

## Reviews

### BOOK REVIEWS

HISTORYJA MINSKA (A History of Minsk) ed. N. Kamienskaja, I. Kraučenka, Z. Kapyski and V. Ramanouški. Minsk 1967. 687 pages.

This collection of essays by a team of historians was compiled to mark the 900th anniversary of the foundation of Minsk, the capital of Byelorussia. The editors quite candidly admit that they have paid particular attention to the recent history of the city, and to its social and economic development in the years following the revolution of 1917 (p. 4). Their admission is no exaggeration, for by page 126 the reader has already been brought to the threshold of the 20th century; the remaining 530 pages deal at great length with the growth of Minsk in the Soviet period. It is worth mentioning that the senior editor, Mme Kamienskaja, is a well-known specialist in the history of the Revolutionary era in Byelorussia. Many readers anxious to acquaint themselves with the preceding 850 years of the city's past, will naturally react critically to what appears to be an unbalanced study. With such a variety of excellent sources on the earlier period, such as the works of Sapunou, Sierbaŭ, Kowalewska and Daŭhiala, not to mention the vast corpus of valuable material published from 1865 to 1915 by the Vilna Archaeological Commission, and in the journal *Минские губернские ведомости*, the editors might have devoted a little more space to such crucial periods in the city's development as the 16th and 17th centuries. One would imagine that an event such as the virtual razing of a prosperous city would merit more than a few ambiguous lines. Nevertheless the sacking of Minsk by the Russian armies of Tsar Alexej Michajlovič after 1652 and the subsequent deportation to Muscovy of a large section of the population to be sold into slavery, is glossed over with the observation that "a significant part of the inhabitants left the city" (p. 52). In the extensive studies devoted to contemporary history there are a few

references, generally inaccurate, to the Byelorussian National Rada, which grouped a number of distinguished intellectuals involved in the publication of the Journal *Naša Niva*, including the critic Anton Łuckievič. Students familiar with the history of this period will be surprised to learn, for example, that the left-wing Rada leader Vaclaŭ Łastoŭski headed a puppet nationalist government set up by the Poles in 1919 (p. 263). Neither the Rada government of 1919, nor that of 1920 could remotely be described as subject to Polish influences. It was the Poles who drove the first government from Hrodna, and who later drove Łastoŭski into exile in Koŭna precisely because the Byelorussians refused to cooperate with them (Cf. N. Vakar, *Byelorussia: the Making of a Nation*, Cambridge, Mass., 1956, pp. 108, 112). Nothing is said of the ruthless purges of Byelorussian intellectuals in the period from 1929-1932, in which thousands of high-minded and distinguished men were executed or imprisoned for alleged nationalist deviations. Similarly the destruction of Minsk in the course of the last war can not be laid entirely at the door of the German occupation forces: the scorched earth policy implemented by Stalin in 1941 and the Soviet bombardments of 1944 were substantial contributory factors. The treatment of the contemporary period is otherwise complete, at least from a Soviet standpoint, and there is much interesting information relating to the industrialisation and economic development of Minsk. There are a few errors, as for example where a map of the city stated to date from the 18th century shows the existence of two railway stations (p. 128). Apart from its obvious limitations, the book is conscientiously produced, well-printed and contains numerous illustrations.

G.P.

EKONOMIČESKOJE RAZVITIJE GORODOV BELORUSSII (XVI-XVII VV.).  
Z. Ju. Kopysskij. Institut Istorii AN BSSR, Minsk, 1966, 227 pages.  
Tables. (In Russian).

A number of pre-Revolutionary historians were much concerned with the development, function and structure of towns in Byelorussia during the Lithuanian period. In more recent years some excellent studies, based on careful use of documentary evidence, have illuminated the history of individual towns or particular aspects of urbanism. In this work Kopysskij attempts an integrated overview of the economic role of Byelorussian towns in the 16th and 17th centuries. The book is divided into four sections. The first, "General Characteristics", is concerned with the number of towns and the size and make-up of their populations. The second examines the relations of towns as centres of exchange for the surrounding localities. The third section is devoted to craft manufacture in towns and the development of guild workshops, while the final section deals with trade relations, both between Byelorussian towns and with Polish towns.

The principal thesis of Kopysskij's work is that, by the 16th century, towns were already distinct economic entities and not, as earlier writers such as Dovnar-Zapol'skij have suggested, little more than overgrown villages with agriculture as their dominant economic activity. Kopysskij sets out to show that in manufacture of goods for sale to the surrounding estates and villages, in acting as a market for the disposal of agricultural produce from the neighbourhood and in trading connections, the Byelorussian towns were possessed of truly urban functions — the beginnings of "modern", or as Kopysskij

terms them "capitalist", functions. This thesis is supported by a wealth of evidence from contemporary documentary sources. These include charters, notably those granting the Magdeburg Right, town inventories, tax records, legal documents such as magistrates' books, customs rolls, chronicles, old maps and travellers' accounts.

The approach is scholarly and one has no doubt of the considerable value of this work to the economic historian and historical geographer. However the size of the book is comparatively limited and one is not infrequently left asking for more. For example, although Kopysskij explains how he achieves his estimates of population for certain towns, he fails to give his evidence for the assumption that the total population of Byelorussia was about 2.3 million. It is, to say the least, an approximation with very wide margins of error and one would like something concrete before accepting it. Again, a consolidated bibliography at the end would have been of great help to the student of the period. Although such omissions are somewhat of a limitation to the usefulness of this book, this is far outweighed by the value of what it does contain. On the evidence presented one must agree with his conclusion that, despite brakes on urban growth such as the strengthening of serfdom at this period, there was no decline as earlier writers have often postulated, but rather a continuous, if slow, development in size, number and economic activity of towns.

R.F.

HISTORIA LITWY (A History of Lithuania). Jerzy Ochmański. Wrocław, 1967. 347 pages. (In Polish).

Although this work purports to deal with the history of ethnic Lithuania, it touches extensively, not to say trespasses, on a great deal of Byelorussian matter, and as such calls for a few comments from a Byelorussian viewpoint. It is, of course, impossible for a historian to limit any study of Lithuania to the country now known by that name, to the exclusion of Byelorussia, which for many

centuries was united with it in a single state — the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Although the author defines clearly what he means by "Lithuanian" (pp. 11-13), he is not so explicit in dealing with the Byelorussians, who were the more civilised element in the state of which he writes. One surmises, for example, that many of the 38 "Lithuanian" students which he mentions as having attended the

University of Cracow from 1402-1440 were in fact Byelorussians from the mixed region known as *Lithuania propria* (p. 79). Again, it is confusing to read on the one hand that the Grand Duchy was a state incorporating Lithuanians, Byelorussians and Ukrainians (p. 175), and to learn on the other hand that such classic examples of the Byelorussian language as the *Litoŭski Statut* of 1588 and the poems of Andrej Rymša were written "po rusku." One is at least relieved to find that the name of one

of the leaders of the Lithuanian uprising of 1863 is given as Kalinowski and not Kalinouskas; it is unfortunate, however, that Ochmański fails to make any mention of his role as a Byelorussian national leader. Although there is little enough reference to Lithuanian-Byelorussian relations in the early years of the present century, one does find a brief mention of the Soviet Lithuanian-Byelorussian Republic (pp. 251-252).

G.P.

Z DUMAJ PRA BIELARUŚ (With Byelorussia in Mind). Hienadz Kisialoŭ. Minsk, 1966. 320 pages.

In the last decade there has been a growing interest on the part of Byelorussian scholars in the history of their native culture. A number of books and articles, for the most part based on hitherto unpublished documents, have appeared. One of such books is *Z dumaj pra Bielaruś* by Hienadz Kisialoŭ. The author has chosen the second half of the 19th century as the subject of this particular study. In 1963 he published an interesting work called *Siejbity vje-naha* (The Sowers of Eternal Treasures), which was a study of certain eminent Byelorussians connected with the anti-Russian uprising of 1863. There was first of all a biography of Kastuś Kalinoŭski (1838-1864), the leader of the uprising and the editor of the first Byelorussian clandestine paper *Mužyckaja praŭda*, who was caught and hanged by the Russians in 1864. The other chapters dealt with the role played in the uprising by the poet Vincent Dunin-Marcinkievič (1807-1884) and with the school and student years of another poet, Franciśak Bahuśevič (1840-1900), who in 1863 was one of the first to join the ranks of the insurgents. In *Z dumaj pra Bielaruś* Kisialoŭ makes public the results of his further research on the same subject. Of the book's five chapters, the first three are concerned, directly or indirectly, with Kastuś Kalinoŭski and the remaining two with Franciśak Bahuśevič.

In the first chapter, *Tak siejcie-ż, dzieciuki!* (Sow then, Fellows!; pp. 5-67), Kisialoŭ tries to assess, with the help of numerous archive documents, how popular Kalinoŭski's *Mužyckaja*

*praŭda* was among the Byelorussian population, and what influence it had in raising the insurgent spirit. The second chapter, *Pa śladach adnaho piśma M. P. Aharava i A. I. Hercena*. (On the traces of a letter of M. P. Ogarev and A. I. Herzen; pp. 68-85), is dedicated to one of Kalinoŭski's collaborators, Feliks Zienkievič, and his possible connection with the Russian revolutionary A. Herzen. The third chapter is the longest of all. It is called *Letapis żyćcia i dziejności Kastusia Kalinoŭskaha*. (Chronicle of the Life and Activities of Kastuś Kalinoŭski; pp. 86-222) and is a well documented chronicle of the life of the Byelorussian national hero, arranged year by year and almost day by day. It is an indispensable aid to anybody studying the life of Kastuś Kalinoŭski or the history of his times.

The next chapter, *Franciśak Bahuśevič i Jan Karłowič* (Franciśak Bahuśevič and Jan Karłowicz; pp. 223-283) is based on the correspondence — discovered a few years previously by Kisialoŭ — between the Byelorussian poet and the well known Polish scholar. The friendship between Bahuśevič and Karłowicz goes back to the 1860's. It was Karłowicz who helped Bahuśevič to hide from the Russian police who were looking for him for his part in the uprising of 1863. Soon afterwards Bahuśevič had to leave Byelorussia and could not come back till twenty years later, in 1884, when he settled in Vilna and set up a legal practice. His correspondence with Karłowicz, which was rather sporadic before, became both voluminous and interesting after 1887, when the latter

finally settled in Warsaw. Karłowicz had shown a keen interest in Byelorussian culture and encouraged Bahuševič in writing poetry. It was also he who helped his friend to publish his book of poetry *Dudka bielaruskaja* and the story *Tralalonačka*. Bahuševič frequently used to send Karłowicz the text of his poems, and he even sent to him a sample of the Byelorussian dictionary on which he was working. Another person with whom Bahuševič maintained friendly relations, and who encouraged him to write Byelorussian poetry, was the great Polish writer Eliza Ōrzeszkowa.

Finally, in the last chapter, *Mužycki advakat*. (The Peasants' Advocate; pp. 283-317), Kisialoŭ tries, with the help of documents, to shed some light on Bahuševič's work as a lawyer in Vilna during the years 1883-1897. It appears that he was always ready to defend without charge the Byelorussian peasants who flocked to him, not least because he always spoke with them in their native tongue. The book *Z dumaj pra Bielaruš* is a serious and well documented work; an undoubted success for this talented historian.

A.N.

RABOČIJ KLASS BELORUSSII V BOR'BE ZA SOCIALIZM 1917-1932 (The Working-Class of Byelorussia in the Struggle for Socialism 1917-1932). N. Ja. Zabalejev. Minsk, 1967. 313 pages. (In Russian).

Despite its rather forbidding title, this book has considerable interest, and (if the statistics are correct) documentary value. It is in fact an historical survey of the Byelorussian industrial economy in the years immediately following the Revolution of 1917. Much of the political material Zabalejev provides will be tedious for the average reader, and formal telegrams and messages of greeting or congratulations exchanged within the framework of a trades union, or a political party, are generally lacking in human interest and social significance. In his description of the estab-

lishment and growth of individual factories, or indeed whole industries in Byelorussia, the author gives an interesting picture of an aspect of social history which writers in the West have tended to neglect. The work is of course written entirely from the official viewpoint, and omits any reference to the dissident movements which existed within the Byelorussian working-class under the Soviets. As such, its reliability as a work of reference may be questionable.

G.P.

BELORUSSIIJA, in series 'Sovetskij Sojuz'. K. I. Lukašev (ed.). Mysl', Moscow, 1967. 310 pages. Plates, photographs, maps and tables. Bibliography. Geographical index. (In Russian).

This volume, written by a group of authors under the general editorship of K. I. Lukašev, is one of an eventual series of 22 volumes, which is intended to form a geographical description of the whole of the U.S.S.R. Comparison has been made in Soviet reviews with the unfinished series 'Rossija', which appeared under the editorship of P. P. Semonov Tjan-Sanskij in the opening years of this century. However the nature and readership of the two series is clearly intended to be very different. If the 'Rossija' volumes were characterized by wealth of detail and considerable scholarship, the 'Sovetskij Sojuz' series is essentially introductory and popular. The text is in two main sec-

tions. The first surveys the Byelorussian S.S.R. as a whole, its physical and economic geography with two brief chapters on 'Pages from History' and 'Population and Culture.' The second section consists of regional descriptions. For this purpose the Republic is divided into five provinces: the Lake Region, Central Byelorussia, the Nioman Region, Eastern and Southern Byelorussia. The volume ends with a useful set of appendices. These include statistical data on physical features, climate, population and economic production, lists of fauna and flora of Byelorussia, some notes on the origin of certain place-names and a brief bibliography.

The overwhelming impression given

by the text is one of superficiality. Almost everything is dealt with extremely briefly. The best part in terms of thoroughness and accuracy is probably the section on physical conditions, the worst undoubtedly the eight, quite appallingly inadequate pages devoted to history. The chapters dealing with industry, agriculture and transport are essentially propagandist, in the sense that they refer only to the many positive achievements of the Soviet period and omit any consideration of problems or negative aspects of the economy. One would not gather from this book that Byelorussia in many social and economic respects lags well behind most of the other

Union Republics. The text is a rather rosy-tinted introduction for the general reader; it has nothing to offer the specialist. This is emphasized in the woefully brief bibliography of only 49 items. Appropriately to this general appeal, the volume is most attractively presented. The quality of paper and printing is high by Soviet standards and the book is very well illustrated. In addition to many, often rather small, black and white photographs, there are a number of colour plates and maps. It is not unfair to compare the work with a meringue — attractive to look at, but not much to bite on inside.

R.F.

TVORČAJE PABRACIMSTVA. Adam

Maldzis. Navuka i Technika, Minsk, 1966. 160 pages.

Adam Maldzis's new book deals with Byelorussian-Polish literary relations in the nineteenth century, and makes a very real contribution to knowledge of the cultural history of this important period which will be appreciated by layman and scholar alike. Much of this talented critic's material is new and all of it well documented, although the abundant footnotes are hardly a substitute for an index, even in so short a work. In actual fact the book's small dimensions are deceptive, for it contains more 'meat' than any of its predecessors in this much-abused *genre*. There is little of the verbiage and irrelevant or hypothetic discursiveness that has for so long cast a blight on literary criticism in Byelorussia and, to a lesser extent, in the Soviet Union as a whole. Maldzis shows a perhaps surprising amount of respect for the 'established wisdom' of Byelorussian scholarship and yet, on the other hand, he is often consciously polemical in his attempts to rehabilitate such unjustly condemned writers as Barščeŭski, Rypiński, Čačot, Kirkor and Jelski — to name but a few, — who have long languished under a pall of official disfavour.

In its thoroughness and originality *Tvorčaje pabracimstva* is above reproach. The influence of Polish literature on Byelorussian writers is considered alongside the question of Byelorussian influences on Polish literature, and the cultural background of the times is well filled in with, to

take only one example, fully documented lists of Polish books published in the Byelorussian territories at various times during the nineteenth century. Maldzis implicitly rejects the modern concept of language as the only arbiter of a man's literary nationality and is thus prepared to consider the Polish alongside the Byelorussian works of multilingual writers like Dunin-Marcinkievič; indeed, he even embraces in his view of Byelorussian literature some writers, like Syrokomla and Mickiewicz, who rarely or even never wrote in this language at all. This certainly widens the scope of the study and is often helpful in throwing extra light on linguistically Byelorussian works.

Another traditional broadening factor, here relatively sophisticated, is the consideration of political alongside literary events: in the section on Kastaŭ Kalinoŭski one welcomes some new information on the peasants' attitude to the patriot's campaign, but elsewhere tortuous explanations of Dunin-Marcinkievič's 'inner conflicts' make painful reading, particularly in a work of such generally high scholarship.

The chapter on Dunin-Marcinkievič (pp. 85-123) is, on the whole, extremely interesting and informative although the conventional wisdom of 'critical realism' creeps in at one point. This work, together with Sciapan Hrabčykaŭ's valuable (but still, amazingly, unpublished) study of the writer's

vocabulary and Ściapan Majchrovič's rather tendentious monograph (*V. Dunin-Marcinkievič*, Minsk, 1955) make Dunin-Marcinkievič the most thoroughly studied of all the Byelorussian writers of the nineteenth century.

*Tvorčaje pabracimstva* is one of the best books on modern Byelorussian literature to have appeared for a very long time and bodes well for the future of this neglected subject.

A. B. McM.

BIELARUSKAJA PADŠAVIECKAJA LITARATURA PIERŠAJ PAŁAVINY 60-YCH HADOŪ. Stanisłaŭ Stankievič. Bielaruski Instytut Navuki i Mastactva, New York — Munich, 1967. 169 pages.

Extremely valuable as a full and detailed description of the prose, plays and poetry of a multitude of contemporary writers, this book, unfortunately, bears out the implications of its title and reveals deliberate tendentiousness in its selection and quotation of examples. For an example see pp. 133-4 where the meaning of a passage from Barys Sačanka's *Ziamla prodkaŭ* is materially altered by the deliberate omission of lines apparently distasteful to the author. This is no less to be condemned than the distortion of facts in order to accord with some inflexible official line of policy; indeed, it is even more reprehensible, for this

author is without the excuse of hidden persuasion. Also disturbing to the serious student are the orthographical changes Stankievič permits himself to make in order that the quotations may conform to the language of the commentary; this is particularly unfortunate here, in view of the fact that the language used by the author is far from the literary norm in both spelling and vocabulary. In spite of this, however, the book does represent a considerable body of detailed research and is easily the fullest bibliographical review of contemporary Byelorussian literature available at the present time.

A. B. McM.

BIELARUSKAJA NARODNAJA VUSNA-PAETYČNAJA TVORČAŚĆ (Byelorussian Oral Folk-poetry). Ed. P. Hlebka, I. Hutaraŭ and M. Hrynblat. Minsk, 1967. 392 pages.

This is a collection of papers published by the Institute of Arts, Ethnography and Folklore of the Byelorussian Academy of Sciences, and deals with the history of Byelorussian folklore from the earliest times to the present day. It will come as no surprise to those familiar with works of this kind to find that more than half the book concerns material dating from the beginning of the present century.

It is extremely difficult to deal objectively with Soviet publications on folklore, since general concepts of what constitutes genuine folk traditions differ so widely from those which prevail in the Soviet Union. "Folklore", writes Hutaraŭ, "is one of the forms of working class social consciousness. It is an inalienable part of its spiritual culture, a keen-edged weapon in the struggle for its social and national interests" (p. 7).

On such a definition, it is possible to treat as folklore any party slogan,

political jingle or doggerel verse with a social content, and to exclude genuinely popular spiritual hymnody or religious verse. If Hlebka and his collaborators have adopted a broad attitude to songs of social protest (at least from an age when protest was possible), and manufactured political poetry, they have also provided a few interesting but all too brief details of popular carols and hymns. Some of the political rhymes are of such a nature, that they can only be savoured in their original and pristine state, unadorned by comment:

У касмічную ракету  
Чалавек савецкі сеў.  
Слава партыі, Саветам  
Мы спяваем шчыра ўсе.

Не паклонімся мы богу,  
Зубы выб'ем сатане,  
І праклалі мы дарогу,  
Серп і молат на Луне.

Ленін, Ленін, а мы ўсё знаём,  
 Ды і хто таго не знаў,  
 Што Ільч сваёй рукою  
 Усю зямлю нам передаў.

Сядзіць Гітлер на асіне,  
 Богу моліцца балван:  
 »Памажыце, ўсе святыя,  
 Пакарыць мне партызан!«

Рэлігійныя абрады  
 Забываюцца навек,  
 Без папоўскага абману  
 Жыве вольны чалавек.

These creations are frequently recorded in a most painstaking manner, the ethnographer carefully noting the region and village in which the song was heard. Not unpredictably there it a rich harvest of folkpoems on the destiny and work of Lenin (pp. 310-324), on collectivisation of farmland (pp. 293 ff) and on the benefits of atheism (pp. 368-376), though the maliciously-minded will note the absence, temporarily at least, of any examples from the vast Stalin-cycle of folklore. If one is tempted to tax the reviewer with levity, let it be recalled that this is a work published apparently in all seriousness, by an Institute which purports to form part of a National Academy of Sciences. In their approach to early examples of folkpoems the editors have displayed a similar lack of discernment. Much material of a dubious nature has been dealt with in this treatise as if its authenticity were beyond dispute. Reference must be made in this connexion to a section entitled "The Heroic and Historical Epos" by Hrynblat (pp. 104-124). This includes examples of what is alleged to be folk-poetry from the 17th and 18th centuries, which tend to show popular resistance by the Byelorussian peasantry to the feudal domination of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. To what extent there was in fact any resistance, and against whom it was direct-

ed, has yet to be established. What is certain is that verses such as the now famous:

Ой, колы б, колы  
 Москалі прышлы,  
 Нашы сродныя,  
 Веры адныя!

ог:

Маць Расея, маць Расея,  
 Маць Расейская зямля!

are not, and never have been, genuine folklore. As Karski writes: "These primitive, and sometimes even senseless doggerel verses are not composed by the people." (Je. Karskij, *Belorusy*, III, 1, p. 31).

Jančuk is even more explicit: "Seminaricians, wandering *dziaki*, army stores clerks and suchlike people, sometimes even the clergy, this is the *milieu* in which in former times such pseudo-folk literature was cultivated, and which both by its language and style, is foreign to folk poetry." (N. Jančuk, »0 мнимонародных беларускіх песнях історычнага і міфалогічнага зместа», *Сборнік Хар'к. іст. філал. абш.*, XVIII, pp. 293-294). But even if it be allowed that these polemical creations reflect the attitudes of a section of the Byelorussian community at that time — which is probably the case, the editors of *Bielaruskaja Narodnaja Tvorčasć* might have given some space to discuss the implication of such radically anti-Russian verse as:

"Oj tak, takto moji ludzie  
 Z Maskalom dobra nie budzie."

Эй, скажыце, добры людзі  
 Што ужо на сьвеце будзе?  
 Чы-то так Бог судзіў з намі  
 Прапасць на век маскалямі?

The editors have not placed their work on a sufficiently comprehensive basis to give it any real value other than as a treatise of verse socialist in content, but dubious in origin.

G.P.

PYTAŃNI BIELARUSKAJ ETNAHRAFII, FALKLARYSTYKI I TAPANIMIKI (Problems of Byelorussian Ethnography, Folklore and Toponymics). Ed. V. Bandarčyk, M. Biryła and others, Minsk, 1967. 165 pages.

This is a collection of papers published by the Department of Ethnography of the Byelorussian section of the Geographical Society of the USSR, to mark the fiftieth anniversary of ethnographical research in Soviet Byelorussia. Valuable work was done in this field before the Revolution, particularly in the XIXth century, as V. Bandarczyk is at pains to explain in his introductory paper. He gives a good bibliography of works published over the last fifty years, including many articles which appeared in periodicals such as *Naš Kraj* and the *Proceedings* of the Academy of Sciences of the BSSR. Bandarczyk's concept of ethnography and folklore covers the propagation of scientific atheism (*sic*), and an abundance of very recent phenomena such as patriotic and political slogans and jingles dating from the last war, which would hardly rate as folklore in other countries. A. Duleba deals briefly with present-day family life and customs among Byelorussian kolkhoz workers, and Uł. Ivanou writes on ways and means of eliminating inequality between the sexes. U. Hurkou gives a report of an ethnographical expedition in the rural areas around Viciebsk and gives some not uninteresting details of the layout and architectural features of modern farm buildings. In an interesting, but somewhat polemical article, M. Hrynblat touches on the relatively unknown subject of religious folklore and traditions in Byelorussia. He gives some interesting notes on regional *Baha-hlašniki* or books of religious songs from Hrodna, Vilna, Żyrovicy and Połack, as well as on Byelorussian Christian and surnames. V. Bandarczyk

also surveys the ethnographical work of I. Serbaŭ, who specialised in the folklore and culture of Palešsie. E. Sabalenka deals with the social and family position of the Byelorussian peasantry, as depicted by the poet Jakub Kołas (1889-1956), and I. Hutaraŭ considers the evolution of working-class folklore during the industrial revolution. A. Fiadosik gives his views on some aspects of Byelorussian satirical folk-tales, and is more particularly concerned with anti-clerical themes. V. Skidin claims to trace some social motifs in traditional Byelorussian love-songs. Of considerably greater weight is I. Jaškin's treatment of the peculiarities of the folklore and dialect of the Slaŭharad region. Also of value is V. Lemciuhova's study of topographical nomenclature using the forms *-ščyna*, *-aüşčyna*, and *-ouščyna*. In the light of past official attitudes to the work of Dr. Stankievič on the forms of Byelorussian Christian and surnames (cf. "Linhvistyčnyja eksersisy Stasiulečki z Janulečkam", *Jak ni kruci*, Minsk 1966), it is interesting to find views similar to his being advanced by A. Ušcinovič in his study of men's names and their diminutive forms as they appear from Mediaeval and Renaissance documents. One is reminded of the official derision poured on the word *spadar* as a form of address; for years it was condemned as a fabricated neologism; it has now been shown that its use was relatively widespread and of some antiquity. Despite a goodly proportion of dubious material, *Pytaŭni* remains a useful little collection.

G.P.

Francišak Bahuševič, TVORY (Collected Works). Edited by S. Aleksandrovič. Minsk, 1967. 228 pages.

This is the most complete edition to date of the works of Francišak Bahuševič (1840-1900), who is considered to be the best Byelorussian poet of the 19th century. The main part consists of the poems which were published during the life-time of the author in his books *Dudka bielaruskaja* (Cracow 1891) and *Smyk bielaruski* (Poznań 1894). There are also some poems which were not published till long after Bahuševič's death, as well as 9 poems written by him in Polish. The

latter are published in a Byelorussian translation, but it would have been more interesting if the editor had also included the original texts.

The prose section consists of four short stories, among which *Tralalonačka* is of particular interest. It was first published in 1892 in Cracow, but practically nothing was known of it till 1960, when it was rediscovered by S. Aleksandrovič who reprinted it in *Połymia*.

There is a selection (in Byelorussian translation) of Bahuševič's articles in the Polish journal *Kraj*, written by him during the years 1885-1891, and also his correspondence with Jan Karłowicz, Eliza Orzeszkowa and some other persons. Apart from a few extracts in the book by H. Kisialoŭ who discovered it, the correspondence has never been published before.

As an appendix Aleksandrovič publishes some documents of the Russian censors regarding Bahuševič's books. In Bahuševič's time the printing of books in Byelorussian was forbidden by the Russian authorities. It was for this reason that his works had to be published abroad. In 1899 he made an attempt to publish some of his works legally in Byelorussia and presented to the censor in Vilna the manuscript of his "Byelorussian Stories by Maciej Buračok." The manuscript has not been found, but there is the letter of the censor to his superiors, dated 16th March 1899, in which he expresses his suspicions that Bahuševič's attempt to publish the book "hides a tendency to create, in addition to 'Little Russian' (i. e. Ukrainian — *A. N.*), also a 'Byelorussian' literature, and thus to destroy the literary and national unity, and consequently the political might, of the Russian nation." Permission to publish the book was refused.

The editor, S. Aleksandrovič, has written an excellent introduction and provided the book with copious notes. Unfortunately there are a few inaccuracies. In the general notes on *Dudka bielaruskaja* (p. 209) and *Smyk bielaruski* (p. 211) Aleksandrovič states that all the poems from those collections have been reprinted in the present edition. A comparison with the original edition of *Smyk bielaruski* (cf. *Smyk bielaruski Szymona Reuki z pad Barysowa*, Poznań 1894) shows that three poems have been omitted,

namely *Žydok* (p. 25 in the original edition), *Panskaje ihryszcze* (p. 32) written by Feliks Tapčeŭski, and *Atkaz Jurce na 'Panskaje ihryszcze'* (p. 34) which is Bahuševič's answer to Tapčeŭski's poem. Moreover, two stanzas from the poem *Pieśnia* (p. 17) are missing. There is also the poem *Niemiec* mentioned by Karski (cf. *Je. F. Karskij, Belorusy, Vol. 3, Part 3, Petrograd 1922, p. 201*), which was apparently printed in *Dudka bielaruskaja*, but which does not appear in the Aleksandrovič edition. Admittedly, all these poems are of no great value, and there might have been good reasons for omitting them. One must be careful, however, not to make inaccurate statements.

The short poem on p. 117 ("Kab ja moh napisac' toje, što u dumcy...") has no note. In fact it was written by Bahuševič on 20th July 1897 in the album of Stanisława Piatrovič at a time when he was the guest of the Piatrovič family in Kaunas. It was first published in the Journal *Kryvič* in 1923 (cf. K. Duš-Dušeŭski, "Aŭtohrاف Franciška Bahuševiča", *Kryvič*, 5, Kaunas, November 1923, p. 51.)

Despite the omissions and inaccuracies mentioned above, the present edition of the works of Francišak Bahuševič has many merits. It allows one to appreciate more fully than ever before the achievements of this man who in one of the most difficult periods in the history of his country was the first to proclaim openly: "Our language is as beautiful and as noble as any other language; it is sacred, because it was given to us by God, as to other good people." And not only did he proclaim this, but he also set out to demonstrate the beauty of the Byelorussian language by means of his fine poetry.

A.N.

#### ANTAŁOHIJA BIELARUSKAHA APAVIADAŃNIA (An Anthology of Byelorussian Short Stories). Minsk, 1967. 2 vols.

It is usual to consider *Tralalonačka* by F. Bahuševič, published in 1892, to be the first modern Byelorussian short story. The real history of this genre in Byelorussian literature, however, did not start till 1906 when the journals *Naša Dola*, and then *Naša Niva* began their publications.

After that date progress was rapid, and already before the First World War the Byelorussian short story had achieved a considerable success in the works of Ciotka, Jadvihin Š., Kandrat Lejka, Taurus, Maksim Harecki, and in particular Jakub Kofas and Žmitrok Biadula. The 1920s and 30s saw the

appearance of new talents, such as Michaś Łyńkoŭ, Vasil Kaval, Łukaš Kaluha, Janka Skryhan, Michaś Zarecki and Kuźma Čorny. The period after the Second World War has been considered as very propitious to the development of Byelorussian prose in general, and of the short story in particular. All leading modern prose writers have tried to write in this genre. As a result of this there are today several outstanding stories by Janka Bryl, Vasil Bykaŭ, Ivan Mielež, Ivan Navumienka, Raman Sabalenka, Mikola Łupsiakoŭ, Alaksiej Karpiuk, Ivan Ptašnikaŭ, Michaś Stralcoŭ, Barys Sačanka, Uładzimir Karatkievič, Viačasłaŭ Adamčyk, Ivan Čyhrynaŭ and many others. Some of the younger authors have made their names as short story writers *par excellence*. It is instructive to compare the works of some of the younger writers, which contain masterly portraits of human characters, with

the first attempts of the early authors, whose stories were often little more than descriptions of particular happenings or popular stories retold.

The progress of the Byelorussian short story is made particularly vivid when looking through the pages of *Antalohija bielaruskaha apaviadańnia*. Its compilers (1st Volume: S. Aleksandrovič and J. Skryhan; 2nd Volume: M. Łyńkoŭ and M. Stralcoŭ) have given much thought in selecting and presenting the best Byelorussian short stories of 76 authors from Francisak Bahuševič (1840-1900) to Michaś Stralcoŭ (b. 1937). A short introduction (a little too short perhaps) by the literary critic Aleś Adamovič and bibliographical and biographical notes on each author enhance the value of the publication.

The book is elegantly produced and tastefully illustrated with drawings by modern Byelorussian artists.

A.N.

BIELARUSKAJA DAKASTRYČNICKAJA PAEZIJA (Byelorussian Poetry of the pre-October Revolution Period). V. Barysienka (compiler). Instytut Litaratury AN BSSR, Minsk, 1967. 568 pages.

This is an anthology of Byelorussian poetry of the early 20th century up to the year 1917. It may be regarded as a companion volume to the *Bielaruskaja dakastryčnickaja proza* published two years previously. (Cf. *JBS*, Vol. 1, No. 3, p. 240.)

The book contains a selection from the works of 45 poets. Its real value lies in publishing some poems by writers such as Albert Paŭlovič, M. Aroł, Sary Ułas, Lavon Łobik, F. Čarnyševič, Haljaš Leučyk, Alfons Pietraškievič, I. Pilipaŭ and others who were quite well known in their time, but of whom practically nothing has been heard or written until recently in Soviet Byelorussia. In fact, with a few exceptions, the works of those authors have never been republished since their first appearance over fifty years ago. It is a pity that the compiler did not give more space to these poets instead of reprinting the well known and easily accessible poems by Bahuševič (the only 19th century poet included in the book), Ciotka, Kupala, Kołas, Bahdanovič and Biadula, which occupy more than two third of the whole book.

There is also an interesting selec-

tion of early works by Jan Žurba, Aleś Hurlo, Kanstancija Bujła, Uładzisiaŭ Haľubok and Čiška Hartny. The last two are better known for their prose works (Haľubok was also a playwright) and one tends to forget that they were also good poets. On the other hand the poetical attempts of another prose writer, Jadvihin Š., are little more than a literary curiosity. Another curiosity, which may be of some limited interest to a historian of Byelorussian literature, is I. Zn.ko, of whom nothing is known — not even his name, — and whose entire literary output consists of one rather indifferent poem published in *Naša Niva* in 1908. Others, such as Marka Chmurny, Mikita Čyščavik, Baŭtruk, Dzianis Vaľyniec, Hierasim B.ki, Dzied Dzianis, Mirko and V. Javar also fall into the same category.

Some poets were not included in the anthology, and their omission could hardly be due to an oversight. One of them is Aleś Harun (pseud. of Alaksandar Prušynski, 1887-1920), one of the most outstanding poets of his time. Maksim Bahdanovič spoke of him in 1913 in the following way: 'Among the poets of *Naša Niva* one

must mention first of all Aleś Harun, from whom our literature may expect much. Lightness and melodiousness of verse, its careful chiselling, new and graceful rhyming — all this confers an attractive quality on his poetry. In some of his works there is force and conciseness of expression. Most important, however, is the fact that A. Harun is unlike anybody else, he has not become anybody's 'echo.' This is the sure sign that our hopes in him are not vain.' (M. B. vič, *Za try hady. Kaladniaja pisanka*, Vilna, 1913). The first historians of Byelorussian literature, Ja. Karski and M. Harecki, also held high opinions of Harun's poetry, and each of them dedicated a separate chapter of their work to this poet. (Cf. Maksim Harecki, *Historyja bielaruskaje litary, 3rd ed.*, Vilna, 1924, pp. 186-193; Je. F. Karskij, *Belorusy*, Vol. 3, Part 3, Petrograd, 1922, pp. 352-357). It so happened, however, that Harun's political views were not such as to endear him to the powers that be in contemporary Byelorussia, and they seem unable to forget this even now, almost fifty years after the poet's death.

Another poet not included in the anthology is Andrej Ziaziula (pseudonym of the Catholic priest Alaksandar Astramovič, 1878-1921). His numerous poems were scattered in the columns of *Naša Niva* and *Bielarus* and a selection of them was even published in book form in 1914. He was not a great poet, yet his literary work was significant enough to merit inclusion in an anthology.

The notes at the end of the book are quite useful, but their fragmentary character (practically nothing is known of nearly half of the authors) shows how much remains to be done in the study of the beginnings of modern Byelorussian literature. In some cases the compiler could have done better. Thus in the note on M. Aroł (p. 553) he does not give the poet's real name — Piacielski — mentioned by both Harecki (*op. cit.*, p. 198) and Karski (*op. cit.*, p. 377). Of another poet, Edziuk Bujła, he states that nothing is known of him except that he perished in the First World War (p. 551). In fact most probably he is none other than the brother Edward of the poetess Kanstancyja Bujła who mentions him in her autobiography. (Cf. *Piaćdziesiąt cztery darohi*, Minsk, 1963, pp. 73-74). She even describes an amusing incident how he sent one of her poems to *Naša Niva*, having signed it with his own name. Thus Karski's supposition, that the poems published under the name of Edward Bujła might belong to Kanstancyja Bujła, may well be true. (Cf. Karskij, *op. cit.*, p. 382).

This book, like its predecessor on prose, is the first attempt to present Byelorussian literature of the early 20th century more fully than has been usually done till now. It is not a very successful attempt, but even in this form it may be useful to a student of Byelorussian literature, provided he can secure a copy — only 1500 copies of the book have been published.

A.N.

HISTORIQUE ET ETAT ACTUEL DE LA BIBLIOGRAPHIE BIÉLORUS-  
SIENNE. Eugene Smoršček. Bruxelles, 1966. 97 pages, (mimeograph).

The author gives some valuable references, and students of Byelorussian will find Dr. Smoršček's work of considerable use in their research. It is divided into two sections, the first of which consists of a historical conspectus of Byelorussian bibliographies before and since the Revolution; the second part deals with the present state of specialised Byelorussian bibliographies. It by no means prov-

ides a complete picture for, as the author himself admits, he has limited himself to the subjects of language, literature and history. It does however indicate a number of the libraries in which good sections on Byelorussian subjects exist, and provides an admirable *point de depart* for further research.

G.P.

BIELARUSKAJE MOVAZNAŪSTVA. BIBLIJAHRAFIČNY ŪKAZALNIK (1825-1965 HH.). L. M. Šakun (ed.). Minsk, 1967. 415 pages. 3514 numbered entries. Index.

This new bibliography is a great improvement on its predecessor, *Biblijahrafičny ŭkazalnik litaratury pa bielaruskamu movaznaŭstvu* (Minsk, 1960), and will be welcomed by the ever growing number of students and scholars taking a serious interest in one of the most philologically rewarding and unstudied of the Slavonic languages. It is to be regretted, however, that this otherwise complete work is limited to publications in Byelorussian, Russian and Ukrainian. Work published in other languages (even including Polish) is not so extensive as to have presented the compilers (A. D. Vasileŭskaja, M. A. Žydovič, Ja. M. Ramanovič and A. K. Jurevič) with a greatly magnified task, and yet its omission is a real

handicap, for it means the exclusion of some of the major studies in this field such as Šerech's *Problems in the Formation of Belorussian* (New York, 1953) or the two monographs of C. S. Stang.

Within its limited compass this bibliography lays out clearly and sensibly a good deal of rare and hitherto unassembled material. The subject grouping of entries is helpful rather than otherwise, particularly as there is a good index of authors' names and titles of collective works. The bibliography also contains references to any important reviews of the works cited. Altogether it is a necessary addition to the shelves of all Slavonic philologists.

A. B. McM.

'LATINO-RUSSKO-BELORUSSKIJ BOTANIČESKIJ SLOVAR' (Latin-Russian-Byelorussian Botanical Dictionary). A. I. Kiselevskij, Minsk, 1967, 160 pages.

The need for a botanical dictionary has been felt for a long time by all those who have had anything to do with the study of Byelorussian flora. The only work of this kind, compiled by Z. Vieras in 1924, has long since become a bibliographical rarity. Thus A. Kiselevskij has rendered a useful service by filling the gap.

The dictionary contains the names of all the plants found in Byelorussia (over 650 *genera*), which were described in the five volumes of *Flora BSSR* (Minsk 1949-59). The Byelorussian section is the richest and the most interesting, as the author, besides the official names, provides various popular names of plants from different regions of Byelorussia, including the Smalensk and Vilna regions which at the present time do not form part of the BSSR. Many of these names have been collected by Kiselevskij himself. This is perhaps the most precious part of the whole work, although by its very nature it is far from being complete.

The great majority of plant names, whether official or popular, are original Byelorussian words. The main exception to this are a group of recently introduced or rare plants

which were not formerly known in Byelorussia. Their names seem as a rule to be borrowed either from Russian or from russified Latin. Unfortunately these linguistic borrowings are not always limited to neologisms. In several cases perfectly good Byelorussian names have been replaced by their Russian equivalents for no apparent reason. Thus at the very beginning, on p. 7, the Byelorussian for *abies* is given as *pichta* — which is a Russian word — and not *jelnica* (Cf. M. Bajkoŭ i S. Niekraŭševič, *Bielarуска-rasijski slovník*, Minsk 1925, p. 100). Again, on p. 15, from the material collected by Kiselevskij himself, it is evident that *angelica* is known practically in all parts of Byelorussia as *dziahiel*. This is also the name given to this plant in the dictionary of Bajkoŭ and Niekraŭševič (cf. *op cit.*, p. 95). However its official name in Kiselevskij's dictionary is not *dziahiel*, but the Russian word *dudnik*. One could easily give a few dozen similar examples.

Among the works consulted Kiselevskij does not mention the 6th part of *Byelorussian Scientific Terminology* published by the Institute of Byelorussian Culture in 1924 and

dealing with botanical names. (Cf. *Bielaruskaja navukovaja terminologija*, vyp. 6: *Batanika ahulnaja i specyjalnaja*, Minsk 1924).

These are however minor defects, and they in no way diminish the

merits of this valuable work which will undoubtedly prove of considerable interest to biologists and philologists.

L.H.

OUTLINE OF BIELORUSSIAN MORPHOLOGY. Charles E. Bidwell. International Dimensions Program. University of Pittsburgh, 1967. 48 pages.

Works on Byelorussian in non-Slavonic languages are so rare as to automatically earn a cautious welcome, but professor Bidwell's book, which grew out of a seminar in 'Slavic descriptive linguistics', is not for the general reader. Indeed, even the trained philologist will find it difficult to make his way through the maze of complicated and sometimes contradictory symbols, to say nothing of the 'quasi-phonemic' transcription of Byelorussian 'isolated morphological words.' The work is in duplicated typed copies, apparently the work of several hands: the errors, particularly disastrous in a study where symbols and conventions play such a large part, are too frequent to list.

The author, who has had the advantage of more up-to-date reference books, not to mention assistance from 'the Most Reverend Professor' Uladislau Ryży-Ryski, refers critically to de Bray's section in *Guide to the Slavonic Languages*, but the letter's pioneering sketch is still the best study in English eighteen years after it was published, even though (or, perhaps, because) it is not 'structurally orientated.'

Professor Bidwell has also published a companion *Outline of Ukrainian Morphology* (University of Pittsburgh, 1967-68, 55 pages) based on an earlier series of seminars.

A. B. McM.

NAŠA RODNAJA MOVA (Our Native Language). A. Kryvicki. 2nd edition. Minsk, 1967. 184 pages.

Philology is generally considered to be a somewhat dry subject, hardly suited to popular treatment. A. Kryvicki has succeeded in demonstrating that this need not necessarily be the case. His book, first published in 1964, has now appeared in a second, enlarged and much improved edition.

In the introduction the author speaks of the native word which 'enters our life from the lips of our mother. In the quiet murmuring of a mother's lullaby songs, in her gentle caresses, we begin to distinguish its characteristic forms and sounds' (p. 3). And he draws the following conclusion: 'The native word is not only the most important means of our spiritual development and the treasury of a nation's history. By introducing us to the life and thoughts of other men, it becomes a constant and indispensable means of communication with our neighbours, it unites us into one people, one nation. It is the clearest and most distinctive mark of a person's belonging to a given nation.

In the words of F. Bahuševič, "People are recognized by their speech or by their dress... the speech, the language is the dress of the soul." (p. 7).

The first chapter (pp. 8-40) is entitled *Krychu historyi* (A Little History). The author, after a short survey of the various linguistic groups (pp. 8-18) and in particular of the East Slavonic group of languages — namely Byelorussian, Russian and Ukrainian, — makes a short sketch of the history of the development of the Byelorussian language from its beginning until the end of the 18th century. This is perhaps the weakest part of the whole book. According to Kryvicki, up to the 9th century each of the various East Slavonic tribes spoke its own dialect. Then in the 9-10th centuries there appeared the powerful state with its centre in Kiev, comprising all East Slavonic lands. It is then that 'the local dialects fell under the influence of the language of Kiev and its neighbouring region. Thus the common East Slavonic

language was formed, which was the mother of the present-day East Slavonic languages' (p. 20). However no sooner was this accomplished than a process of disintegration set in, following the decadence of the Kievan state and its breaking up into smaller political units. Thus during the 12-13th centuries 'linguistic development was confined within the boundaries of the single small territories of the feudal states. The linguistic unity of the East Slavs was ended' (p. 22).

This is an ingenious theory which leaves one sceptical however. National literary languages do not spring up overnight, like mushrooms after rain, in order only to disappear on the next day. They are the result of a prolonged common cultural and political development. It may be recalled that in Chaucer's England there was still no standard literary English, but a number of dialects, each having its own literature. It therefore seems somewhat improbable that the East Slavs could have achieved linguistic unity at such an early period of their history, and over a huge territory populated by illiterate tribes. For it must be remembered that literacy came to the East Slavs only at the end of the 10th century, together with Christianity. It is for this reason that the concept of a common East Slav language must be examined with great caution, especially since the early East Slav written documents have come down to us, for the most part, not in their original form, but in late 14-15th century copies. Similar caution should be exercised with regard to the statement that the old Kievan state comprised all East Slavonic lands.

In the section dealing with the 13-18th centuries (pp. 25-40) Kryvicki persists in referring to the Byelorussian language as 'West Russian' a term invented in the 19th century by certain Russian scholars who denied the very existence of Byelorussian and considered it to be a Russian dialect.

The second chapter of the book (pp. 41-73) *Na ślachu da roŭnasci* (On the Way to Equality) is concerned mainly with Byelorussian dialects, and here

the author is on more familiar ground. First he considers the group of north-eastern dialects (pp. 49-61) which occupy the territories of the Mahilou and Viciebsk regions and extend westwards as far as Minsk. The author gives a description of their main characteristics, such as dissimilative *akannie*, soft *r*, double consonantal endings in certain neuter nouns etc., illustrating it throughout with many concrete examples. He then passes on to the important group of south-western dialects (pp. 61-73) which are the basis of modern literary Byelorussian, because they were 'the mother tongue of Jakub Kolas and Janka Kupała, Kuźma Corny, Kandrat Krapiva, Ciška Hartny, Michaś Čarot and many other writers and Byelorussian men of culture' (p. 61). Here again Kryvicki explains in great detail such characteristic traits of this group as non-dissimilative *akannie*, the seven-vowel system (as distinct from the five-vowel system of the north-east) and so on. He gives special consideration to the dialects of Palešsie, which display many peculiar traits not found in any other part of Byelorussia.

The last chapter (pp. 74-178) *Roŭnaja starod roŭnych* (An Equal among Equals) is perhaps the most fascinating of all three. It deals with various aspects of modern Byelorussian. There is a very interesting section on the relationship between the literary language and the dialects, and on the influence of the north-eastern 'periphery' on the stabilisation and clarification of certain grammatical forms and on the vocabulary of modern literary Byelorussian (pp. 88-104). This is followed by sections on the Byelorussian national lexicon (pp. 104-125), word formation (pp. 125-149) and finally on phonetics and spelling (pp. 149-178).

The author has a rare gift for clear exposition of even the most complicated problems, and his obvious enthusiasm for his subject is infectious.

The book provides a very good introduction to a more serious study of the Byelorussian language.

A.N.

RODNAJE SŁOVA (The Native Word). F. Jankoŭski. Minsk, 1967, 92 pages.

What is the correct form of the imperative of the verb *jeści* (to eat): is it *jež* or *ješ*?

Why is it that whenever one sees in print the word *spachapicca* (to recollect), one wants to strike it out and put *schamianucca* in its place?

How can you explain that the nouns *kamień* (stone), *korań* (root), *popiel* (ashes), when declined, have no fleeting vowels?

The reader will find the answers to these and many other questions in the book *Rodnaje słowa* by F. Jankoŭski. The author is the Dean of the Faculty of Byelorussian Language at the Pedagogical Institute in Minsk and an authority on Byelorussian idioms. His book may well bear the subtitle 'Modern Byelorussian Usage', and it is evident that in writing it the author had the needs of his students very much in mind.

The first chapter, called *Bielaruskaja frazealohija* (Byelorussian Phraseology), is concerned with Byelorussian idioms, their uses and abuses, and has a section on the use of idioms in translation from one language into another, with special reference to translation

from Russian into Byelorussian and vice versa.

In the second chapter, entitled *Słowa i jaho ŭzyvańnie* (The Word and its Uses), the author deals with the choice of appropriate words for specific purposes. The chapter has sections on colloquial words, synonyms, compound words, lexical borrowings and diction.

The treatment of the subject matter of the third chapter, *Bielaruskaja mova, slavianskija movy* (Byelorussian and the Slavonic Languages), is completely practical. There is a particularly good section in which the phonetical, grammatical and syntactical differences between Byelorussian and Russian are discussed in detail.

Finally, in the last chapter, the author answers questions on the use of certain words and their spelling, which present particular difficulties.

The book abounds in practical examples taken from the works of Byelorussian writers and from folklore.

It is a small book, rich in information, which will be appreciated by every student of the Byelorussian language.

A.N.

PLATON: VYBRANYJA DYJALOHI (Plato: Selected Dialogues). Tr. Jan Piatroŭski. Syracuse, N. Y., 1967. 209 pages.

In the relatively short space of time which has elapsed since the re-emergence of Byelorussian as a national literary language at the beginning of the present century, there has been a dearth of translations from the great classical works of antiquity. It is therefore an encouraging sign to find Pastor Piatroŭski venturing into this neglected field with his translations of Plato's *Defence of Socrates*, *Krito* and *Phaidon*. In an explanatory fore-

word the translator gives details of the lives and work of Plato and Socrates, and a brief outline of their philosophy. The translation is proficient, and the style is generally speaking good. Its appearance is all the more welcome, since virtually nothing has been done in this field by Byelorussian classicists in the Soviet Union.

G.P.

REVIEWS OF PERIODICALS

BIELARUS (The Byelorussian), New York, 1967.

The Journal contains various items of news which are of interest to Byelorussians living overseas, in particular in the United States of America and in Canada. There are some articles having a wider appeal, such as a commemoration of the 450th anniversary of Byelorussian printing (117/1). M. Kulikovič, a distinguished modern composer, pays tribute to the art of a noted singer Barbara Vieržbałovič (118/3) and St. Stankievič analyses recent trends in the writings of the non-conformist Soviet author Vasil Bykaŭ (119/2-3, 5). Jurka Vičbič gives an interesting historical note on the city of Viciebsk (121/3), whilst Archbishop Vasil Tamašcyk considers the significance of the life and work of St. Euphrosyne of Połack (122/11). There are informative notes commemorating the deaths of the disting-

uished poet Janka Kupała (1882-1942), (123-124/1), and an outstanding figure in the cultural field in pre-war Vilna, Fr. Adam Stankievič (1891-195?) (125/5). The Byelorussian Institute of Arts and Sciences in the West takes issue with Soviet historiographers in reaffirming their position over the name of Francis Skaryna, the Byelorussian humanist of the Renaissance (126/2). Z. Stankievič gives an interesting account of her visits to the Byelorussian settlements in Western Europe (126/6; 127/5), whereas Uł. D. reports on a concert given in honour of the composer Mikola Kulikovič (127/3). The Journal also gives examples of the poetry of the younger generation of Soviet poets, including Baradulin, Yiarcinski (123-124/6-7), Šipakoŭ and Švirka (128/6-7).

BOŻYM SLACHAM (On God's Highway), London, 1967.

Fr. Hermanovič provides translations into modern Byelorussian verse of the canons of St Cyril of Turaŭ (100/17-19). There is an interesting but somewhat sketchy outline of the history of coinage in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania by H. Pichura (101/6-10). Dr. Č(eslaus) Š(ipovič) gives a summary of the life of Francis Skaryna and his importance as a translator of the Bible (103/1-3; 104/1-7), and some more of Skaryna's engravings are provided in reproduction (101/11;

102/12). The question of the literary work of Łaŭryn Zizani, the 16th century author of a Slavonic Grammar and *Lexis* is considered by Fr. A. Nadson in a most interesting article. As an appendix to his study, the author reproduces the relatively little-known text of Zizani's *Tolkovanije* or commentary on the Lord's Prayer, which is a fine example of Renaissance spiritual writing in Byelorussia (102/3-8).

ROCZNIK BIAŁOSTOCKI (The Białystok Yearbook — Vol. VII). Białystok, 1967. (In Polish.)

Byelorussian culture is not generally well represented in this publication, which specialises in a region where the rural areas are predominantly Byelorussian. There are, however, a few articles of limited interest, which touch upon the culture of this ethnic group. A. Bergman deals with the history of the Communist Party of Western Byelorussia during the years 1924-1928 (33-72). A. Ryszkiewicz contributes a valuable biographical study of the gifted late-Baroque painter Antoni Hrušcecki, a monk in the Basilian convent of Supraśl (105-131).

T. Lankammer evaluates the contents of J. Textor's map of *Nowe Prusy Wschodnie* or Neu-Ostpreussen (1795-1800) which cover part of the province of Padlaśsie (181-206). There is some interesting material of a social and economic character in Zbigniew Klein's study of the circumstances surrounding the inauguration of the railway line from Warsaw through Białystok to St. Petersburg in the latter years of the XIXth century (207-220). Marian Pokropek provides valuable details of the evolution of farming implements from wood to

metal in Padlašsie during the XIXth and early XXth centuries. (121-260) In the chronicle, Barys Nikiciuk and Viktar Rudčyk commemorate the

fortieth anniversary of the establishment of the Byelorussian Hramada (338-340).

MAŁADOŚĆ (Youth). A monthly. Minsk, 1967.

Two novels attract one's attention in this year's *Maladość*. One is *Viecier u sosnach* (The Wind in the Pine Trees; Nos. 4, 6; 5, 17; 6, 17) by Ivan Navumienka. It is a continuation of the author's first novel, *Sasna pry darozie* (The Pine Tree by the Road) which was published in *Maladość* in 1962 and which at once established Navumienka's name as one of the foremost contemporary Byelorussian writers. It is the story of a group of teenage boys and girls in a Byelorussian provincial town, caught unawares by the events of the war and seeing their familiar world suddenly crumbling under the onslaught of the German forces. With great skill and knowledge of adolescent psychology Navumienka describes how his heroes, after recovering from the initial shock, slowly try to find their bearings in a new situation. The reader rediscovers them all in *Viecier u sosnach*, but here the author places them in a much wider context in his attempt to show the growing popular active resistance against the German occupying forces. In the process of achieving this the novel loses something of the freshness and directness which was such an attractive feature of its predecessor. Still it must be considered as a fair success by a talented writer.

One has learnt to expect something unusual from Uładzimir Karatkievič. In this respect his latest novel, *Cezienija* (Chesenia, a variety of Siberian willow; 2, 11 & 3, 60) lives up to expectations. The hero is a brilliant young Byelorussian scientist who describes himself as "little better than a computer" and who, when threatened by a nervous breakdown brought about by arid work, escapes to the virgin forests of Eastern Siberia in an attempt to save his sanity. There he meets a young girl naturalist who proves to be a descendant of a Byelorussian deported to Siberia for taking part in the anti-Russian uprising in 1863. The memory of the "great rebellion" is still alive in their family. It is the consequences of this encounter

that form the main theme of the novel. Karatkievič has called his work "a poem", and the reader is, from the first page, struck by the appropriateness of this description.

Other prose works include the "lyrical notes" *Zmienia soniečnych promniaŭ* (A Handful of Sunbeams; 1, 30 & 8, 7) by Janka Bryl and short stories by V. Adamčyk, A. Masarenka, K. Piščykava, A. Savicki and others. Special mention must be made of the story *Meha-Buna* (1, 63) by Uł. Šycik — for the moment the only Byelorussian Science-Fiction writer.

The poetry section contains new works by R. Baradulin, N. Hilevič, V. Zujonak, Volha Ipatava, P. Makal, S. Paniznik, Uł. Paułaŭ, Ju. Švirka, R. Siemaškiewič, Uł. Skarynkin, A. Stavier, R. Tarmoła, Aŭhiŭnia Janiščyc and others.

Alaksiej Hardzicki publishes his interviews with the poet and playwright Vasil Vitka (3,131) and the novelist Alaksiej Kułakoŭski (4, 123). Mikoła Bazarevič publishes some unknown letters by Jakub Kołas from the years 1936 (2, 141). There is an interesting article by Ryhor Siemaškiewič entitled *Zahlanie sonca i ŭ naša akonca* (The Sun Will Also Shine in at Our Window; 8, 104) about the Byelorussian publishing organisation of the same name which flourished in Petersburg in the years 1906-1914. Finally Ivan Ralko contributes an article on *Šeŭčienka i Kupała* (Ševčenko and Kupała; 7, 149) with the subtitle: *At the sources of Byelorussian and Ukrainian accentual verse*. In it the author dispels the commonly held view that accentual, or tonic, verse (i. e. the verse with equal number of stresses in the line, interspersed with any number of unstressed syllables) was introduced into Byelorussian poetry under the influence of the Russian poet Majakovskij. Ralko has succeeded in demonstrating that accentual verse was used a long time before by Janka Kupała, who was influenced by certain forms of Byelorussian folklore poetry. In the case of Ukrainian poetry, the origins

of the accentual verse go still further back to Ševčenko himself.

There are many articles on theatre, art, sport etc. The journal is profusely

illustrated with photographs and reproductions of works by contemporary Byelorussian artists.

POLYMYIA (The Flame). A monthly journal of the Union of Byelorussian Soviet Writers. Minsk, 1967.

The most remarkable of all prose works published in this year's *Polymia* is the novel *Tartak* (The Sawmill; 12, 6) by Ivan Ptašnikau. It is a war novel with a difference. The heroes are inhabitants of a village lost in the deep forests of central Byelorussia. Its geographical situation makes the village an ideal hiding place for the guerillas who convert it into their more or less permanent base. However, the Germans organise a punitive expedition. The guerillas retreat into forest, leaving the villagers to pay the penalty 'for helping the partisans.' In a last desperate bid to save their lives and those of their children, the villagers collect a certain amount of grain, and a convoy of six horse carts sets off to the nearest town centre to deliver grain to the German authorities. It is the history of this tragic convoy that is the main theme of the novel. All of them, except one, die having stumbled into a battle between the Germans and the guerillas. Previously they had been destined to see smoke rising over their native village, indicating that the Germans had not kept their word and had burned the village, killing all the inhabitants. The sole survivor of the convoy, a small boy, later returns to the village to find nothing but smouldering ashes and desolation. It is a fine novel by an author who through his previous work has established himself as one of the foremost writers of the younger generation.

Among other prose works one should mention *Paharelcy* (The Fire Victims) by V. Adamčyk and stories by J. Bryl, A. Naŭrocki, M. Rakitny and others.

More than 50 poets, old and young, published their new works in this year's *Polymia*. Among them are R. Baradulin, A. Bialevič, L. Hienijuš, N. Hilevič, Uł. Duboŭka, K. Kirejenka, A. Naŭrocki, A. Pysin, Ju. Švirka, J. Sipakoŭ, M. Tank and others.

The literary historian Sciapan Aleksandrovič in the article *Puciaviny rodnaha slova* (The Ways of the

Native Word; 8, 208) writes about the history of Byelorussian publishing organisations during the years 1906-1914, and in particular about the well-known organization *Zahlanie sonca i ŭ naša akonca* (The Sun Will Also Shine in at Our Window) which flourished at that time in Petersburg. His second article *Raskazvajuć archivy* (The Archives Tell Their Story; 5, 204) is concerned with the newspaper *Naša Dola* which appeared for a short time in 1906. Finally in *Ad harbara da staršyni uradu* (From Tanner to Prime Minister; 9, 228) Aleksandrovič writes about his countryman Ciška Hartny (they both come from the town of Kapyl), a well known poet, writer and politician, who became the first Prime Minister of the Byelorussian Soviet Republic. Ryhor Siemaškievič in his *Kupała i Epimach-Šypila* (7, 220) writes about the relationship between the poet and Prof. B. Epimach-Šypila, especially during the years 1909-1913, when Kupała lived in Petersburg in the latter's house. At that time Epimach-Šypila was Deputy Chief Librarian at Petersburg University and professor of Classics at the Catholic Academy there. He was the moving spirit behind the national movement among the Byelorussian students in that city and had a beneficial influence on the development of Kupała's talent. The personal reminiscences by Ja. Sušynski in his *Kupała u Pieciarburzie* (Kupała in Petersburg; 3, 186) are an excellent complement to the article by Siemaškievič. I. Ralko in *Staronka teoryi bielaruskaha vierša* (A Page on the Theory of Byelorussian Verse; 6, 219) makes a study of Kupała's poems from the point of view of construction, paying particular attention to the rhythm. He came to the interesting conclusion that it was Kupała who first introduced 'accentual', or tonic, verse into Byelorussian poetry. The other conclusion he draws is that two such varied talents as Kupała and Bahdanovič, in their search for new poetical forms, arrived at very

similar results quite independently of one another. Finally, to conclude the Kupala cycle, I. Navumienka in *Laŭkoŭskija vieršy* (The Poems of the Laŭki Period; 4, 198) writes about the poems written by Kupala in summer 1935, while spending his summer holidays in the village of Laŭki. Another great poet and writer, Jakub Kołas, is the subject of reminiscences by the literary critic Ju. Pšyrkoŭ in *Nieza-byŭnyja sestrečy* (Unforgettable Encounters; 6, 200). Pšyrkoŭ was one of the first scholars to open up new vistas in the study of Kołas's works, often misunderstood by early Soviet critics. He knew Kołas personally and his reminiscences, especially the reports of conversations, are of particular interest, as the following extract shows:

— “What served as an example for your *Tales of Life*, the works of which authors?

— The critics know better than me — Kołas answered with a smile. — They always insist that I was following in the footsteps of Krylov, Saltykov-Ščedrin and Gorkij. In fact I have never followed in the footsteps of anybody, but wrote as I thought. My tales bear no similarity whatsoever to the tales of Ščedrin or Gorkij. If you want to look for models, then you must turn first of all to Byelorussian folklore. I learnt from the people how to formulate my thoughts.

Then, after a moment's reflection he continued:

— No doubt you want to know about literary parallels. Then I must admit that in my youth I fell under the spell of the literature of Balkan peoples. Something similar I found in the works of a minor Bulgarian writer whose name I don't now remember” (ibid. p. 205).

The works of Vasil Bykaŭ are the subject of the article *Talent surovy i dobry* (A Severe and Good Talent; 8, 191) by V. Buran. S. Husak's *Pafas prauŭdy* (The Pathos of Truth; 9, 225 & 10, 207) has the sub-title *The Traditional and New in Byelorussian Prose* and deals for the most part with the works of Ivan Mielež. Finally R. Biazozkin contributes the article *Vyprabavaŭnie ahniom* (Trial by Fire; 5, 202) on the poetry of Pimien Pančanka.

Among the general articles on literary subjects one may mention *Styl*

*bielaruskaj narodnaj kazki* (The Style of the Byelorussian Folk Tale; 10, 217) by L. Bierah and *Svabodny vierš u bielaruskaj paezii* (The *Vers libre* in Byelorussian Poetry; 3, 212) by V. Rahojša.

H. Kołas in *Pa-svojmu, svajoju darohaj* (Their Own Style, Their Own Way; 9, 206) writes about the Jakub Kołas Theatre in Viciebsk. There are interesting articles by R. Nudžha *Bielaruskaja pieśnia za miažoj* (Byelorussian Song Abroad; 4, 215) and by M. Fuks *Maniuška ŭ Bielarusi* (Moniuszko in Byelorussia; 6, 231). Two articles by I. Sałamievič, *Dašledčyk Rečyckaha Palešsia* (The Explorer of the Rečyca Palessie; 1, 224) and *Zbiralnik zalatych skarbaŭ* (The Gatherer of Golden Treasures; 7, 227) deal with the life and works of the ethnographers C. Pietkiewicz and M. Fedorowski respectively.

Ja. Jucho in *Hramadskija i pravavyja pohlady Skaryny* (The Social and Legal Ideas of Skaryna; 6, 175) puts forward the interesting idea that Francis Skaryna may have been one of the editors of the First Lithuanian Statute of 1529. The archaeologist H. Stychaŭ contributes the article *Ab pachodžanni Minska* (On the Origin of Minsk; 5, 180) to mark the 900th anniversary of the Byelorussian capital.

Much attention is being paid to the problem of the Byelorussian language. M. Kłyška continues his *Matarjalny da sloŭnika sinonimaŭ i blizkaznačnych sloŭ* (Materials for the Dictionary of Synonyms and Words with Nearly the Same Meaning; Nos. 1, 3, 6, 8). P. Stečka and F. Jankoŭski each contribute an article with the same title *Narodnaja fraziealohija* (Folk Idioms; 2, 249 and 5, 244 resp.) and L. Padhajski writes on *Ličebnik u skazie* (The Numeral in a Clause; 1, 248). The articles by R. Škraba *Pra rabiat i jašče pra sioje-toje* (On Kids and Other Such Things; 3, 225) and by J. Rapanovič *Slova treba šukać* (One Should Look for a Word; 8, 237) show the growing concern caused by the corruption of the Byelorussian language by the infiltration of Russian words and expressions. The plight of the Byelorussian language in Byelorussia can be imagined from several examples given in the article *Blizkija sercu dumki* (The Thoughts Near to One's Heart; 9, 249) by J. Skryhan. Here are two of them: “Quite recently

I saw in a bookshop two schoolgirls who wanted to buy a copy of *The Bonfire Burns* by Siarhiej Hrachouški. One of the girls, impressed by the exterior appearance and illustrations, was already on her way to the cashier's desk, when the other stopped her: "Wait, it is in Byelorussian." "True", — the first answered. — "And I don't know Byelorussian." ...About two years ago I gave a talk at a meeting of the Young Communists League in Zdanovičy. I told them that we had our own history (don't they teach these things in the schools?), and described the Statute of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the first printer Skaryna and the revolutionary dem-

ocrat Kastuś Kalinoŭski. The Young Communists listened with great interest, then asked questions, took part in discussion, and I was surprised because there was something I could not understand: some of them were obviously glad of the opportunity to speak Byelorussian, others were unable to do so and felt ashamed and guilty. On our way home, in the car, their leader confessed that he never spoke Byelorussian and did not see any need to do this" (*ibid.* p. 250).

The high quality of the contents of this year's *Polymia* confirms its reputation as the foremost Byelorussian periodical publication.

VIEŠČI AKADEMII NAVUK BSSR — Seryja hramadskich navuk (Proceedings of the Academy of Sciences of the BSSR — Social Sciences Section). A quarterly. Minsk, 1967.

The year 1967 marks the 450th anniversary of Byelorussian printing which dates from the appearance of the Skaryna Psalter in 1517. It is to commemorate this event that A. Bułyka and A. Žuraŭski contributed the article on *The Language of the Old Byelorussian Printed Editions* (3, 23) in which they make a linguistic analysis of books printed by Skaryna, Budny and Ciapinski, as well as of various religious and polemical publications of the late 16th and early 17th centuries. I. Kramko, A. Jurevič and A. Janovič in their article *The Evolution of the Language in Byelorussian Printed Books of the Later period* (3, 41) deal with the language of books published in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The article by M. Bułachaŭ and M. Biryła, *The Evolution of the Byelorussian Language in the Soviet Period* (4, 103) may be said to conclude the series. A. Hryckievič in his *Byelorussia at the End of the 15th and the Beginning of the 16th Centuries* (3, 14) attempts to give a picture of the social and cultural

climate in that country during the lifetime of Skaryna.

Among other linguistic articles one should mention two valuable studies by A. Hruco on compound-dependent and conditional sentences (1, 102) and (2, 80) in the Byelorussian language, with copious examples from the documents of the 15-17th centuries.

V. Čamiarycki in *The Byelorussian Chronicles, their Codices and Versions* (1, 86) makes a survey of existing codices of original Byelorussian chronicles of the 15-16th centuries and proposes a new and original system of classification. The article *At the Sources of Byelorussian Verse* (2, 64) by I. Ralko is the first attempt to study the form of the early Byelorussian poetry of the 16-17th centuries. The author contends that even at that early period one may discern the beginning of evolution from the syllabic to syllabo-tonic form. E. Sabalenka contributes an article on *The First Ethnographical Works of Jakub Kolas* (1, 78) and V. Skidan writes on *Some Artistic Methods Used in Folklore Songs* (1, 95).

#### MISCELLANEOUS PERIODICALS

*Žnič (The Torch)*, Rome, 1967.

This paper occasionally provides information having considerable documentary value. To mark the 450th anniversary of Byelorussian printing the editor, Mgr. P. Tatarynovič publishes the original in Latin and a

translation into Byelorussian of a letter addressed by Sigismund I King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania, to Dr. Francis Skaryna of Połack (94/4-5).