly periodical, *Božym Šlacham*. This magazine, which first appeared in Paris in 1947 under the very able editorship of the Reverend Leū Horoško, is now published in London by the Rev. Jazep Hermanovič. There is interesting new material on the lives and work of two distinguished Byelorussian ecclesiastics, Archimandrite Andrej Cikota (1891-1952) and Fr. Hermanovič (Nos. 82, 83);

on the history of Byelorussian Church music (Nos. 83, 84 & 85); on the activity in England of the ethnographer and poet Alexander Radwan-Rypinski (1811-1861) (No. 86); and on the history of the Byelorussian students at the Greek College in Rome (No. 87).

Vincuk Advazny publishes more of his delightful fables in verse (Nos. 82, 83, 84, 87), and there are other contributions from the poems of Piatruš Syč (1912-1964) (No. 85) and Natalia Arsenieva (No. 82).

ZNIČ (The Torch), Rome, 1964.

The religious magazine Znic which first appeared in 1950, is a well-presented parochial journal edited by the Very Rev. Mgr. P. Tatarynovic. Grammatically, however, the language is sometimes obscure and tends towards Polonisation. There is an informative article on the life of Fr.

Viktar Sutovič (1890-1960) who was associated with the Vilna group of nationally-conscious priests during the inter-war years (No. 76). In a supplement to one issue Fr. Jazep Hermanovič; publishes his version of the penitential psalms done into verse (No. 75).

## Byelorussian Chronicle 1964

### I. The International Scene

#### THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

At the Plenary Meeting held at Headquarters in New York on Tuesday 15 December 1964, the delegate of the BSSR His Excellency Ryhor Kiseleū addressed the General Assembly of the United Nations.

On behalf of the Byelorussian people he welcomed the unanimous election of His Excellency Alex Quaison Sackey of Ghana to the Presidency of the General Assembly, and expressed sincere friendship for the people of Ghana. After giving voice to his Government's support for the admission of the Peoples Republic of China to the United Nations, Mr. Kiseleū criticised the rearmament of the Federal German Republic, and attacked the policies of the colonial powers. Speaking in Russian, the spokesman of Soviet Byelorussia observed:

"Colonialism still exists and the people of the world must preserve

and strengthen their unity in the fight for general independence and equality of rights against all the very great variety of subterfuges of the Colonialist Powers." [For details of the International policies of the BSSR see K. Kiselev "Belorusskaja SSR na meždunarodnoj arene", Moskva 1964 (in Russian)].

(Provisional Verbatim Record  
A/PV 1303 16th December 1964)

#### THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS

On the occasion of the 46th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence of the Byelorussian Democratic Republic (BNR), members of the Senate and of the House of Representatives of the United States of America expressed sympathy for the Byelorussian people and understanding of their problems. Among the twenty-six senators and representatives, who in their addresses commemorated the events of the 25th March 1918, were