

Reviews

BOOK REVIEWS

Goldhagen, E. (ed.) *Ethnic Minorities in the Soviet Union*. New York, 1968. 351 pages.

This work consists of a collection of papers dealing with the nationalities problem in the Soviet Union. That such a problem must exist is self-evident in a centralised federation which groups together several score of ethnic entities. As Mr Goldhagen observes in his introduction: 'The condition of the ethnic minorities in the Soviet Union is complex and many-hued, a unique and novel phenomenon defying the labels of political polemics.' There is, however, all too often, a tendency among Western authors to adopt double standards, and to condemn in the Soviet policies that which, in their own countries they applaud. For example, in the paper dealing with the Soviet Language Policy, Jacob Ornstein refers to 'Thesis 19' of the Central Committee's programme, adopted on 12 November 1958, as favouring the dominant language — Russian. Thesis 19 proposed to grant parents, in the education of their children, a choice between Russian or the minority language — if existing facilities made such an option possible (p. 126). In practice, this is precisely what occurs in several multi-national Western states, such as the United Kingdom or France, without causing the faintest ripple of concern over the ultimate fate of minority languages there. Accepting, however, that existing centralising tendencies in the Soviet Union do represent a very real threat to the national minorities and their languages, what will be the future of the Byelorussian language?

Professor Nicholas Vakar characteristically entitles his paper *The Belorussian People between Nationhood and Extinction*. Readers of Professor Vakar's *Belorussia, the Making of a Nation* will recall his extremely cautious approach to the whole Byelorussian question, which led him to the somewhat curious conclusion that, at some time in the 19th century,

the Byelorussian people ceased to be Russians, and were virtually badgered into a dubious national consciousness as Byelorussians by a minute group of political and literary *cathart*.

Whether or not a nation can be conjured into being out of nothingness seems questionable, to say the least. Whether or not 'the view that the Byelorussian people is an established nation has been losing ground lately' (p. 218), can have any effect at all on the realities of the situation, is a matter the relevance of which escapes one. Whatever criticisms may be levelled at the present government in Soviet Byelorussia, the nation as a political entity has existed for fifty years, and sits in the United Nations. The Byelorussian language is universally recognised by Slavists as a distinct language of considerable antiquity. Even under the present tendency towards uniformity in the Soviet Union, the Byelorussian nation is far more firmly established than in Tsarist days. Vakar observes that 'Belorussian is still formally the language of the Belorussian Republic, but it is seldom heard in the streets and in the offices of Minsk' (p. 220). This is true enough, but then 'Byelorussian has seldom ever been heard generally spoken on the streets in Minsk in preference to Russian or Yiddish, simply because the great majority of the inhabitants were Russians or Jews. Similarly the fact that Byelorussian is being banned from higher, secondary and elementary schools, although serious, is not particularly novel, any more than the shortage of books. Indeed, Byelorussia as a nation was 'made', as Professor Vakar has said himself elsewhere, at a time when books and teaching in the native tongue were prohibited. Once again, if the periodical *Hotas radzimy*, which is disseminated among Byelorussian expatriates abroad, is printed partly in Russian

(p. 221), this is not because of a new editorial policy of Russification, but because many expatriates, particularly of the older generation in Canada and the Argentine, have difficulty in reading modern literary Byelorussian. On this, and the other concrete examples given by Professor Vakar, there is little to justify the trend of the author's suggestion that the Byelorussian people are hovering on the brink of extinction. Even if one were to assume that this was the ultimate goal of the present regime, it must be borne in mind that even on the most conservative estimates the population of Byelorussians speaking their own language must number some five or six millions, of whom the majority are country-dwellers. Such people, with a long tradition of obstinate resistance to assimilation, are not likely to disappear overnight. It may be that in the present climate of economic expansion and industrial revolution, the fate of national minorities is suffering a decline in the cultural field. Such also was the position of national minorities in many West European countries in the 19th and early 20th centuries. However, once a prosperous economic situation becomes stabilised, a reaction tends to set in, and the banners of 'national revival' and 'conservation' are raised anew.

In his study, Professor Vakar describes at some length a conversation he had with a young Byelorussian Communist with whom he became acquainted, and who presented depressingly familiar arguments in support of the prevailing 'melting pot' trend in Soviet Byelorussia. One

wonders just how representative of the views of the non-Party majority these arguments are. According to Professor Vakar: 'The growing new Byelorussian intelligentsia holds that the use of the Russian language is necessary and beneficial for the people, and that it does not by any means make them less Byelorussian.' This view he contrasts with the efforts of 'dedicated men and women, struggling desperately for the survival of the national idiom and customs, who decry the incursions of Russian in Byelorussian homes, schools and offices' (p. 222). Quite clearly, under the present system a knowledge of Russian is essential for a Byelorussian, just as in the late 19th century a proficiency in French was essential for a Belgian, even if he was Flemish-speaking by birth and lived in Flanders. But to argue from this, as Vakar appears to do, that Byelorussian is on the way to extinction, is to take the matter further than the facts warrant, and to enter into the spheres, perhaps, of wishful thinking.

A close scrutiny of the development of Byelorussian culture and scholarship, even over the last two decades, shows that there is a strong trend towards conservation, particularly among the young, and that in journals such as *Maladość*, there are strong indications of a will to preserve and extend the Byelorussian cultural heritage. With such feelings prevalent in the youth of a nation, any talk of the 'making' or 'extinction' of a nation with reference to Byelorussia, must seem a trifle fanciful.

G.P.

Rahač, P. *Karotki ahlad historyi Bielarusi* (A Brief Survey of the History of Byelorussia). Cleveland — New York, 1968. 90 pages.

In the light of the current revival in official circles of interest in historical treatises written from an unofficial viewpoint, the appearance in the United States of this small textbook for schools is not without significance. The need for such a publication arose from the almost total absence of any genuinely objective study of the history of Byelorussia. Prior to 1905, there were no history books dealing with Byelorussia as such. Russian scholars such as Ključevskij and Polish authors such as

Kutrzeba tended to deal with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and its inhabitants as an integral part of Russia or Poland, and gave no consideration to Byelorussia as a separate ethnic, cultural or political entity. After the lifting of the prohibition on publications in the Byelorussian language, during the so-called *Naša niva* period (1906-1915), a few writers, and in particular Vaclaŭ Lastoŭski, in his *Karotkaja historyja Bielarusi*, attempted to present to the Byelorussian people a coherent, overall

picture of their past. Too often, however, such works were coloured more by wishful thinking than by scholarship, and in a laudable effort to dispose of past misconceptions, the authors tended to lean too far in the other direction, and extend to the political and economic past of Byelorussia the appellation of a 'golden age', which ought more properly to have been limited to its cultural heritage.

During the period of the revolutionary wars of 1917-1921, some interesting historical monographs were published, but they were generally too short and too general to be of any great value to the student. One such work was Professor Dovnar-Zapolski's *Les Bases de l'Etat de la Ruthénie Blanche* (Hrodna, 1919), which, had the author had time and sufficient opportunity to develop further, might have opened a new era of serious study of the history of Byelorussia. Much sound historical research was conducted by the members of the Byelorussian Cultural Association in Vilna and the Institute of Byelorussian Culture in Minsk, during the relatively liberal era of the '20s, but no comprehensive history of Byelorussia was forthcoming.

In 1944 Jazep Najdziuk published in Minsk, then under German occupation, his *Bielaruś učora i siannia*, which was a conscientious work compiled in difficult circumstances. It was, nevertheless, relatively moderate in tone, and the author certainly never attempted to gloss over, or idealise the condition of the peasantry under the rule of the Grand Dukes. He is severely criticised by Soviet historiographers, who see in him the archetype of the 'bourgeois-nationalist' historian.

In contrast to the writers of the 'nationalist' school, Soviet historiographers have produced a variety of interpretations of Byelorussian history, the most notable of which appeared in 1961 under the editorship of L. Abiecadarski and others, entitled *Istorija Belorusskoj SSR*. The general trends of this school of history have been discussed elsewhere (*JBS*, vol. I, pp. 123-126). Suffice it to say that according to present criteria, the lot of the Byelorussian people was one of unmitigated misery prior to the Revolution of 1917, and that consequently little that is positive can be

said of their past. This attitude leads to absurdly unbalanced treatises in which centuries of a nation's history are dismissed in a few pages, and the bulk of the work is devoted to the events of the last fifty years.

A somewhat similar approach was adopted by the Russian émigré historian N. Vakar in his work *Belorussia, the Making of a Nation* (Cambridge, Mass., 1956), though his treatment of recent history was less narrow and tendentious than that of his Soviet colleagues.

By comparison Rahač's book is of slight format, though it must be specified that it was intended primarily as a textbook for secondary schools. The author sets out to relate the history of a nation, rather than of a social class or a political movement, and in this, of course, he echoes the ideas of writers such as Lastoŭski and Najdziuk. A reasonable balance in the contents is achieved. There is little evidence of any of the defects supposed by some critics to exist in the works of historians of the national school. The author deals with trade relations between the early Byelorussian principalities and their Russian and Ukrainian neighbours, though he does not dwell overmuch on the rather hypothetical united 'Kievan Ruś' in which the Tsarist and Soviet historians have rather persistently sought the political origins of the Byelorussian state. Rahač's treatment of the Renaissance period is sober enough, though one would have wished for some greater justification of the term 'golden age' which he applies to that period. In the field of learning Skaryna, Ciapinski and Budny played a significant role, no doubt, but other talented writers of greater literary merit, such as Jeŭłašeŭski and Kmita-Čarnabyłski, should at least have been mentioned. In the same way the author might have said something of Byelorussian achievement in the field of music, painting and architecture. If Rahač sees in the establishment of the Uniate Church at the Union of Brest in 1596 the promise of a nascent national church, this by no means renders him unaware of the abuses attendant upon the manner in which it was initially promoted.

The author's view of the decline of Byelorussian national life in the 18th century, though broadly speaking accurate, errs perhaps in its pess-

imism. *Batlejki*, School dramas, and some sermons of interest were recorded during this period, as well as a few ethnographical collections of folksongs and proverbs, not to mention a considerable corpus of Byelorussian ecclesiastical music.

Compared to the period between 1812-1860, the Uprising of Kastaŭ Kalinouŭski in 1863 is given a prominence which is a little out of proportion. Byelorussian uprisings had occurred during 1830-1831, to be followed by repressive measures of the greatest importance, particularly the suppression of the Uniate Church in 1839. The depth of feeling which this act aroused in Byelorussia, was particularly lasting, and persisted well into the present century.

The *Naša niva* period is adequately dealt with; in official Soviet history the popularity and influence of the journal are barely mentioned, and then only in a negative sense. The early years of the Byelorussian Soviet Republic are also considered in a sympathetic light. It is a pity that the treatise concludes with a brief chapter which appears to accord some significance to a dubious political movement animated by the German occupation forces in Byelorussia during the last year of the war.

The merits of Rahač's work, however, far outweigh its flaws, and it presents a sound introduction to the main features of Byelorussian history.

G.P.

Ul'janovič, A. I. et al. (eds) *Belorusskaja SSR. Grodnenskaja Oblast'*. Izd. 'Biełaruś', Minsk, 1968. 182 pages. Plates and photographs. Map.

This is a popular and often superficial account of the history and geography of Hrodna Region. The physical geography and population of the region are dismissed in three pages; a mere page takes the history of the area from the Stone Age to the 13th century. Later history to 1914 is only slightly more fully dealt with and with heavy emphasis on political-ideological matters. Thus a paragraph is devoted to an anti-religious tract published in Hrodna in 1567, but no mention at all is made of the extremely important *voloka* reform of the economy taking place at that time. The Revolution is treated in much more detail, but the account of the interwar period, when Hrodna was

in Poland, is almost exclusively concerned with socialist political activities. The Soviet period and in particular partisan action in World War II are considered at relative length, in a distinctly propagandist framework. Reasonable detail is provided about the present development of industry, agriculture and social provision. However, the approach is always one-sided, describing advances and improvements, but never mentioning problems and deficiencies. There are a number of colour plates and black and white photographs, although the quality of reproduction is not high.

R.F.

Brumanis, André Arvaldis. *Aux origines de la hiérarchie latine en Russie. Mgr. Stanislas Siestrencewicz-Bohusz, premier archevêque-metropolitain de Mohilev (1731-1826)*. Université de Louvain, Recueil de Travaux d'Histoire et de Philologie 4^e série, fasc. 40, 1968. xxxi + 387 pages. Bibliography. Indexes. Two maps and twelve plates.

We have here a book not only of great content, but one compiled with great diligence as well.

Dr Brumanis divides his work into six parts. In the first he describes the family of Bohuŭ-Siestrencevič, and the youth and studies of the future Metropolitan of Mahiloŭ up to his ordination to the priesthood. This coincides with the last years of the Republic as an independent state.

In the second part we have studies

on the episcopacy of Bohuŭ-Siestrencevič, on the erection of a Byelorussian bishopric by Catherine II, and on the nomination by the same Empress of Siestrencevič to the see of the first Byelorussian bishop without reference to Rome.

Here our author informs us about the relations of Empress Catherine II and Bishop Siestrencevič with the Jesuits, whose Order was liquidated by Pope Clement XIII in 1773, and

whom Catherine protected and commanded Siestrencevič to protect (against the will of the Pope).

In the third part the author considers the further development of the Catholic Church in Byelorussia and Russia and its legalisation by nuncio Archetti.

In the following fourth part the history of the Catholic Church under Paul I is described. Two of the most important factors here are the sojourn of nuncio Laurens Litta in St Petersburg and the erection of an ecclesiastical province headed by the Metropolitan of Mahiloū.

In the fifth part we see the activities of the Metropolitan of Mahiloū during the reign of Alexander I, the visitation of nuncio Arezzo, and various misunderstandings between the Metropolitan and the czarist regime.

The sixth and final part is a short review of the activities of Siestrencevič as pastor, man of learning, patron of the poor, etc.

In reading this interesting work by Dr Brumanis one must wonder at the courage of the author, who, regardless of the already vast existing literature on Siestrencevic, on the Jesuits in Byelorussia and on the Ecclesiastical Province of Mahiloū, undertook to re-study all the out-dated and newer bibliography; and most important, dared to look at Metropolitan Siestrencevic from another viewpoint, namely from that of the Second Vatican Council.

Beginning from nuncio L. Litta, who called Siestrencevič the divine scourge of the Church, later authors, especially Pierling, Boudou, Journal and Ammann, all of them Jesuits — whom Siestrencevic helped Catherine II to save — accuse the Metropolitan of ambition, of flattering the czars and of disobedience to canon law.

Dr Brumanis places the emphasis in his book on czarist despotism and on the need to save the Catholic Church in very new and complicated circumstances.

Will Brumanis bring about by his work a change in the opinion of Siestrencevic that has existed up to now, at least among Catholic authors? To a certain extent, yes!

But who, unbiased in study, will be able to justify Siestrencevic in cases where without considering lawful authority (Rome) he executed com-

pletely the will of Catherine II or Paul I?

Thus Dr Brumanis in some cases — the liquidation of the Byelorussian Uniate Church, for example (pp. 165-166) — although attempting to understand Siestrencevič and justify him, says: 'Une autre interprétation reste done possible' (p. 166).

Thanks to the diligent use of all possible sources, especially Vatican archives, from a formal point of view the book is almost without fault. Here and there it would be possible to complete the information a little; for example, we would like to know why the author did not mention what M. Harecki (*Historyja bielaruskaje litatury*, Vilna, 1924, pp. 78-79) says: that Metropolitan Siestrencevič was the uncle of the well-known Byelorussian poet Vincuk Dunin-Marcinkievič and helped him study?

We also doubt if the point made by the author that the first bishop of Minsk, Jakub Dederko, was an ex-Jesuit (p. 191) is true. At least, in the canonical process of Dederko there is no confirmation of this.

It is also difficult to agree with the assertion of the author that the documents published by R. de Journal regarding the activities of the papal nuncios Archetti (1783-4), Litta (1797-99) and Arezzo (1803-4) do not immediately refer to the theme of his work (p. xiii), and therefore are not of primary importance. It seems that the activities of the above-mentioned nuncios ought to be considered as essential to a knowledge and evaluation of the work of Siestrencevič. We are especially interested in this unusual man as the bishop who organised a new ecclesiastical province, and the documents published by R. de Journal are the chief source of information on this matter.

Finally we may mention that the title of the work might have been otherwise, and more in agreement with the documents, for example: 'The Erection of the Catholic Ecclesiastical Province in Byelorussia by Stanislav Bohuš-Siestrencevič.'

Russia did not have many Catholics at that time (15,000 in all!) but there were millions in Byelorussia: is it not strange therefore that Siestrencevic himself formed a Byelorussian diocese — a hierarchy for Byelorussia. Russia had fame and a despotic government

when Byelorussia, Latvia, and Lithuania had the Catholic Church and really struggled for their religion.

However, what is said here is not

intended to in any way lessen the value of Dr Brumanis's interesting and serious work.

Č.S.

Nadson, A. *Śviaty Kiryl Turaŭski*. London, 1968. 110 pages.

Few saints of the Christian Church in Byelorussia have shared the popularity of St. Cyril of Turaŭ. His prayers were so highly thought of that at the end of the 16th century they were included in a collection of selected prayers of the Greek Fathers, printed in a book called *Molitvy povsednevnyja* (Daily Prayers), which was published in several editions in Vilna between 1596 and 1635.

He lived in the middle of the 12th century (1130c.-1182), and became Bishop of Turaŭ in about 1169. He is remembered chiefly by the holiness of his life, and by the excellence of his prayers, sermons and hymns.

In his book, Fr. Nadson gives an interesting and well-documented introduction on the life and times of St. Cyril, with particular reference to the place occupied in the Eastern Slavic world by the Principality of Turaŭ. He relates the rise of the princely house of Śviatapołk, and its dynastic links with Kiev, Byzantium and Germany, and deals with the political and ecclesiastical organisation of its domains in the 11th and 12th centuries.

The role of Cyril as a spiritual teacher is discussed by the author in the light both of a 14th century *Life* of the saint, and of his sermons and other writings, in particular *The Parable of the Carefree King* and a *Discourse on the Monastic State*. These latter works are directed at those who have embraced the monastic life, and place great stress on the notion of sacrifice, and on the quasi-sacramental nature of the monastic vows. Cyril is essentially an ascetic, but whilst advocating a somewhat grim discipline for his followers, he

finds in that discipline the final liberation from earthly cares.

It is for his beautifully composed prayers and religious hymns or *canons*, that Cyril is chiefly remembered, and Fr. Nadson has developed this facet of the saint's work at some length. Although the prayers are mainly penitential in character, they stress, often with a delicate imagery, the all-powerfulness of the Divine Mercy. There is a striking quality in some of his metaphors which reveal his not inconsiderable literary talent, as when he writes: 'For all human justice before Thee is as a cobweb, easily torn to shreds', or where he describes the Theotokos as 'a bright candle, a help swifter than lightning, star ever shining, chalice containing the wine of salvation.' Similar passages are to be found in the *Sermons* of St. Cyril, and in his *Canons*. Some of his more striking works have been translated into modern Byelorussian verse-form by Fr. Joseph Hermanovič, also known under the name of Vincuk Advažny, and have been appended to Fr. Nadson's work.

The very thorough study of the life and writings of St. Cyril, and the most useful bibliography, which the author also provides, render this small book an authoritative guide to the student of Mediaeval spiritual literature in Byelorussia. English readers may also wish to be reminded of the same author's 'The Writings of St Cyril of Turaŭ', *JBS*, vol. I, no. 1, London, 1965, pp. 4-15 and 'Spiritual Writings of St Cyril of Turaŭ', *Eastern Churches Review*, vol. I, no. 4, 1967-8, pp. 347-58.

G.P.

Sipovic, C. *Il dottor Francesco Skaryna e la sua opera oiolica*. Rome, 1968. 13 pages.

Much has been written, both in the Soviet press, and in academic publications overseas, about the many-sided genius of the Byelorussian humanist, Francis Skaryna (1485c.-1540). His work in the fields of printing, engraving, literature, medicine, botany and phi-

losophy, has been the subject of intensive study, and not a little speculation. Yet first and foremost Skaryna was a translator of the Bible into his native 'Ruthenian' tongue, for the greater edification, as he himself wrote, of the simple people of Ruś'.

Surprisingly little, however, seems to have been written in the course of the two years which marked the 450th anniversary of the printing of his Bible in Prague in 1517-1518, about Skaryna as a Biblical scholar, and as a man of religion. On the contrary, some authors, such as Zajcaŭ and Aleksiutovič, have contrived to present Skaryna as a free-thinker, if not actually as an atheist. By what process these writers arrive at such a manifestly untenable conclusion, remains uncertain, even after having examined their arguments. Skaryna, from his own writings, and in particular from his interesting introductory essays or *Pradmovy* to the Books of the Bible, appears as a deeply pious and altruistic figure, with a humble and sincere veneration for the Holy Scriptures, for the Virgin Mother and for the whole company of saints.

One is therefore grateful to Bishop Sipovič for having filled to some extent a major lacuna in our knowledge of the personality and endeavour of this remarkable man.

After an introductory passage in which he reviews the bibliography relating to Skaryna, the author goes on to give a few biographical details of the great scholar's life. Of part-

icular interest are the details, drawn from Skaryna's own publications, of the dedications of his works to the 'Life-giving Sepulchre of Our Lord', to 'the Archangel Michael, to St. John the Baptist, to the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, to the Apostles Peter and Paul, to St. Nicholas, to the Life-giving Cross, to the sweetest Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ.' The place of Skaryna and his work in the Slavic world is also touched upon by Bishop Sipovič, and in particular the sources of the texts he translated, and the language he used. To what extent one can agree with the author in his statement that Skaryna wrote in 'the living spoken language of Byelorussia in the 16th century', is doubtful. Skaryna's writings are heavily influenced by Church Slavonic, and although they do display essentially Byelorussian features, they are relatively far removed from the more living language of the *Barkulabaŭski letapis* (16th c), for example.

The diffusion and influence of Skaryna's work are considered in a final section. One would, however, have liked to see the author develop further the question both of Skaryna's sources, and of his spiritual outlook.

G.P.

Arachovič, K. K. *et. al.* (eds) *450 hod bielaruskaha knihadrukavañnia* (450 Years of Byelorussian Printing). Academy of Sciences of the BSSR. 'Navuka i tehnika', Minsk, 1968. 436 pages. Illustrations.

This is a collection of articles written by several authors to commemorate the appearance in August 1517 in Prague of the printed edition of the *Book of Psalms* in a language which, although basically Church Slavonic, contained many Byelorussian elements. It was the first book to be published by Doctor Francis Skaryna of Połack who during the years 1517-1525 translated and published — first in Prague and then in Vilna — a number of books of the Old and New Testament as well as a prayer book for laymen. It also marks the beginning of Byelorussian printing.

The aim of the editors has been to present the development of Byelorussian printing from its beginnings till the present day. As might be expected, the life and work of Francis Skaryna receives the most attention. The articles *The Times of Francis Skaryna* by V. U. Čapko and A. P.

Hryckievič (p. 5) and *Połack at the Time of Skaryna* by Z. Ju. Kapyski (p. 85) provide the necessary historical background to the study of the life and work of the first Byelorussian printer. One very valuable contribution — published posthumously — is *Scoriniana* by A. F. Florovský from Prague (p. 389). This distinguished scholar was an authority on the cultural relations between the Czechs and East Slavs and did much research on Skaryna. In his article he makes a comprehensive survey of the development of Skaryna studies during the last 40 years, thus complementing the work which appeared under the same name by U. Pičeta in 1926. Another interesting article, *F. Skaryna and Czech Printing* is contributed by A. S. Mylnikaŭ (p. 179), in which the author, among other things, tries to answer the question why Skaryna first chose Prague as the centre of his

publishing activities. Florovský also raises this question, and the conclusions of the two authors are very much alike. One of the reasons for Skaryna's choice may have been the long-standing Czech tradition of translations of the Bible into the vernacular. Another likely reason was the high standard of Czech printing at that time, and the existence in Prague of craftsmen capable of making type other than Latin and Gothic. Florovský does not exclude the possibility of Skaryna being connected in some way with the royal court, since the Czech king at that time was a descendant of Jahajta. Both authors are sceptical of the suppositions that Skaryna might have had any direct connections with the Hussite milieu. Mylnikaŭ is undecided on the question as to whether Skaryna owned a printing press, or made use of existing Czech establishments. He is inclined to think, however, that the type — the like of which is not found anywhere else — was made to Skaryna's own design. It seems that in considering this problem, one has to bear in mind that apart from Skaryna's books there were no other publications in Cyrillic script in Prague at that time. Moreover, when Skaryna moved to Vilna in about 1525, he took his type with him. His printing press was the first in that city, and it is unlikely that he could have had the assistance of an existing printer there. All this seems to indicate that Skaryna owned his own press — perhaps jointly with certain Vilna burghers who helped him financially — and was not only a publisher, but also a skilful printer.

The language of Skaryna's book is the subject of the articles entitled *The Language of Skaryna's Printed Books* by A. I. Zuraŭski (p. 277), *F. Skaryna and Problems of the Byelorussian Literary Language* by L. M. Šakun (p. 305), *Concerning Word-formations in Skaryna's Editions* by M. H. Bułachaŭ (p. 315), *Notes on the Phonetical Traits of the Byelorussian Language in Skaryna's Editions* by A. M. Bułyka (p. 345) and *The Syntax of Skaryna's Editions* by A. Ja. Bachaňkoŭ (p. 359). On the whole the articles of this group are perhaps the most serious contribution to the study of the language of Skaryna since the appearance of *Doctor Francisk Skorina* by Vladimi-

rov in 1888. The importance of Skaryna's innovations in the linguistic field has been summed up by Zuraŭski in the following words: 'Having retained the Church Slavonic basis for his translations, he saturated them with Byelorussian linguistic elements to such an extent that his language took the most extreme place in the Byelorussian version of Church Slavonic, and became in fact the **last** intermediate link in the process of passing from Church Slavonic to Byelorussian in the sphere of religious usage. The introduction by Skaryna of the grammatical and lexical forms of the living Byelorussian language in the Holy Scripture had a decisive importance for the future development of the religious literature in Byelorussia. Skaryna provided a brilliant example of the utilisation in Holy Scripture of the resources of the folk language, and thus broke with the centuries-old tradition of the use for this purpose of Church Slavonic with its petrified forms and lexicon' (p. 303-304).

P. N. Bierkaŭ in his *Skaryna and the Beginnings of East Slavonic Versification* (p. 245) makes a study of certain verses in Skaryna's prefaces to his books. The subject of the article *Concerning the Medico-biological Work of Skaryna and his Views on Natural Sciences* by P. P. Kručok (p. 373) has nothing to do with printing, but it sheds interesting light on a little known aspect of the work of the first Byelorussian printer who held the degree of Doctor of Medicine from the University of Padua. There is also an article by U. A. Aničenka, *The Skaryna Traditions in the Ukraine* (p. 263), in which the author describes the influence of Skaryna on Ukrainian editions of the Bible in the second half of the 16th century and on the work of certain Ukrainian writers.

Not all contributions are of equal value. There is little substance in the article *Skaryna and the European Reformation* by V. K. Zajcaŭ (p. 119). The author is much given to making such categorical statements as: 'Skaryna continued the traditions of the prominent printers of the century — Aldus Manutius, Badius, Frobenius — and stood at the head of the educational and anti-clerical tendencies in Byelorussian society which linked up

with the progressive movement of that period' (p. 120). A statement of this kind — provided one can overlook the use of the political jargon of the 20th century — would have looked more impressive if the author had substantiated it with some concrete examples from Skaryna's own writings. This he has failed to do. Equally unfortunate is Zajcaŭ's attempt to pass off his words as being Skaryna's, as in the following passage: 'Luther's motto *credo ut intelligam* did not coincide with Skaryna's creed *intelligo ut credam*' (p. 122). No such words — which are meaningless anyway — ever appeared in Skaryna's writings. The article by M. A. Aleksiuovič, *The Philosophical, Social and Political Views of Skaryna* (p. 101) — published posthumously — does not differ substantially from that of Zajcaŭ. Another article by Zajcaŭ, *The Bases of Humanism in Byelorussia* (p. 41), as well as *Hussism and the Social Movement in Byelorussia and Lithuania in the 15-17th century* by S. A. Padokšyn (p. 169) and *The Continuation of Skaryna's Cultural Ideals by Symon Budny* by Ja. I. Parecki (p. 229) have nothing to do with Skaryna or Byelorussian printing. Padokšyn appears to imply that Skaryna was the follower of Jan Hus, or at least was strongly influenced by the latter's teaching, whereas Parecki attempts to present him as the spiritual father of the Unitarian Symon Budny. All five articles remind one forcibly of the Procrustean bed: into it the authors try to fit Skaryna by stretching or mutilating him, as the case may be. It would have been simpler to quote Skaryna himself, who offered his work 'To the honour and glory of God One in Trinity, in praise of His Immaculate Mother Mary, for the joy of His angels and His saints, for the good instruction of the common people' (Skaryna's *Preface to the Book of Job*; cf. A. F. Koršunaŭ (ed.) *Chrestamatyja pa staražytnaj białaruskaj literatury*, Minsk, 1959, p. 178).

Ja. I. Niemiroŭski in *Ivan Fiodaraŭ and Piotr Mściślawiec in Byelorussia* (p. 137) describes the work of the first Muscovite printers during the years at the printing press in Zabłudava in western Byelorussia, where they found refuge after their flight from Moscow. The article *Vasil Ciapinski — Continuer of the Work of Skaryna*

by H. A. Halečanka (p. 171) deals with the work of Vasil Ciapinski who in the 1570's translated into Byelorussian and printed on his own press part of the New Testament. The history of the Mamonič press which existed in Vilna for half a century (c. 1575-1623) and published, among other things, the *Rules of the High Court (Trybunal)* in 1586 and the *Statute of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania* in 1588, is the subject of an article entitled *The Cultural and Educational Activity of the Mamonič Press* by M. I. Praškovič (p. 155). Much has been written on this subject by authors such as Lappo, Iljaševič, Zernova, Anuškin, Kaweczka-Gryczowa and others. Praškovič seems to be acquainted with the work of Zernova (cf. A. S. Zernova, 'Tipografija Mamoničej v Vilne', *Kniga*, No. 1, Moscow, 1959, pp. 167-223), whom he follows pretty closely, mistakes and all. Thus he repeats Zernova in stating that the *Molitvy povesednevnyje (Daily Prayers)* published by Leo Manovič in 1601 was a Uniate publication, because it contained no mention of any 'Great-Russian' (i. e. Muscovite) saints. It may well have been that this was a Uniate publication, but not for the reasons stated by Praškovič and Zernova. Muscovite saints were venerated only locally, and it would have been unusual to find their cult prevailing among the Orthodox in Byelorussia at a time when that country was ecclesiastically and politically independent of Moscow. Praškovič also quotes Zernova's erroneous statement that the language of the Polish editions of the *Lithuanian Statute* of 1614 and 1619 and of the *Trybunal* of 1616, 1619 and 1823 was not Polish but Byelorussian, only printed with Gothic type.

Finally, there is the article *Byelorussian Printing in the Soviet Period* by A. A. Volk and A. I. Rakovič (p. 195). It is written in the usual self-commendatory tone, and is full of impressive-looking statistics, among which one searches in vain for information concerning the number of books published in the Byelorussian language. It is perhaps in order to make the achievements of the Soviet period look still more impressive that the three centuries preceding it have been passed over in silence. Nothing is said about the famous Vilna Orthodox Confraternity printing press in

Vilna and in Jeŭje which functioned during the last decade of the 16th and throughout the 17th centuries and which published, among many other books, such important works as the *Slavonic Grammar* and *Lexis* of Zizani and the *Slavonic Grammar* of Smatrycki. Nor has mention been made of the printing presses in Kuteina Bujničy, Mahiloŭ and Supraśl which functioned at various periods during the 17th and 18th centuries. Among other topics omitted one may mention the question of the printing of Byelorussian books in the 19th century both in Byelorussia and abroad; the work of various Byelorussian publishing organisations during the years preceding the First World War; the printing press of Marcin Kuchta in Vilna, founded in 1906 especially for printing *Naša niva* and Byelorussian books and

immortalised in a short poem by Maksim Bahdanovič; and last but not least, the printing of Byelorussian books in western Byelorussia during the years 1921-39, when it was under Polish rule.

The book is richly illustrated with reproductions of engravings and pages from Skaryna editions and the works of modern artists on the theme of Skaryna.

Much of the material in the book is very valuable and constitutes an important contribution to the study of Skaryna and his work. Notwithstanding this, one cannot help feeling that the editors have missed an opportunity of presenting a truly comprehensive picture of the development of Byelorussian printing during the 450 years of its existence.

A.N.

Konan, U. M. *Razvićcio estetyčnaj dumki ŭ Bielarusi (1917-1934 h.)*. (The Development of Aesthetic Thought in Byelorussia from 1917-1934). 'Navuka i technika', Minsk, 1968. 189 pages. Index.

The student of aesthetics will not be disappointed by this well-written book. U. M. Konan handles the development of Byelorussian aesthetic thought in four main divisions of his book.

The first part of the book is particularly valuable. Here the broadly-based traditions of Byelorussian aesthetics are discussed, from the great humanist Francišak Skaryna up to the beginning of the Soviet era. The aesthetic ideas of such Byelorussian authors and poets as Dunin-Marcinkievič, Bahuševič, Łučyna, Bahdanovič, Ciotka and others are considered, as well as the platform of the newspaper *Naša niva* (1906-1915) and the journals *Łučynka*, *Sacha* and the annual *Bielaruskija kalendary*. *Naša niva*, of course, playing an especially significant role in the development of literary appreciation among the Byelorussian people. In this paper such important authors as Janka Kupała, Jakub Kołas, Ciotka, Zmitrok Biadula, Ciška Hartny and others put forward their ideas in their regular contributions.

Maksim Bahdanovič was a capable critic in pre-Soviet Byelorussia, as Konan points out. Not only in critical articles, but in highly artistic verses and stories, such as *Piešniaru*, *Muzyka*, *Apokryf*, *Ab ikonniku i zalataru*

and others, he developed interesting and original thoughts — and certainly demanded that real art requires strenuous work and should reflect the beauty and reality of life.

The second part of the book deals with Byelorussian aesthetic thought in the first years of Soviet rule. During this period many Byelorussian journals began to appear, among them *Zviazda*, *Dziannica*, *Savieckaja Bielaruś*, which mostly dealt with communist themes. During these early years of Soviet Byelorussia, Viciebsk became a centre of Byelorussian artistic life for a time. One native of this city, Marc Chagal, achieved fame abroad as an expressionist painter even before the Revolution. In this section the author also deals with the philosophical thought of Kazimir Malevič (1878-1935), and the further works of Janka Kupała, Jakub Kołas and Zmitrok Biadula in some detail, showing with particularly appropriate examples how these writers presented their thoughts on aesthetics. And, indeed, they were genuinely able literary critics who showed much depth of thought.

In the third section the author considers the limitations of aesthetics from the standpoint of Marxist ideology. Konan attempts to show how the problem of art was solved by refer-

ence to the 'general aims of the working class'. The aesthetical attitudes of several periodicals are discussed in some detail, pointing out the various conflicts which arose among the different contributors. The trends of thought in literary organisations such as *Maladnik*, *Uzvyšša* and *Polymia* are also considered.

The final section of this interesting little book discusses the position of the theory of socialist realism during the years 1932-34, and the ideas of the

Byelorussian Association of Proletarian "Writers with regard to various questions of aesthetics, such as fundamental principles of the creative method.

All in all this book is a useful contribution to the study of the little known field of Byelorussian aesthetical thought, and should find a welcome place in the library of anyone interested in aesthetics, or indeed in philosophy in general.

R. P-T.

Siemaškievič, R. M. *Branislaŭ Epimach-Šypila*. Minsk, 1968. 112 pages.

The development of the Byelorussian national movement prior to 1918 has, generally speaking, attracted little attention from Soviet Byelorussian historians. It is therefore particularly gratifying to find a well-presented and serious study of the life and work of Branislaŭ Epimach-Šypila who, as an organiser of Byelorussian student life in St Petersburg, and as the moving spirit behind the publishing house *Zahlanie sonca i ū naša valwnca*, must rate as one of the foremost leaders of the national revival. Epimach-Šypila (1859-1934) was born into a family of the Byelorussian Catholic gentry, and after attending a *lycée* in Riga, he read classics at St Petersburg University. He was a brilliant linguist, with a command of more than twelve languages, including Greek and Latin, in which he was able to converse freely. He became a lecturer in Greek at the Roman Catholic theological academy in 1890, and the rest of his life was devoted to teaching. His interest in philology led him to a study of Byelorussian language and folklore. Already in 1877, at the age of 18, he began recording folksongs, and he continued this work as a student at St Petersburg. There is in existence a compilation of Byelorussian folklore collected by him, although it has never been published, under the title *Bielaruskaja chrestamatyja*, and bearing the date 1889. According to Siemaškievič, Professor Karski used some of Epimach-Šypila's material in his own monumental work *Belorusy*. In addition to much interesting ethnographical material, Epimach-Šypila recorded works that still remain unpublished by poets such as A. Šunkievič and F. Tapčeŭski.

With the revocation in 1906 of the

Imperial ukase forbidding the printing of works in Byelorussian, Epimach-Šypila set about organising a publishing house to diffuse the works of Byelorussian writers. His circle of friends and collaborators included literary figures such as Aloisa Paškievič (1876-1916), and Janka Kupała (1882-1942) whose writings he published. Epimach-Šypila was particularly interested in making known the work of poets which, because of the official policy of the Tsarist regime towards the Byelorussian language in the 19th century, had only appeared in limited or clandestine editions — if at all. Thus it was that the publishing house *Zahlanie sonca i ū naša vakonca*, undertook a programme of printing works by Dunin-Marcinkievič (1807-1884), Bahuševič (1840-1900) and Kahaniec (1868-1918), as well as by writers of the new generation, such as Jakub Kołas, Zmitrok Biadula and Ciška Hartny.

Epimach-Šypila was particularly concerned with arousing a scholarly interest among the Byelorussian students at St Petersburg University in the culture and history of their country. At his home on Saturdays he would hold a *salon littéraire* for students, which was attended by the poet Kupała, the artist Drazdovič, the composer Kazura, Hrynivieč — a specialist in folksongs, the grammarian Branislaŭ Taraškievič, and many others. He was also closely associated with the foundation and development of the journal *Maladaja Bielarus* after 1912.

In 1925 he went to Minsk, where he played an important part in the preparatory work for a Byelorussian Dictionary, and from 1927-1929 he presided over the editorial committee.

He also published several studies on Byelorussian dialects. His last years were spent in Leningrad, though his return there in 1930, according to Siemaškievič, was involuntary. Kraškoŭski in his *Memoirs* relates that he was reduced to very poor circumstances, and was forced to rely on the charitable assistance of his friends for the simple necessities of life. He died in 1934.

Siemaškievič's biographical study is well-documented and provides a wealth of interesting details on the life of the Byelorussian community in St Petersburg before the Revolution. He also shows no hesitation in mentioning the very positive work done in the promotion of Byelorussian studies by individuals whose outlook, from

an official point of view, was perhaps unorthodox. Of Claude Duš-Dušeŭski, sometime editor of the cultural journal *Kryvič*, which appeared in Lithuania during the early '20s, he writes that he did much for the diffusion of knowledge on the history of folk-art (pp. 92-93). In the same way he pays tribute to the generous financial assistance given to the Byelorussian cultural revival by Princess Mahdalena Radziwił (1864-1945). Many early Byelorussian publications owe their appearance to her support, including *Naša niva*, *Bielaruś*, and *Zahlanie sonca i ū naša vakonca* (pp. 52-53). One must look forward to more works from this able, and evidently cultivated young author.

G.P.

Lis, A. *Mikoła Ščakacichin*. Minsk, 1968. 164 pages.

This small biographical work is one of a series produced by the Byelorussian Academy of Sciences. The author has already compiled a study of the life of the well-known grammarian and political figure Branislaŭ Taraškievič (1892-1937c), whose latter years were previously veiled in some obscurity, and whose date and place of death are still unknown.

Mikoła Ščakacichin (1896-1940) is chiefly remembered as an art historian who first attempted to make a systematic survey of art in Byelorussia from the earliest times until the present century. His most valuable work was done between the years 1925 and 1929 when he played an active role in the Byelorussian Cultural Institute in Minsk, and it was during this period that he published his capital works on the engravings of Francis Skaryna (*Knižnyja ozdoby ū wydańniach Fr. Skaryny* (1926), *Kali radziŭsia Franciśak Skaryna* (1925), *Da pytańnia ab chranalohii 'Malaj padarožnaj knižycy'* (1928)), and on the history of Byelorussian art (*Narysy z historyi bielaruskaha mastactva*, vol. I. (1928)).

If it is true to say that individual aspects of Byelorussian art had already received some attention from 19th century Russian historians such as Vladimirov and Stasov, it fell to Ščakacichin to investigate a considerable mass of virtually unknown material, to co-relate all the relevant facts, and to build up a complete picture of the development of Byelo-

rusian art as a whole. Unfortunately, very few of his published works have survived until the present day, and the reader is therefore indebted to Lis for providing a relatively full description of Ščakacichin's works. His analysis of Skaryna's engravings, and his suggestions as to their authorship, are of great value, though the conclusions he draws do not always seem to be supported by the evidence he advances. Thus, according to Lis, Ščakacichin, whilst maintaining on the one hand that the motif of the sun eclipsed by the moon, was chosen by Skaryna as his mark because it bore some relation to the date of his birth (p. 46), on the other hand attributes to Czech artists engravings which not only bear Skaryna's device, but also present distinct stylistic similarities to other works of undoubted authorship.

The scope of Ščakacichin's main work on Byelorussian art *Narysy z historyi bielaruskaha mastactva* is outlined by Lis, and shows the wide variety of subjects studied by the author. These included pre-Christian art-forms, ecclesiastical architecture of the 11th and 12th centuries, the architecture of castles and military installations from the 13th to the 15th centuries, and the development of the Byzantino-Gothic style in Byelorussia from the 15th to the 16th century. Lis's analysis, which extends over more than thirty-five pages, is of particular value when it is recalled that *Narysy* is

virtually inaccessible to the reader outside the Soviet Union.

With the change of direction in the development of Byelorussian studies in Byelorussia after 1929, Ščakacichin

was unable to pursue his work. It is an encouraging sign, however, that his life and activity have become a legitimate field of research.

G.P.

Hilevič, N. S. *Naša rodnaja pieśnia* (Our Native Song). 'Narodnaja ašvieta', Minsk, 1968. 212 pages.

This little book by N. S. Hilevič is a well-written appreciation of Byelorussian folk songs from the literary point of view. Its popular format and lucid language make it readily accessible to anyone interested in this subject.

The author analyses and classifies the songs of Byelorussia according to their literary style, and shows how they depict the various characteristics of the life and history of the Byelorussian nation, as well as displaying to great advantage the poetical traits of many songs.

The book provides many examples of the various types of Byelorussian folk songs. Although it is written from a mainly literary angle, one serious flaw is that all the songs given as examples are presented without their melodies. After all, the melody is an integral part of a folk song. Is the song in a major or minor key? What is its tempo and setting? All these factors have a bearing on its interpretation, even from a literary viewpoint. It would seem that the primary reader of such a book would be a person interested in music. In the eyes of someone musically-minded, a folk song considered merely as a lyric poem, divorced from its melody, is something inconceivable. The melody reflects the character of the song just as much as the words do.

The author is indeed correct in saying in the first chapter that one can learn a great deal about the character and history of a nation by examining its folklore and its folk songs especially. His divisions of the songs in the subsequent chapters more or less follow those established by earlier ethnographers such as Fedorowski, who published collections of Byelorussian folk songs. Thus in the second chapter the author explains how the songs were classified according to their literary genre.

The seasons of the year play an important role in the life of any nation and Byelorussia is no exception.

One can find songs appropriate to any time of the year, or having a connection with certain festivals. Many, for example, are in honour of St. John the Baptist (*Kupalle*, or mid-summer festival, is celebrated on the night of 23-24 June, the eve of St. John's feast day). Songs of this type are the subject of a detailed study in the third chapter of the book.

In the fourth chapter the author considers songs concerned with family life. Here we have wedding songs, and songs for other family celebrations.

Byelorussians are a people who have always lived close to the land, and there are many folk songs about nature, about the fate of their homeland, and similar themes. These are considered by Hilevič as well, and the examples he presents in each chapter are particularly apt.

The seventh chapter, 'Folk songs of the Soviet era', must be approached with some circumspection. On page 185, for example, the author states that 'in Byelorussia such songs as *Byvajcie zdarovy* by A. Rusak and I. Luban... *Viečarynka ū kalhasie* by J. Kupała and S. Pałonski... and many others' became widely popular among the people. One can hardly consider such songs to be 'folk songs' when they are in fact musical settings of works by well-known poets artistically rendered by various composers, albeit in the folk style.

There are further inaccuracies to be pointed out: 'To some of the pearls of classical Byelorussian poetry the people themselves thought up wonderful melodies, as for example in the songs: *Lublu naš kraj, staronku hetu* — a setting to the words of K. Bujła; *Zorka Vieniera* and *Sluckija tkačychi* on the words of M. Bahdanovič' (p. 185). If indeed such folk settings exist, they do not seem to have been recorded. However, the *Junacki špieŭnik* published in Minsk in 1944 clearly gives the melody of *Sluckija tkačychi* as the composition of M. Scahoŭ. The musical setting of *Zorka Vieniera*

is the work of S. Pałonski and A. Bahatyrou, according to *Bielaruskija pieśni* published by the Byelorussian Academy of Sciences in Minsk in 1955.

There is an incredible number of 'folk' songs which have materialised, according to the author, in honour of Lenin. Again, most are the works of poets, written on this specific theme and set to music by composers of the BSSR. This is not the way genuine folk songs come into existence. No matter how widespread and popular a song may be, one does not generally

consider it a true folk song if the composer is known. It should not therefore be included with the real folklore of the country.

Apart from these few weaknesses, the book is to be commended for its popular literary style, its clearness and general usefulness to the student of folklore as well as to anyone else interested in the literary classification and appreciation of the varied and beautiful songs of the Byelorussian people.

R. P-T.

Bahdanovič, Maksim. *Tvory* (Collected Works). Edited by V. V. Barysienka and others. With an introduction by A. Łojka. The Janka Kupała Institute of Literature of the Academy of Sciences of the BSSR. 'Navuka i technika', Minsk, 1968. 2 volumes. 552 and 567 pages. Index (Vol. 2). Illustrations.

Maksim Bahdanovič (1891-1917) wrote relatively little during his short life, yet his name in Byelorussian literature ranks with that of Janka Kupała and Jakub Kołas. Only one collection of his poems, *Vianok*, was published during his lifetime, in 1913. His other works, as well as numerous articles by him, were scattered in various periodical publications, or remained in manuscript form. In 1927-28 the Institute of Byelorussian Culture in Minsk published a 2-volume collection of his work which has since become a bibliographical rarity. Thereafter only selected works of the poet have appeared from time to time.

Thus the need for a critical edition of the complete works of Bahdanovič has been felt for some time. The present edition claims to satisfy this need. The first volume contains the poetical works of Bahdanovič, including those which formed part of the original *Vianok* of 1913. Bahdanovič, before he died, was preparing a new edition of his book, into which he intended to introduce several changes. Two printed copies of *Vianok* with various corrections made by Bahdanovič were found among his possessions. The sensible thing to do would have been to reproduce the first printed edition of *Vianok* without changes, and to give alternative readings in the notes. The editors, however, have retained the original text only in some cases, whilst in the others they have replaced it with the first or second corrected manuscript version. To

complicate matters further, to use their own words, 'into the principal version in the present edition those of the author's corrections, which the editors thought to be legitimate, have been introduced' (Vol. 1, p. 440). Thus, despite the variant readings in the notes, there exists considerable confusion. The end product is the editors' idea of what the *Vianok* would have looked like in its final form.

Among the other poems, which were not found in *Vianok*, are *A Letter to Vaclaū, Łastoūski* and *To Mr. Anton Navina as a Souvenir from the Author* (pp. 220 and 229 resp.). The editors have removed the names of the persons from the titles and replaced them with enigmatic dots. The writer Vaclaū Łastoūski (he usually signed his works with the pseudonym Vlast) and literary critic Anton Navina (pseudonym of Anton Luckievič) were members of the editorial staff of *Naša niva*. Bahdanovič was in close touch with them and held them in high esteem. Navina wrote a review of *Vianok*, and Bahdanovič thanked him with the poem. The omission of the name in the title achieves nothing except to make the reader ponder on the editors' motives in so doing.

Bahdanovič's poems in the Russian language are also included in the volume. They are not numerous, and the majority of them are the author's translations of his own Byelorussian works. As such they have a certain interest for the student.

The second volume contains Bahdanovič's prose works and critical articles, as well as some of his correspondence. The articles are of particular interest, since they reveal a little known side of Bahdanovič's activity as a literary critic, and as one of the first historians of Byelorussian literature. Unfortunately the editors have once more omitted several passages containing the names of V. Łastoŭski, A. Navina, J. Losik as well as some special topics. The effect of this editorial mutilation may be judged from the following passage, taken from the article *Hlyby i slai*, first published in *Naša niva* in 1911; the omitted parts are set in square brackets:

'Passing to the short stories, we must first of all single out [two writers: Vlast and Jadvihin S. Around them practically all our other short story writers have gathered, thus forming] two different groups: one consisting of small works, for which it is difficult to find a name: perhaps a story — or perhaps not a story; a voiced thought, but that is not exactly the same... in a word, something reminding one somewhat of the so-called 'poem in prose'. More often than not one finds in them descriptions of nature and of the feelings aroused by it, but all this is rather pale, dull and uninspired; moreover the spiritual baggage of the author is poor. [Vlast alone has managed to give in his sketches something of value. Unfortunately sometimes he reminds one forcibly of the Polish modernists (cf. his 'Dreams'), whilst in his stories from everyday life the best aspect of his talent — that sad poetic feeling — is lost.] It happens sometimes, however, that the lyrical inspiration of the writer's soul is reflected in a description of our grey everyday life, and then it weaves into the crown of our literature a fresh radiant flower [(cf. his 'Swan Song').] (Cf. *Naša niva*, No. 5, Vilna, 1911, p. 74 and the present edition, Vol. 2, p. 102 resp.).

Similar omissions occur in the articles *Za try hady* (p. 132), *Belorusskoje vozroždenije* (p. 239) and in letters Nos. 3, 4, 5, 10 and 11 (pp. 499-508). The last two letters were addressed to Łastoŭski. (Incidentally all those letters except No. 4 were published in full by M. Smołkin in the

March 1958 issue of *Polymia* on pp. 178-182.)

In his article *Belorusskoje vozroždenije* Bahdanovič, in discussing Byelorussian culture of the 16th century, writes: 'All this taken together placed Byelorussia into one of the foremost places among the civilised Slavs, putting her in front of Muscovy — that backyard of the Slavs of that time, nourished, like some parasitic plant, with the spiritual sap of Byelorussia' (p. 280). The editors provided this passage with the following note: 'Bahdanovič's idea of the relations between the Russian and Byelorussian cultures of the 16th century is false. It does not correspond to reality. The universally known historical facts testify with all clarity that the Russian culture of the 16th century was among the foremost culture of the Slavs and the countries of the West' (p. 533). The note — and there are others of a similar kind — does not give any new information about Bahdanovič, nor does it cast any new light on what is a perfectly clear statement. It is therefore irrelevant. It does, however, explain why another similar passage in Bahdanovič's letter to the editors of *Naša niva* was omitted (Letter No. 4 in the present edition; for the missing passage see: Anton Navina, 'Z niedrukavanaje spadčyny pa M. Bahdanoviču'. *Hadavik Bielaruskaha Navukovaha Tavarystva*, Book 1, Vilna, 1933, p. 165).

One may give other examples of such inaccuracies. Those already cited, however, suffice to show that the editors' claim for this to be 'The most complete and scientifically exact of all existing editions of the works of the poet' (Vol. 1, p. 5) is somewhat exaggerated. Its value for the student — for whom it is primarily intended — is limited, and it will have to be used with circumspection. On the other hand its appearance — despite some fine illustrations by V. Šaranhovič — is not sufficiently attractive to appeal to the general reader who in any case has already an artistically produced little book of the selected lyrics of the poet (cf. Maksim Bahdanovič, *Mala-dzik*. Edited and introduced by A. Lojka. 'Bielaruś', Minsk, 1968).

A.N.

Barysienka, V. V. et. al. (eds) *Historyja bielaruskaj dakastryčnickaj litary* (History of the Byelorussian Literature of the pre-October Revolution Period). Vol. I. The Janka Kupała Institute of Literature of the Academy of Sciences of the BSSR. 'Navuka i technika', Minsk, 1968. 448 pages. Index. Illustrations.

Barysienka, V. V. et. al. (eds) *Historyja bielaruskaj dakastryčnickaj litary* (History of the Byelorussian Literature of the pre-October Revolution Period). Vol. I. The Janka Kupała Institute of Literature of the Academy of Sciences of the BSSR. 'Navuka i technika', Minsk, 1968. 448 pages. Index. Illustrations.

The first volume of this two-volume work contains the history of Byelorussian literature from its origins to the end of the 18th century. The second volume, now in preparation, will cover the 19th and early 20th centuries up to the year 1917. The work is being prepared by a team of authors under the auspices of the Janka Kupała Institute of Literature in Minsk.

The introductory chapter by Ju. I. Pšyrkoŭ, *The Historiography of Byelorussian Literature* (pp. 13-49), is a short survey of the works on Byelorussian literature from the end of the 18th century to the present day. It is a useful preliminary guide for any student of the subject, although it has serious limitations. In particular the works of Byelorussian scholars who during the period between the two World Wars lived abroad or in 'western Byelorussia — which during the years 1921-39 was under Polish occupation — are dismissed with the following superficial remark: 'Byelorussian clericals and nationalists in western Byelorussia and Lithuania became active in the field of the study of the history of Byelorussian literature. However, their views on the social role of writers and men of culture of the past were very limited, and they interpreted literary processes from bourgeois nationalistic positions' (pp. 38-39).

M. I. Praškovič, the author of the section on *The Literature of Ancient Ruś* (pp. 55-100), seems to share the view commonly held by the Soviet historians who consider the period of history between the 10th and 13th centuries as common to all East Slavs. However, quite sensibly, he restricts his study to those works of literature which either constitute without doubt the common heritage of all East Slav peoples (for example, *The Lay of Igor's Campaign*) or can be regarded as Byelorussian in the strict sense by reason of their origin (e. g. the writings of St. Cyril of Turaŭ and of Clement of Smalensk, the *Vitae* of St. Euphrosyne of Połack and St. Abraham of Smalensk, the legend of St. Mercury of Smalensk). Other East

Slav works of literature of definitely non-Byelorussian origin are either omitted or receive but a brief mention. The only exception is the early chronicles, mostly of Kievan origin. The fact that they are an important source for the history of Byelorussia — as the author rightly points out — does not make them part of Byelorussian literature. Sometimes the author does not make his meaning quite clear and occasionally he contradicts himself, as in the following passage: 'Kievan Ruś was one of the greatest and most powerful states in the Europe of the 10-12th centuries. It was not one centralised state, but a conglomeration of principalities independent of (my italics *A. N.*), or semi-dependent upon, Kiev' (p. 55). One can also hardly agree with Praškovič's assertion that the significance of the *Vita* of St. Euphrosyne of Połack was as 'an earnest plea for literacy and education' (p. 75): medieval hagiographers were not generally interested in social reforms. On the whole, however, it is a well written account of the early stages of development of Byelorussian literature.

The next section deals with the literature of the 14th to early 16th centuries. In the first part (pp. 101-140) V. A. Čamiarycki gives — in what is probably the most interesting and original contribution in the whole book — an excellent account of the development of Byelorussian chronicle writing during the period in question. According to the author, 'every nation, having attained a certain degree of consciousness of its own identity, begins to realise the historical significance and value of its past, the memory of which must be preserved for the future' (p. 108). Having thus asserted the connection between the appearance of national chronicles and the growth of national consciousness, Čamiarycki proceeds to describe the development of Byelorussian chronicle writing within the context of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, indicating how the character of the chronicles changed at various stages depending on the political situation and the milieu in which the chronicler lived.

Much attention is paid by Čamiarycki to the problems of language, style and composition.

In *The Bases of Humanism in Byelorussia* (pp. 140-160) by V. K. Zajcaŭ, one finds a long enumeration of various sects, heresies and religious movements which have caught the author's fancy, but of which he evidently knows precious little, as the following example — one of many — shows: 'By denying that Christ belonged to the Divine Trinity, and considering him to be born of a mortal woman, the Lutherans introduced a pronouncedly rationalistic element into the explanation of one of the most complicated Christian dogmas. The spontaneous materialistic sense of this explanation is evident. It takes its roots in the ancient doubts of the Monophysites and Origen in the triple nature of Christ (*sic!*)' (p. 131). One may ask what all this has to do with humanism in Byelorussia or elsewhere. What is particularly unfortunate is that the chapter on humanism serve as an introduction to the chapter on Francis Skaryna (pp. 160-190), also written by Zajcaŭ. As a printer and translator of Biblical texts, who in 1517 gave Byelorussians their first printed book, Skaryna occupies a unique position in the history of Byelorussian culture. His place in literature is assured by his numerous prefaces to the books of the Bible published by him, which may be regarded as the earliest examples of the Byelorussian essay. A study of these prefaces as works of literature may prove to be very rewarding, as little has been done in this field up till now. Nothing of this, of course, is to be found in Zajcaŭ's writing. Instead, he produces a long and tortuous discourse on what he supposes to have been Skaryna's philosophical, political and social views. It is full of gratuitous assertions, such as: 'The fact that he (Skaryna) placed duty towards men alongside the service of God indicated that God had to squeeze a little in order to give place to man by his side' (p. 172). Moreover, Zajcaŭ's conclusions are not infrequently based on a misunderstanding of Skaryna's text. Thus he interprets *pravo jazyčeskoje* — which is how Skaryna translated *ius gentium* — as 'pagan law' (p. 183), confusing, no doubt, the Church Sla-

vonc *jazyk* ('people', Lat. *gens*) used by Skaryna with the Russian *jazyčnik* ('pagan').

A. F. Koršunaŭ is known as the editor of the *Reader of Early and Middle Byelorussian Literature* (Minsk, 1959) and of the *Diary* of Athanasius Filipovič (Minsk, 1965). He is therefore well qualified to write on the literature of the mid-16th to mid-17th centuries. Indeed, his pages on Filon Kmita, Jeŭšašeŭski and the Chronicle of Barkuŭabaŭ (pp. 243-268) are among the best to date on these topics. The clarity of exposition is here combined with a profound knowledge and sound principles of literary appreciation. The chapters on Vasil Ciapinski (pp. 222-233), Athanasius Filipovič (pp. 330-343) and Symon Budny (pp. 209-222) are also good, although too much is made of the latter writer, whose place in Byelorussian literature cannot be other than modest, since most of his works are in Polish or in Latin. Unfortunately Koršunaŭ shows little discernment when dealing with religious polemical literature of the late 16th and early 17th centuries. It seems that in this case he was guided by considerations which have little to do with literature. Thus out of some sixty pages dedicated to this subject (pp. 258-329), Koršunaŭ devotes thirty to the detailed analysis of anti-Catholic works by Philalet and Meletius Smatrycki which do not really fall within the province of Byelorussian literature, since they were written in Polish. This sets a rather dangerous precedent: doubtless one day someone, following Koršunaŭ's example but not sharing his views, may seek to pass off as Byelorussian literature *Obrona jedności cerkiewnej* by the Catholic writer Leo Kreuzza, or some other such work of which there are many. Who will then draw the line and decide what is and what is not part of Byelorussian literature? Religious controversial writings obviously have their place in the history of Byelorussian literature, but in considering them it would be good to bear in mind the sensible remarks of the Russian scholar Goleniščev-Kutuzov: 'We do not divide Ukrainian and Byelorussian writers into 'clean' and 'unclean' according to their religious beliefs, especially as in those times the same person frequently changed his religion two or three times.' (Cf.

I. N. Goleniščev-Kutuzov, *Gumanizm u vostočnyh slavjan*, Moscow, 1963, pp. 5-6.) Elsewhere the same author adds: 'It seems to us that the next aim of the scholars of Ukrainian humanism should not be quarrels about how and to what extent this or that writer defected from the Orthodox faith and sympathised with the Uniates, but the study of the *style* (author's italics — *A. N.*) of controversial writings within the limits of the Church Slavonic and Ukrainian-Byelorussian language' (*op. cit.* p. 53).

Praškovič contributes chapters on the political satire of the first half of the 17th century (pp. 343-354) and on the poetry of the 16-17th centuries (pp. 354-364). When writing about Skaryna's paraphrase of the Ten Commandments in verse, which is to be found in the latter's preface to the Book of Exodus, Praškovič remarks that 'Skaryna ... puts into first place those of them (i. e. commandments — *A. N.*) which he considers to be most important' (p. 355). In fact Skaryna did nothing of the kind; he simply followed the traditional order of the Commandments as accepted by the Catholic Church. The Orthodox have the Ten Commandments arranged in a slightly different order. There is a special chapter on Simeon Połacki (pp. 365-380), also written by Praškovič. It seems that the importance given to this poet by Praškovič — and other Soviet Byelorussian writers — is out of all proportion to his real place in Byelorussian literature. Although Simeon Połacki was a native of Byelorussia, he belongs essentially to Russian literature, where his merits are considerable indeed. During his period of life in Byelorussia he wrote mostly in Polish and in Latin. His Byelorussian verses are comparatively few and not very good. However, although Simeon Połacki has some claim to be included among Byelorussian

poets, Jan Bielabocki has none at all. Like Simeon, he was Byelorussian by birth, but all his known poetical works belong to the Muscovite period of his life and are written in Russian. Praškovič's short analysis of Bielabocki's poetry (pp. 414-416) seems completely out of place.

There is a very well-written and interesting section on Byelorussian translations of foreign works of literature by L. Ja. Cimaškova (pp. 383-408). It could have been made still more interesting by a mention of the writings of the Byelorussian Tartars. Finally P. P. Achrymienka contributes a short but informative section on the literature of the late 17th and the 18th centuries (pp. 411-432) where, among other things, he deals with the beginnings of the Byelorussian theatre.

The book, when compared with its predecessors such as Dabrynin's *Bielaruskaja litaratura-staražytny pieryjad* (Minsk, 1952) or Volski's *Narysy pa historyi bielaruskaj litaratury epochi fieadalizrna* (Minsk, 1958), shows that the study of early and middle Byelorussian literature during the last decade or so has progressed considerably in Byelorussia. Much serious research and reappraisal of former attitudes has taken place. At the same time the subject still suffers from severe limitations imposed on it by the present-day exigencies of officialdom. Hence the presence of much irrelevant material, of frequently anachronistic attitudes towards historical events and an undue preoccupation with what is 'progressive' and what 'reactionary'. This is particularly evident in the treatment of such topics as Skaryna, religious polemical literature and Simeon Połacki. Considerations such as these lead one to the view that, like the proverbial curate's egg, this is a work which is very good in parts.

A.N.

Žuraŭski, A. I. *Historyja bielaruskaj litaraturnej movy*, vol. I. 'Navuka i tehnika', Minsk, 1967. 372 pages.

This sound and well-presented book fills an important gap in the field of historical Slavonic philology. Dr Žuraŭski, who is head of the 'History of the Byelorussian Language' section of the Institute of Philology at the Byelorussian Academy of Sciences, describes the development of the

Byelorussian literary language from its beginnings to the end of the 18th century, presenting a great deal of material that is new, and where (as in the case of Skaryna studies, for example) some work has already been done, a comprehensive and balanced assessment of the present state of

scholarly opinion. The eminently reasonable and unbiased approach to controversial matters (such as the degree of independence achieved by the Byelorussian language in the 16th century) and the unusually clear exposition of unfamiliar linguistic data combine to make this volume a model of its kind, despite typesetting and printing that fall some way beneath the best present-day standards.

Although principally concerned with the 'internal' development of the Byelorussian literary language, Żuraŭski also discusses the various literary genres of his period and the special features of the language they employed. Nor does he neglect the historical background to linguistic changes, and indeed, these sections (for example, that on the decline of the Byelorussian literary language at the end of the 16th century) present considerable interest for the general reader as well as the specialist.

The book is divided into four main sections: 'The Literary Language of Ancient Ruś as the Starting Point of the Byelorussian Literary Language' (pp. 15-34); 'The Language of Byelorussian Writings of the Early Period' (pp. 35-225); 'The State of the Byelorussian Literary Language between the Second Half of the 16th Century and the First Half of the 17th Century' (pp. 226-348); 'The Decline of the Old Byelorussian Literary Language' (pp. 349-70). The two middle sections are subdivided into shorter parts dealing with specific writers or topics: for example, 'The Language of S. Budny' or 'The Peculiarities of the Language of Manuscript Confessional Literature'. The author approaches each literary monument 'with basically the same method, discussing in turn its orthographical, morphological, syntactical and lexical features. Such a procedure inevitably leads to some repetition, notably in the listing of Church Slavonicisms or Polonisms, but this small fault is outweighed by the advantage of having a relatively full and detailed linguistic picture of particular representative works, rather than just a general gloss of tendencies and periods as a whole. This approach is supported by the presentation of passages from the monuments, often alongside other texts which offer an interesting comparison: for example,

a passage from the *Book of Esther* in Skaryna's version is set against that found in the *Ostrog Bible* of 1581; a passage from Maraŭski's *Comedy* of 1787 against one from Dunin-Marčinkievič's *Sielanka*.

The early history of the Byelorussian literary language, like that of Russian and Ukrainian, is basically the story of the gradual replacing by popular, native words and forms of the bookish Church Slavonic elements. Żuraŭski traces the natural infiltration of Byelorussian forms as well as their conscious use to replace Church Slavonic features in writers like Skaryna, Budny and Ciapinski, always taking care to establish the 'linguistic basis' of a given document from objective analysis of the evidence, rather than any *a priori* conviction. In treating the early period he notes that hitherto scholars have not recognized the existence of a particular Byelorussian version of Church Slavonic, although other types, like Russian, Ukrainian, Moravian, Bulgarian, Czech and Serbian are all properly classified (pp. 93-4). This notable gap in the study of Church Slavonic clearly resulted from scholars' ignorance of basic Byelorussian material, and is symptomatic of the general by-passing of Byelorussian in historical linguistics. It is to be hoped that the present book will go some way towards remedying this deficiency. Żuraŭski makes a number of interesting suggestions as to why Skaryna described the language of his Biblical books as Byelorussian ('ruskij jazyk') when they appear to be essentially Church Slavonic, albeit with a strong admixture of Byelorussian elements. Elsewhere (in the *Liber viaticus* and other Vilna publications) he rightly characterized his language as Church Slavonic, and thus it would seem that he himself did distinguish between the different types of language; the name 'ruskij jazyk' was hardly, as has sometimes been suggested, a mere indication of the writer's democratic aims or of his intended readership. Also extremely interesting is the author's treatment of the use of glosses by various writers, especially Ciapinski, and their significance as an indication of which lexical elements were 'established' and which 'strange' at given times.

Naturally, loan material plays an important role in the development of

the Byelorussian literary language, as, indeed, it does in all the other Slavonic languages. In this connection the author's scrupulous concern to define and classify the various types of borrowing makes his conclusions particularly valuable. Monuments and writers are always viewed in their historical context, and loan words peculiar to any one source are distinguished from those that were widely used and from those that were later wholly adopted by the Byelorussian literary language (for example, nearly all the Polonisms in Budny fall into the latter category); purely bookish borrowings are separated from natural adoptions, and elements that enrich and add to a language's resources are contrasted with those (like many of the Polonisms of the 17th century) which merely duplicate or even replace native elements and eventually threaten the language's survival as an independent entity.

The question of the historical linguistic independence of Byelorussian acquires particular significance when even today an established Russian scholar like Kuznecov denies that Byelorussian enjoyed any separate existence as a literary language before the 19th century (V. I. Borovskij and P. S. Kuznecov, *Istoričeskaja grammatika ruskogo jazyka*, Moscow, 1963, p. 31). His view is refuted by the evidence of this book, and Żuraŭski demonstrates convincingly that in actual fact the Byelorussian literary language freed itself from Church Slavonic long before Ukrainian or the language of Muscovy, retarded as it was by the Second South Slavonic influence. Although the effect of Polish on Byelorussian is at present much better documented than any influence in the other direction, the 16th century Polish writer Łukasz Górnicki (1527-1603) declared his own language to be poorly developed by comparison with Byelorussian, and felt that it might well be enriched by the latter. There was no codification of the language at this time — it was, of course, Church Slavonic, then beginning to be forgotten, that formed the object of Zizani's and Biarynda's descriptive studies — and it is noteworthy that this lack of codification and normalisation was one of the weapons used by Michalon, Augustin Rotundus and other Lithuanians who

as early as the middle of the 16th century proposed that Latin (the myth of Lithuanians' Roman origins enjoyed considerable currency at that time) replace the 'alien, crude and barbarian' Byelorussian as the chancery language of the Grand Duchy. These ill-camouflaged nationalistic pretensions won little support from the Lithuanian nobility, but nonetheless weakened the official position of Byelorussian and facilitated its later decline and the domination of Polish. It is in this light that one must view the famous clause in the Statute that documents must be written 'with Byelorussian letters and words ... and not with any other language and words'. Although clearly evidence of Byelorussian's universality as the national chancery language, it also indicates the need to defend against the encroachments that were beginning to be made on its status. Whilst the development of the Byelorussian literary language had been made at the expense of Church Slavonic, it is interesting to note that with its decline in the 17th century the archaic Slavonic elements again began to figure as an important linguistic influence.

In the predictably small section on the 18th century Dr Żuraŭski discusses the language used by the peasant characters in two school dramas, *Comedy* and *Doctor przymuszony*, in a manuscript collection of 1787 by Marašeŭski and Cacerski, teachers of rhetoric at Ziabel high school in the Połack region. The comedies demonstrate convincingly that the 'native' language had not undergone the strong Polish influence experienced by the old literary language and, indeed, that they were linguistically closer to the 19th century than, for example, the 16th.

The author's wide reading and willingness to acknowledge his debt to other investigators, including foreign scholars like Stang and Martel, together with the thoroughness of his own first-hand researches make this book a very comprehensive study of the Byelorussian literary language. Where, however, work clearly remains to be done (as in the statistical analysis of the language of Skaryna's Biblical books, or the etymological study of old Byelorussian) he does not

attempt to fill the gaps with dubious hypotheses. In view of the present lack of even basic historical lexicons, however, an index of the words discussed in this volume would have made a very valuable addition and served as a stop-gap until the projected Byelorussian historical and etymological dictionary makes its appearance. Whether he is discussing the importance of the Judaizers or the names given to Byelorussian in the middle ages, the relation of the

chancery language to the popular tongue or the use of Latin linguistic elements by anti-Catholic writers, Zuraŭski combines a comprehensible and interesting style that will appeal to the general reader with the scholarly exactitude that is essential for a specialist's work of reference. Altogether, this is an important milestone in modern Byelorussian philology, and it augurs extremely well for the future of the subject.

A. B. McM.

Kramko, I. I., Jurevič, A. K. and Janovič, A. I. *Historyja bielaruskaj litaraturnaj movy*, vol. II. 'Navuka i technika', Minsk, 1968. 342 pages.

In this, the second and final volume of the History of the Byelorussian Literary Language produced at the Academy of Sciences of the BSSR, the first section, dealing with the period from 1800 to 1917, is the work of I. I. Kramko (pp. 7-154), whilst the period from, the 1917 revolution to the present day is described by A. K. Jurevič and A. I. Janovič. The same pattern of approach is adopted as in vol. I, although one immediately notices a less systematic and comprehensive presentation of both bibliographical and linguistic data than in the earlier volume. Nonetheless, the book offers a great deal of new material based on first-hand researches and goes a considerable way towards filling some of the larger gaps in the scientific study of this subject, particularly with regard to the development of the Byelorussian language in the 19th century.

In the latter field where many literary works are known to have been lost, or, rather, not yet re-discovered it is plainly impossible to claim any completely comprehensive coverage of the monuments and writers whose language is taken for analysis. Nonetheless, one is bound to ask why the language of Čačot's *Piosnki* but not that of his philomath works is considered; why the macaronic works of Pščoľko are analysed whilst the *Papiery* of Abuchovič are ignored; or why *Enieida navyvarat*, *Taras na Parnasie* and *Vinšavahnie Savašcieja* are described from an orthographical and phonological standpoint, when only *Enieida* is subjected to a lexical analysis. Likewise, it is regrettable that several important scholarly studies escape mention in footnote (as

in vol. I, there is no bibliography). Obvious examples are I. Bas on *Taras na Parnasie* ('Drukavanyja i rukapisnyja varyjanty paemy *Tarasa na Parnasie*', *Bielaruskaja litaratura*, III, 1960, pp. 213-33) and I. K. Hiermanovič's thesis (*Normalizacija leksiki bielaruskaj litaraturnaj movy ū 20-30 hh. XX sth.*, Minsk, 1963).

A certain imbalance also lies in the unnecessary concentration upon the language of 'democratic' writers like Kalinoŭski rather than 'reactionaries' such as F. F. Błus, author of 'Reč starovojta k krest'janam o svobode (dłja narodnogo čtenija), and 'Reč starovojta (dłja čtenija moim zemljakam)', written in Byelorussian and published in the *Mogilevskije gubernskije vedomosti*, Nos 51, 60 and 61, 1862, whose doggerel tracts probably enjoyed, if not deserved, a larger readership than *Mužyckaja praŭda*. If the 19th century monuments, as is suggested here, are to be regarded as reflections of individual dialects rather than as potentially influential milestones in the development of the nascent literary language, it is surely no less important to give details of the provenance and background of writers like Błus and Pšycki than it is to link Kalinoŭski with the struggle for national liberation. Democracy, however laudable in itself, rarely holds any significance in the field of linguistics. In the realm of ideology as a whole the average reader will encounter a number of surprises: Dunin-Marcinkievič's poetry was hardly linked with the 'broadening of the national liberation front' (p. 47); nor may the Russian and Polish ethnographers, linguists and historians who did such valuable work in the

19th century be described as mere tools of Tsarist autocracy or the Polish magnates, less valuable in their contribution to the Byelorussian cause than such well-known Russian socialists as Herzen, Černyševskij, Dobroljubov and Gor'kij.

In the 19th century the morphology and syntax of the Byelorussian written language were relatively stable, but its lexical resources were subject to constant pressure from the established Russian and Polish literary languages. This factor lends considerable importance to the question of when words were first used in literary Byelorussian, but until the appearance of a comprehensive etymological dictionary there is bound to be a sprinkling of mistakes in such general descriptive works as the present one: *ašvieta*, *maralna* and *byt* were not introduced by Jelski (p. 107) but by Dun'in-Marcinkievič (the former two in the letter to J. I. Kraszewski of 1861, the latter in his translation of *Pan Tadeusz*). *Milašć* hardly merits inclusion in a list of abstract nouns that distinguish Kalinoŭski's language from that of his predecessors (p. 69) since it had been used on a number of occasions by both Barščeŭski and Dunin-Marcinkievič. Similarly, several words like *ašvieta* and *vučań*, said to have come with *Naša niva* (p. 146), were used in the 19th century. Nor can there be any justification for suggesting that *ruchomašć* appeared for the first time in both the *Biasieda staraha volnika* (p. 79) and in Jelski's works (p. 107). Mistakes of the latter kind would have been obviated by the provision of an index, sadly missed here as in vol. I and, indeed, the majority of Soviet Byelorussian linguistic works.

Reluctance to acknowledge loan material in one's own language is a conspicuous feature of the not uncommon nationalist approach to philology. Kramko appears to move in the opposite direction, often describing words as Polonisms or Russicisms without sufficient justification. For example: *abiacać*, *kachać*, *skarha*, *skaržycca*, *tumać* and *zvada* are all literary in Byelorussian, Ukrainian and Polish; *abiatnica* and *pavitannje* are recorded in the dictionaries of Nosovič and of Bajkoŭ and Niekraševič as well as being found in Ukrainian and Polish; *blazień* is characteristic of literary and dialectal

Byelorussian, Ukrainian and Polish, although in Russian it is purely dialectal; *umova* (also used in literary Byelorussian of the early period) is literary in modern Byelorussian and in Polish and is also occasionally found in Ukrainian; *pro/it* is common to Russian, Ukrainian and Polish. Part of the trouble is that the authors do not define their terms clearly enough, leaving room for speculation as to what exactly constitutes a Polonism or Russicism in any given context. In this respect vol. I of *Historyja bielaruskaj litaraturnaj movy* was undoubtedly superior. *Zbavieŭnie*, for example, is described as a Polonism although it is literary in modern Byelorussian, because it lacks the epenthetic T characteristic of the East Slavonic languages; described as a Polonism in Karski's *Zapadnorusskije perevody Psaltyri v 15-17 vekach*, it should hardly be given the same generic description as words like *cionhla* or *ušechnahoncy*.

A number of words cited as Russicisms are also open to question: *knut* is common to both Russian and Polish; *pradviaščać* is characteristic of modern literary Byelorussian and of the Smolensk dialect; *prykaz*, *sulić* and *vialeć*, although not typical of Byelorussian, were used by a wide variety of writers of the 19th and early 20th century, and should therefore be distinguished from rarefies like *padstrakaciel* and *pradnaznačany*, for example. *Satvaryciel* (in *Krótkie zebranie nauki chrezciaŭskiej...*) is described as an Old Church Slavonicism; it was used in early Byelorussian literature and is now found in Ukrainian and Polish (*stworzyciel*), but, although consisting of typical Church Slavonic word-formational elements, is not recorded in Sreznevskij's *Materialy*, nor in any of the other standard glossaries of Old Church Slavonic. Once again, the methods of classification used require explanation.

In both the 19th and the early 20th centuries neologisms played a significant role in the formation of the literary language. It is not clear, however, why *mšcivašć*, (common to modern Byelorussian, Ukrainian and Polish), *rondzić* (a clear Polonism, used by Kalinoŭski) and *sporka* (recorded in Nosovic and found also in Ukrainian) should be described as the inventions of Jelski. A number of

doubtful points also arise in the description of words as literary and dialectal: cases in point are *hadka* (p. 27), *pryŭraciŭ* (p. 39) and *skrucicca* (p. 60).

The authors follow the usual modern practice of normalising the spelling of lexical examples, but in a few instances the results are misleading: *korbač* (p. 46) is undoubtedly a Polishism in Čačot's *Piosnki*, but the fact that he gives it final stress (*karbacz*) is not without significance; *rupieč* (p. 59) is the literary Byelorussian form of this Baltic word, but Dunin-Marcinkievič (with reference to whose language it is mentioned on p. 59) uses only the dialectal form *rupič*.

A basic and often repeated premise of this book is that in the 19th century the Byelorussian literary language arose more or less haphazardly on a purely dialectal basis. Even if this is accepted, despite Bahuševič's self-declared acquaintance with the old literary language (Maciej Buračok, *Dudka bielaruskaja*, Cracow, 1891, p. 111), it must be recognized that the revived modern literary language had many elements in common with its 16th century predecessor, if only because of their common basis. The approach to 19th century writers which sees them purely as representatives of their own dialects and regards as 'alien' or 'foreign' everything that falls outside the dialect in question, even though it may be characteristic of 19th century and modern literary usage as a whole, would seem to impose upon itself unnecessary limitations.

Historyja bielaruskaj litaraturnaj movy stresses the interaction between the Russian and Byelorussian languages from the 30s to the 60s of the present century. There appear to be grounds for simply describing this phenomenon as the influence of Russian on Byelorussian, since the reverse process does not seem to have taken or be taking place. On p. 286 the authors compare the *Ruska-bielaruskij*

sloŭnik of 1928, the *Ruska-bielaruskij sloŭnik* of 1937 and the *Ruska-----ruskij sloŭnik* of 1953, demonstrating the degree of Russification shown by the dictionary of 1937, for obvious reasons. No less interesting would have been a comparison between the dictionary of 1953 and the *Bielaruskij sloŭnik* of 1962 which is a marked improvement on its predecessor as a record of the living, independent Byelorussian language. This, however, hardly warrants the self-congratulatory tone of phrases like 'diversity and high scholarly standard' (p. 291) with which the authors describe the state of modern Byelorussian linguistics as a whole. Whilst it may be argued that philology is the strongest and most productive of the disciplines currently pursued at the Byelorussian Academy of Sciences, there is still a tremendous amount of basic work to be done. For example: Kašpiarovič's *Viciebski krajovy sloŭnik* of 1927 was classified as 'materyjały' at the time but no further contributions of any significance to the envisaged comprehensive dialectal dictionary have been made to this day.

It is not clear why translations from Russian (pp. 86-7) should have greater cultural significance than those made by the same authors from Polish or Ukrainian; nor why a polyglot background should assume importance in some writers like Kalinoŭski (p. 68), but not in others. Nonetheless, despite these and a number of other questionable points, this volume undoubtedly represents a huge body of painstaking research and analysis, carefully and, for the most part, clearly laid out. Like its predecessor, vol. II of *Historyja -----ruskaj litaraturnaj movy* is an important and very worthwhile publication which will serve as a textbook for students and scholars as well as offering a great deal that will be of interest to the general reader.

A. B. McM.

Antonovič, A. K. *Belorusskije teksty, pisannyje arabskim pišmom, i ich grafiko-orfografičeskaja sistema* (Byelorussian Texts in Arabic Script, and Their Graphico-orthographical System). Vilna, 1968. 418 pages. English summary. Glossary. Indexes. Bibliography. Illustrations.

The beginnings of the Tartar settlements in Byelorussia go back to the 14th century. The first settlers seem to have been prisoners of war taken by

the Grand Duke Vitaŭt in 1397. Vitaŭt gave them freedom and land in western Byelorussia, in return for which they were required to do military serv-

ice in time of war. Later they were joined by other Tartars, many of whom came to Byelorussia of their own free will. Thanks to the wise policy of Vitaŭt and his successors, the newcomers soon adapted themselves to life in the new country. They remained faithful to their Moslem religion, but already by the 16th century they had forgotten their native tongue and had begun to translate their writings — mostly of a religious character — into Byelorussian and into Polish, using the Arabic alphabet.

The writings of the Byelorussian Tartars began to arouse the interest of scholars from the 19th century onwards. Many of them — Fleischer, Muchlinski, Kračkoŭski, Stankievič, Volski, Szykiewicz, Woronowicz and, more recently, Kanapacki and Zajączkowski — made interesting studies in this field. With one or two exceptions, however, these studies were of a fragmentary character and were based on a very limited material. Moreover, some authors, albeit distinguished orientalists, were hampered by an insufficient knowledge of the Byelorussian language and by the absence of a satisfactory system of transliteration.

The present work by Antonovič is the first fundamental treatise on the writings of Byelorussian Tartars. It consists of three parts. The first (pp. 8-49) is a short but comprehensive survey of the history and the present state of study of the subject. The second part (pp. 50-177) contains a detailed description of twenty manuscripts which have been studied by the author. Three manuscripts belong to the 17th century, one was written in the 20th, and the rest date from the 18th and 19th centuries. According to the contents they are divided into the following groups: *tesfir*, or the book of the Koran with an interlinear translation into the vernacular; *chamil*, or a prayer book containing, among other things, many prayers and spells which are believed to have medicinal or magic powers; *tedźvid*, or the book of rules on how to read the Koran; and finally *kitab*, the most interesting of all containing various ritual prescriptions, moral precepts, legends, pious stories and apocrypha. There is also an interesting 19th century Turkish-Byelorussian conversation manual and a legal document in Polish. The Byelorussian

language predominates, but there are also several texts in Polish, Arabic and Turkish. On the question of the origin of the majority of the Polish texts Antonovič, without adopting a definite standpoint, is inclined to believe that they were translated from the Byelorussian. They all display many Byelorussian traits. One can, on the other hand, discern a Polish influence in several Byelorussian texts, although the degree of this influence varies from text to text.

The third part (pp. 178-350) is concerned with the graphical system and orthography in the writings of the Byelorussian Tartars. It begins with a table setting out an excellent system for transliterating Arabic characters into Cyrillic which was devised by Antonovič specially for the purpose of transcribing Byelorussian texts. There follows a detailed study of the phonetical values of the Arabic characters as used by the Byelorussian Tartars.

Several interesting points emerge from this study. In the first place the orthography of the Byelorussian Tartars was based essentially on the phonetic principle. For this reason their writings display several characteristic traits of the Byelorussian language, which are not evident from the conventional writings of the same period in the Cyrillic script. In particular the Tartars invented special signs for *dz* and *c* which enabled them to represent in writing such typical features of the Byelorussian language as *dziekaŭnie* and *ciekaŭnie*. The softness and hardness of the consonant pairs *z-ż*, *s-ś*, *k-k'* are consistently indicated throughout. On the other hand the softness and hardness of other consonant pairs (*m*, *n*, *p* etc.) is not indicated, and this is one of the main shortcomings of the Arabic script as applied to the Byelorussian language. A strict distinction is drawn between *h* and *g*, the latter being used in the Byelorussian texts only in the words of foreign origin. Of the other characteristics of the Byelorussian language which appear in the Tartar manuscripts one may mention the consistent representation of *ji* (as in the word *jich* — them) and *akaŭnie*. In the field of vowels the Byelorussian Tartars showed much inventiveness. They consistently distinguished *a* from *e*, and by the end of the 18th century they had invented a special sign for

o as distinct from *u* (in the Arabic script, of course, the vowels *a* and *e* are indicated by the same sign, and so are *o* and *u*). On the other hand the Byelorussian Tartars represented *i* and *y* by the same sign. Their writings also show many characteristic properties of dialects, for the most part from western Byelorussia.

From this short survey one can see that the writings of the Byelorussian Tartars are a valuable source of material for Byelorussian philologists and dialectologists, and may prove of

interest to ethnographers and students of folklore, as well as to orientalists.

Antonovič's work deserves the highest commendation for its contents, as well as for the excellent and thorough way in which the subject matter has been treated. It is a valuable contribution to Byelorussian philological literature and it constitutes a solid basis for the further study of the writings of the Byelorussian Tartars.

A.N.

Schneider, L. *Język białoruski*. Nauka dla wszystkich 58. Polska akademia nauk, Cracow, 1968. 31 pages. Short bibliography.

This little booklet provides a further illustration of the growing Polish interest in Byelorussian affairs that has been noted in recent years. After an introduction outlining the history of the Byelorussian language and literature, as well as the main centres of Byelorussian settlement outside the BSSR (other republics of the USSR one and a half million; Poland one hundred thousand; Canada ten thousand; the USA ten thousand; the Argentine five thousand), there follow a number of short sections dealing

synchronously with the phonology, orthography, morphology, syntax and lexicon of the modern Byelorussian literary language. The two final sections describe the principal Byelorussian dialects and the moves towards linguistic normalisation at the end of the last century. Both presentation and exposition are admirable, but the bibliography woefully inadequate, even for a purely popular work of this kind.

A. B. McM.

Tolstoj, N. I. (ed.) *Leksika Poles'ja. Materialy dlja polesskogo dialektного slovarja*. 'Nauka', Moscow, 1968. 476 pages. Maps and drawings. Bibliography.

This collection of lexicographical articles is based on a series of linguistic expeditions made to Palešsie between 1962 and 1965. Published by the Institute of Slavonic Studies of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR it is modelled on an earlier Polish work: Doroszewski's *Słownictwo Warmii i Mazur*, Wrocław, 1958. The phonetic norm against which the various dialectal examples are set is the Russian form of any given word, or, where none exists, an hypothetical or artificial form constructed according to the rules of Russian phonology. Articles on individual words compare their dialectal variants from both a phonetic and a semantic viewpoint.

The thematic fields from which the words are taken are essentially those

of material culture: geographical relief and vegetation, meteorology, building, agriculture, bee-keeping, fishing, weaving, textile processing, pottery, transport and communications, food, clothing, footwear, crockery, flora and fauna, beliefs and ceremonies. These semantic fields, typical of East Slavonic lexicology at the present time, although arguably less interesting linguistically than, for example, abstract words, offer valuable data for the student of ethnography as well as the comparative phonetician. This volume has obviously been prepared with care and it makes a valuable contribution to the study of East Slavonic linguistics.

A. B. McM.

Martynov, V. V. and Tolstoj, N. I. (eds) *Poles'je (Lingvistika. Archeologija. Toponimika)*. With an introduction by S. B. Bemstejn. 'Nauka', Moscow, 1968. 304 pages. Maps, diagrams and photographic plates.

The title of this volume is something of a misnomer since for the most part it is simply a companion or complementary volume to *Leksika Poles'ja* published by the same institute in the same year: of the thirteen constituent articles, nine offer analyses of the lexical data given in the other volume, and one provides a chronicle of the scientific expeditions in the course of which that material was collected.

The archaeology and toponymy of the title are represented by Ju. V. Kucharenko's 'Poles'je i jeho mesto v processe etnogeneza slavjan, (18-46) and V. A. Nikonov's 'Dve volny v toponimii Poles'ja' (193-205). In addition there is A. K. Antonovič's 'Kratkij obzor belorusskich tekstov, pisaných arabskim pis'mom' (256-299)

which covers some of the same ground as his book *Belorusskije teksty arabskim pis'mom*, Vilna, 1968, and is presumably included in this collection because many, although not all, of the documents he has studied show linguistic features characteristic of the south-west Byelorussian dialects.

Although this volume contains a good deal that is of interest to students of the subject, it must once again be said that more judicious grouping of material (the chronicle of expeditions and nine lexical studies should clearly have been published together with, or as an appendix to *Leksika Poles'ja*) would have facilitated greatly the future work of scholars, bibliographers and librarians.

A. B. McM.

Biryła, M. V. and Martynaŭ, V. U. (eds) *Linhvistyčnyja dašledavañni*. With an introduction by A. Kryvicki. 'Navuka i technika', Minsk, 1968. 167 pp.

This mimeographed brochure published by the Jakub Kołas Philological Institute of the Byelorussian Academy of Sciences consists of short articles by young Byelorussian philologists, some of whom, like P. V. Viarchoŭ, A. I. Padlužny and H. F. Jurčanka, are already quite well-known, whilst others are new to the field. A wide range of linguistic topics are covered, the majority concerned with lexical problems, and of these many take their material from the Palešsie region. Amongst other interesting articles one may mention I. P. Kalvalčuk's attempts to characterize the

transitional Byelorussian-Lithuanian dialects, or the commentaries by L. P. Maščenskaja and A. K. Ušcinovič on the language of mediaeval memoir literature and official documents, respectively.

A welcome and useful publication (in an edition of only 510) this collection would have been much more readily accessible to present and, particularly, future scholars had it formed an issue of a periodical publication such as the now inexplicably defunct *Pracy instytutu movaznaŭstva*.

A. B. McM.

Vajtovič, N. T. *Nienaciskny vakalizm narodnych havorak Bielarusi*. 'Navuka i technika', Minsk, 1968. 220 pages. Maps.

This monograph makes a useful contribution to the study of unstressed vowels in Byelorussian dialects, a field of study, particularly with regard to *akañnie*, that in recent years has produced considerably more speculation and dogma than solid research. The book is divided into four main sections: 'Vowels in the First Pre-tonic Position' (9-114); 'Vowels in Other Unstressed Positions' (115-162); 'The Relationships between Different Types of Unstressed Vowels after Hard, Soft and Sibilant Consonants and "c" ("ts") and "r"' (163-192); 'On the Question of the Development of *Akañnie* in the Byelorussian Dialects' (193-216). The transliteration system

adopted is adequate for the purpose, being a slightly simplified version of that used in the *Dyialektalaħičny atlas* of 1968. Maps illustrating the various vocalic glosses are given, although they sometimes become obscure as a result of overcrowding. The book throws light on the phonology of Byelorussian dialects and their relationship to those of Russia and the Ukraine, as well as clearing up a number of points relating to the development of *akañnie*. It is a pity that the author follows the deplorable current practice of substituting footnotes for a comprehensive bibliography.

A. B. McM.

REVIEWS OF PERIODICALS

BIELARUS (The Byelorussian), New York — Toronto, 1968.

Stanislaŭ Stankievič contributes a study of the origins of the Soviet system in Byelorussia (129/1). Z. Stankievic provides details of a visit to the Byelorussian colony in Munich (129/5). St. Krušynič surveys the state of Byelorussian museums in the Soviet Union (130/3), whereas S. Stankievič considers the life and work of the distinguished literary critic and historian Maksim Harecki (1893-1932). There is an interesting survey of the activity of the Byelorussian military historian General Francišak Kušal (1895-1968) by A. Bahrovič (134/3), some material on the history of the Byelorussian Orthodox Church by V. Vassileŭski (134/2-3), and notes on the Exhibition organised by the New York Public Library to celebrate the 450th anniversary of printing in Byelorussia (135-136/1). Jurka Vičbič provides some interesting historical particulars of the non-Bolshevik uprisings in the Viciebsk and Vialiž areas in November 1918 (139/3). Finally Stanislaŭ Stankievič considers the importance of the work of Vaclaŭ Lastoŭski (1883-1937c.) in the field of Byelorussian studies. Lastoŭski became one of the most constant and dedicated contributors to the journal *Naša niva*, and his essays and short stories were much admired by the poet Maksim Bahdanovič.

Janka Kupała himself dedicated his poem *Piešnia zvanara* to 'Vlast', as he was called by his friends. In 1910 he published a popular history of Byelorussia in which he attempted to present a coherent picture of the Byelorussian nation through the ages, with particular reference to the richness of their cultural heritage. During the period of the wars of intervention (1919-1921) he became involved in left-wing politics, and was for some time Prime Minister of the Rada Government. With the final partition of Byelorussia between Poland and the Soviet Union after the Treaty of Riga, he continued his activity in Kaunas where he edited the cultural journal *Kryvič*. In 1924 he published a Byelorussian dictionary under the title *Kryŭski sloŭnik*, and this was followed in 1926 by a well-documented history of printing — *Historyja kryŭskaj knihi*. In that year he returned to Minsk, where he became Secretary to the Institute of Byelorussian Culture, and later a member of the Academy of Sciences. His selected prose works were published in Munich in 1956, but he is still the subject of official disapproval. He remains, however, one of the leading figures of the Byelorussian national revival (140/2).

BOŻYM ŚLACHAM (On God's Highway), London, 1968.

Fr A. Nadson writes on Western literature in Byelorussia from the 15th to the 17th centuries (106/2-6, 108/3-7). Jurka Vičbič describes the churches of Viciebsk and their organs (106/6-9), and A. Čabatar provides details of the life among the Byelorussian settlers in Western Australia (108/11-14, 109/11-12). The situation of the Byelorussian colony in the Argentine is considered in an article by E. Ciauloŭski (108/9-10). Jurka

Vičbič gives his reminiscences of the poet Andrej Ziaziula (1878-1921), otherwise known as Alexander Astramovič. His works are much neglected at the present time, though they are of considerable charm, with graphic descriptions of country life in the village of Aršany, where the poet worked as a parish priest. His works appeared in the journal *Naša niva*, and in the Roman Catholic periodical *Bielarus* (111/12-15).

MAŁADOŚĆ. A monthly. Minsk, 1968.

Vasil Bykaŭ, who for years has been a faithful contributor to *Maladość*, publishes his new war novel *Praklataja vyšynia* (The Damned Hill; V-33).

It is a story of one day in the life of an infantry company, during which it took a hill from the Germans, was driven back and was getting ready

for a new attack. The company commander Ananjeŭ, a rough, uneducated and hard-swearing person, hides under a rather unattractive exterior his warm human feelings and real concern for his men. When one of them, an elderly kolkhoz peasant, is taken prisoner by the Germans in his sleep, Ananjeŭ, in defiance of military orders, agrees to get him back in exchange for a captive German *Feldwebel*. His second-in-command — who in the Soviet army is always a political commissar — Hrynievič is a different person. Always correct and well-spoken, he is at the same time somewhat aloof and cold. While sergeant Pilipienko, a Ukrainian, makes no attempt to speak Russian, Hrynievič carefully hides the fact that he is a Byelorussian and admits it only before his death to Ananjeŭ's orderly, the only other Byelorussian in the company. He is not a coward and, although wounded in the leg, refuses to leave his post. The action of Ananjeŭ, however, frightens him, and he suddenly decides to avail himself of his right as a wounded man to be sent back from the front-line. The real reason for this decision is made plain in his words to the company commander: 'You got yourself into this mess, you try to get out of it alone. I am not going to help you'. He does not go far, however, before he is mortally wounded. Ananjeŭ, too, seems to realise the grave consequences of his action and gives orders to the company to get ready for a new attack, for which there is no need, and which from the very start is doomed to failure. When the perplexed orderly points this out to him, he gets a cryptic reply: 'A fried fish is not afraid of the cat.'

Among other prose works one should mention *Nastasia Miakota* (XI-51) by Todar Kuleša. It is an historical novel based on a note in an old chronicle of the siege of Słuck by the Tartars in the 13th century. The true name of the author is Jazep Dyla (born 1880) who first began to write in *Naša niva* under the pseudonym of Nazar Byvajeŭski. In 1919 he became a member of the first government of the Byelorussian Soviet Republic. In 1930 he was a victim of the Stalinist purges, but fortunately managed to survive. He now lives in Saratov.

The short story *Maruta i Zina* (I-30)

promises much from its author Anatol Kudravic, if he continues in this vein. Other writers who publish new prose works include Alaksiej Karpiuk, Ivan Navumienka, Klara Piščykava, Aleš Pałčeŭski and others. The poetry section is well represented by the works of Hienadz Buraŭkin, Viera Viarba, Danuta Bičel-Zahnietava, Siarhieŭ Zakoŭnikau, Vasil Zujonak, Volha Ipatava, Aleh Łojka, Aleš Naŭrocki, Uładzimir Paŭlaŭ, Juraš Svirka, Ryhor Siemaškiavič and others. Michaś Stralcoŭ, author of several fine short stories and an original literary critic, has also tried his talent in poetry (VI-105) with a great degree of success. One hopes, however, that he will not abandon his writing in prose.

Alaksiej Hardzicki publishes his interviews with the writers Janka Skryhan (II-141), Janka Bryl (VII-12Y) and Ivan Navumienka (X-140). The literary critic Aleš Jaškiavič contributes a somewhat provocative (perhaps deliberately) article *Hety dalni haryzont* (That Far-off Horizon; I-127) in which he talks about the crisis of ideas among the younger authors, i. e. among those who began to write in the late 1950's and early 1960's. According to him, they have not yet found their 'grand theme' and, once the first enthusiasm and the freshness of youth have passed, they have nothing much to say. Jaškiavič at once makes certain important qualifications, and speaks with appreciation of the work of such 'younger' writers and poets as Karatkievič, Ptašnikaŭ, Stralcoŭ, Baradulin and Viarcinski. The article provoked a lively discussion in which both younger and older writers took part. The results of the discussion were published under the general title *Hety dalni haryzont* (V-143).

Another thought-provoking article by the same author is *Nieuladkavanaje ŭlatahičnaje sumiežža* (The Non-systematised Philological Borderland; XI-135). The occasion for this article was provided by a review by two philologists of the lyrical poem *Kalina* (The Guelder Rose; IV-4) by Viera Viarba. The reviewers criticise the poetess for what appears to them her improper use of certain expressions, not in accordance with the traditional usage in literary Byelorussian. Jaskievic questions the validity of their arguments and goes on by

saying that some philologists would like to restrict linguistic processes by imposing rigid rules on the literary language without taking account of its continuous development. He suggests that they should pay more attention to the 'borderland' where their interests and those of writers meet.

The poet Aleś Bačyła in his *Maksimavymi ścieżkami* (In the Footsteps of Maksim; XI-149) describes his sentimental journey through the places where Maksim Bańdanovič lived and worked, and his meetings with persons who still remembered him. J. Cichanovič contributes an article *Narodny artyst* (The People's Artist; IV-127) on the well-known writer playwright and actor Uładzi-słaŭ Haľubok (1882-1937).

Aleś Kryvicki in *Zalatyja rossypy sloŭ* (The Golden Treasury of Words; XII-130) writes on the linguistic riches of the Turaŭ region in Palessie, where he spent the summer on a dialectological expedition. S. Akulič in *Cud čalaviečykh ruk* (Marvels Made by Human Hands; VI-153) describes the old Byelorussian manuscript books, their miniatures and ornaments. The archeologist H. Štychaŭ in

Ślady lehiendy (The Traces of a Legend; IV-139) tells the story of the discovery of the remains of the ancient city of Zaslau from information contained in an old chronicle. There is also a short article *Zamak nad Mirankaj* (The Castle on the River Miranka; VII-152) by L. Michaj-loŭskaja about the old castle in Mir. In the article *Bielaruskі kamienny arnament* (Byelorussian Stone Ornament; XII-143) Z. Paźniak describes some examples of 19th century stone ornament in the folk tradition from the Braślau district. The author argues that Byelorussians have a long and rich tradition of decorative art in stone, and suggests that it should be used to give a national character to the exteriors of new buildings in the Byelorussian capital.

Much attention is paid to the problems of contemporary art. In particular there is the article *Nias-tomnaść* (Indefatigability; I-97) by V. Ivin about the life and work of Byelorussia's foremost sculptor Zair Azhur on the occasion of the latter's sixtieth birthday. There are also articles about the painters A. Hlebaŭ (III-128) and Ja. Zajcaŭ (I-129) by I. Kraučanka and B. Krepak respectively.

POLYMYA. The monthly journal of the Union of Byelorussian Soviet Writers. Minsk, 1968.

The publication of the new novel *Śniežnyja zimy* (Snowy Winters; XI-3, XII-19) by Ivan Šamiakin is no doubt a major event in the Byelorussian literary field. It is the story of an elderly agriculturist Antaniuk, who is forced into premature 'voluntary' retirement because of his opposition to the official agricultural policy. When two years later that policy undergoes a sudden change, he is invited to return to active life, but is not offered his former post now occupied by persons with more elastic principles. He refuses. To complicate matters, Antaniuk's war-time love affair — which had occurred more than twenty years previously, and which he had tried to keep secret for the sake of his family — is brought to the surface and used to bring certain pressures to bear on him. There is also the problem of the relationship between the younger and older generations, when Antaniuk sees his grown-up children each going his or

her own way, not exactly as he would wish it. Finally, his well-meaning attempts to hide a certain painful truth only bring more unnecessary suffering to the person he wanted to shield.

The theme of *Śniežnyja zimy*, as of Šamiakin's previous novels *Krynicy* and *Serca na daloni*, is thoroughly contemporary. In portraying human relationships in present-day Byelorussia, the author steers clear of easy solutions and over-simplifications. It is a successful novel by a talented writer, who is sometimes compared to the greatest Byelorussian pre-war novelist, Kuźma Corny.

Alaksiej Karpiuk in his autobiographical novel *Pa kvietku ščaćcia* (In Search of the Flower of Happiness; II-9) reminisces on his childhood and youth in a village in the extreme western corner of Byelorussia, first under Polish and then under German rule.

Among the numerous short stories

one should mention especially *Karol niaboža* (Poor Charles; II-119) and *Dziki holub* (The Wild Pigeon; IX-87) by *Viačasłaŭ Adamčyk*, *Siastrucha* (The Cousin; V-114) by Anatol Kudravic, as well as *Pustalha* (The Kestrel; I-66) and *Chleb* (Bread; VIII-36) by *Mikoła Kapyłovič*. The last two writers belong to the younger generation and, judging by their most recent works, much may be expected of them in the future.

Other writers publishing prose works include *Alena Vasilevič*, *Alaksiej Kułakoŭski*, *Arkadz Marciniovič*, *Aleš Naŭrocki*, *Roman Sabalenka* and others. There are also several new poetical works by *Edzi Ahniačviet*, *Mikoła Aŭramčyk*, *Ryhor Baradulin*, *Piatruš Brouka*, *Anton Bialevič*, *Larysa Hienijuš*, *Vasil Zujonak*, *Kastuś Kirejenka*, *Arkadz Kulašoŭ*, *Eŭdakija Łoś*, *Aleh Łojka*, *Siarhiej Panižnik*, *Alaksiej Pysin*, *Jaraš Svirka*, *Ryhor Siemaškievič*, *Janka Sipakoŭ*, *Maksim Tank* and others.

Dzimistry Buhajoŭ makes an important publication of some hitherto unknown works by *Maksim Harecki* (VIII-60). *M. Lučeraŭ* publishes the autobiography of *Kuźma Čorny* (V-232), and *I. Sačanka* — some articles by the same writer (IX-231). There is also an unknown early poem by *Jakub Kołas* (V-233) found by *I. Safamievič* in the archives of the Polish ethnographer *M. Fedorowski*.

Hienadz Kisialoŭ in his most interesting article *Zahadka bielaruskaj 'Enieidy'* (The Puzzle of the Byelorussian 'Aeneid'; I-208, II-191) tries to establish the authorship of this early 19th century Byelorussian poem, and indirectly sheds much light on the ethnic character of the Smolensk province. *Michaś Łazaruk* in *Paetycny vopyt Janki Łučyny* (The Poetical Experience of *Janka Łučyna*; I-182) considers the work of the poet *Jan Niestuchoŭski* (1851-1897) who wrote under the pseudonym of *Janka Łučyna*. In particular he questions the established view which makes him a disciple of *Francišak Bałuševič*, and tries to show *Łučyna's* indebtedness to certain earlier Polish poets, especially to *Władysław Syrokomla*. *Ivan Navumienka* contributes an article *Paezija pracy i pryrody* (The Poetry of Work and Nature; X-191) in which he writes on the themes of work and nature in *Jakub Kołas's Novaja*

ziamlá. The works of the poet *Juli Taubin* (1911-1940) and writers *Maksim Harecki* (1893-1939) and *Platon Hałavač* (1903-1937), are considered respectively in articles by *Ryhor Biazozkin* (IX-220), *Julijan Pšyrkoŭ* (II-178) and *Michaś Smołkin* (I-197).

Arsieŭ Lis in *Paznanaje charastvo ziamli* (The Beauty of the Land Discovered; IV-144) writes on the historian of Byelorussian art, *Mikoła Ščakacichin* (d. 1940). Professor *Branisłaŭ Epimach-Šypiła* (1859-1934), a well-known scholar and one of the pioneers of the Byelorussian national revival, is the subject of the article *Čalaviek pradvieśnia* (Man of the Early Spring; I-160) by *Ryhor Siemaszkievič*. *Adam Maldzín* in his *La vytokaŭ bielaruskaj muzyki* (At the Sources of Byelorussian Music; IV-158) deals with the beginnings of modern Byelorussian music in the 19th century. A special mention must be made of the article *Pra nazvu 'Bielarus'* (Concerning the Name 'Byelorussia'; I-175) by *Jazep Jucho*, in which the author describes the evolution of the name 'Byelorussia' from its origins to the present day. According to *Jucho*, the use of the word 'Byelorussia' as a name for the whole nation is of recent origin. At the time of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Byelorussians were known as Lithuanians and their country was called Lithuania. It is a timely article on a subject where much confusion exists.

On 1 January 1919 the Byelorussian Soviet Republic was proclaimed in Smolensk. The history of this proclamation, as well as the events immediately preceding it, is the subject of the article *Abviaščeŭnie respubliki* (The Proclamation of the Republic; IX-168) by *Vadzim Krutalevič*. As the author himself admits, 'an impartial and comprehensive account of how the Byelorussian Soviet Republic was proclaimed has its difficulties. One can hardly find another sector of the history of Soviet Byelorussia where the subjectivist bias and deliberate misuse of documentary sources have been pushed to such a degree' (ibid., p. 168). The article by *Krutalevič* goes a long way towards restoring the true picture, and one is favourably impressed by his strict adherence to concrete facts, as found in the contemporary sources. It is a pity that towards the end he

spoils this generally good impression by some rather blatant exaggerations. Writing about the achievements of Byelorussia during the Soviet period he says: 'Here is the laconic language of figures... in 1913 only two books in the Byelorussian language were published. And these are the statistics for the year 1966: altogether 1741 books were printed in the Republic, and of these 333 in the Byelorussian language.'

In the first place, over twenty Byelorussian books were published in 1913, and not two as stated by Krutalevič. Among them were such significant works of literature as *Vianok* by Maksim Bahdanovič, *Šlacham žyćcia* and *Paŭlinka* by Janka Kupała, *Pieśni* by Ciška Hartny, *Abrazki* by Zmitrok Biadula, *Apaviadaŭni* by Uładzistaŭ Haľubok, short stories *Niomanaŭ dar* and *Toŭstaje palena* by Jakub Kołas and others. It would be, however, importune, even meaningless, to compare the achievements of 1913 with those of 1966. In 1913 Byelorussia was a backward province of the Russian Empire. The Russian government was hostile to any idea of a Byelorussian national or cultural revival, and until 1906 there was a ban on Byelorussian printing. In 1966 Byelorussia had been in existence for forty-eight years as the Byelorussian Soviet Republic, where the Byelorussian language was not only recognised, but enjoyed an official status and was taught in schools. The population of the republic at the beginning of the year 1967 was 8,744,000 (Cf. SSSR, *Enciklopedičeskij Spravočnik*, Moscow, 1967, p. 511). For a country of this size there is nothing extraordinary in a publication of 1741 books a year. What remaining admiration one may still be inclined to feel for this feat disappears when one realises that only 333 books i. e. less than one in five were in the Byelorussian language. In the same year the Lithuanian Soviet Republic (pop. 3,026,000) published 2341 books, of which 1536 were in Lithuanian, 675 in Russian and 7 in other languages; the Latvian Republic (pop. 2,285,000) published 1828 books, of which 1002 were in Latvian and 781 in Russian; the Estonian Republic (pop. 1,293,000) published 1928 books, of which 1448 were in Estonian, 403 in Russian and 4 in other languages (Cf. *Pečat' SSSR v 1966 godu*, Moscow, 1967, table 44).

The problem of the Byelorussian language and its development figures prominently in this year's issues. Fiodar Jankoŭski provides three publications of folk idioms (II-235, V-251, XII-227) and answers readers' queries about modern usage in the Byelorussian language (VI-244). Ja. Kamaroŭski and E. Maciejeŭskaja also publish a collection of idioms from the Stoŭbicy district (X-249), whilst A. Šydoŭski makes some interesting remarks on Byelorussian toponymy (X-238). Michaś Kłyška continues his publication of materials for the dictionary of synonyms (III-245, IV-248, VI-247). Sciapan Hrabčykaŭ writes about the urgent need for vocabularies of the language of Byelorussian writers (VII-248), and Ryhor Škraba in his *Adno slova* (One Word; IV-239) considers certain problems connected with translation from Russian into Byelorussian. The other contributors — Aleś Kaŭrus (III-243) Leanid Padhajski (IV-246, VIII-232) and Jaŭhieŭ Rapanovič (VIII-225, X-236) — are concerned with the proper use of words and expressions in the Byelorussian language. Leanid Carankoŭ publishes a collection of folk proverbs, mostly from the southern region of Byelorussia (X-240).

Viera Pałtaran in her essay *Dzivasil* ('Elecampane': name of a plant with bitter aromatic roots and leaves; III-134) gives a charming account of a short Christmas visit she and her two friends paid to the village of Toniež in the deep south of Byelorussian Palešsie, where the new ways of life are inextricably mixed with old, deeply rooted traditions.

One should finally mention an article by Maryna Barstok *Svoj dar* (One's Own Gift; IV-202), in which the author considers the problem of patriotism and internationalism in present-day Byelorussian poetry. Referring to the discussion which took place in 1957 in the Russian journal *Družba narodov* about the meaning of the traditional communist definition of culture as 'national in form and socialist in content', she comes to the conclusion that the content, no less than the form, must have national characteristics: 'National identity is imprinted on them (i. e. on the works of literature — *A. N.*) not only by the language — although this is one of the most important elements of form — but also by the national character

of the hero, national cultural traditions, the milieu in which the action takes place, the inner world and spiritual formation of the author himself (p. 203). While accepting that in the end there will be one universal language and culture, she continues: 'There is no need to hasten artificially the slow process of fusion of national cultures and languages, which will take centuries, and to give preference to one given language. The native language is the basis of national culture. Only in his native tongue can

man open his soul to the full and express his innermost feelings' (*ibid.*). After giving several examples of patriotic and universal elements in present-day Byelorussian poetry, Barstok finishes thus: 'Universal values have developed through the ages from the living experiences and spiritual achievements of single peoples, nations 'small' and big. In the crown of world poetry there are also woven flowers from the land of Byelorussia' (p. 210).

ROCZNIK BIAŁOSTOCKI (The Białystok Yearbook — Vol. VIII). Białystok, 1968 (in Polish).

Zofia Sokołowska contributes a study of the achievements of the Museums of Białystok province in Eastern Poland, and deals with the prospects for their further development. Mention is made of the Byelorussian Local Museum in Białowieża, which contains some three hundred items collected by the Byelorussian inhabitants of the area. There are other good local museums in Suwałki, and Ciechanowiec, whilst the Branicki Palace Museum in Białystok contains a representative collection of paintings and sculpture. The Białystok District Museum has a wide range of exhibits with sections on archaeology, agriculture, local architecture, flora and fauna, as well as some score of frescoes saved from the ancient monastery of Supraśl (11-26). Danuta Jaskanis deals with the history and organisation of the Białystok District Museum as a centre for research and the propagation of knowledge pertaining to the region (27-47). Jan Jaskanis studies some of the local archaeological remains, and discusses their importance in relation to the early history of Białystok (49-53). Zygmunt Filipowicz provides an article on the Suwałki Museum and the attendant

problems of research and educational work (54-66). The whole question of the preservation of movable historical objects, and the restoration of ancient examples of plastic art, is considered by Ludmiła Lebedzińska, with particular reference to the refurbishing of the Baroque sculptures in the Branicki Palace and the Abbots Palace in Supraśl, and the restoration both of the portraits in the Church of Tykocin and of the splendid Byzantine frescoes of the Monastery Church in Supraśl (67-75). Borys Nikiatiuk gives an interesting account of labour and employment problems in the Białowieża forest area during the years 1932-1933 (187-263). In conclusion, Anna Zadrożyńska-Barącz describes the traditional folk-costumes of the Ciechanowiec region of Padlaśsie, and explains at some length how folk-dress evolved into standard dress in a 'mercantilo-fiscal' economy (337-358). The Yearbook 'contains a relatively comprehensive section of reviews of books on the history of Padlaśsie, Lithuania and Byelorussia (473-513). There is also a short chronicle, though it contains little to interest the student of Byelorussian affairs (515-537).

SLAVIA ORIENTALIS. A quarterly. Vol. XVII. Warsaw, 1968 (in Polish).

This journal, published by the Slavonic Section of the Polish Academy of Sciences, is one of the most serious periodical publications in the field of East Slavonic studies. Much attention is paid to problems of the Byelorussian language. Articles are published as a rule in Polish, but

Byelorussian, Ukrainian and other languages are occasionally used.

A. Hruco (Minsk) contributes an article on Subordinate *Clauses of Time in the Byelorussian Language* (I-67), illustrating it with many examples from old writings and present-day dialects. E. Smułkowa

(Warsaw) in her *Studies in the Byelorussian Vocabulary* (II-237) considers a group of words relating to the arable land of the eastern part of the Białystok region. She also contributes an *Essay on the Phonological System of Ruthenian Dialects in the East Białystok Region* (III-415).

Number III of the journal is in honour of Professor A. Obrębska-Jablońska who holds the Chair of Byelorussian at the University of Warsaw. It is, therefore, particularly rich in Byelorussian material. In addition to the article by E. Smułkowa mentioned above, A. Araškova and Ju. Mackievič (Minsk) consider *Characteristic Traits of Byelorussian Dialects in the Western Borderland* (III-275), that is in the region where the Byelorussian language comes into direct contact with Polish and Lithuanian. F. Jankoŭski (Minsk) writes on *Idioms in Volume IV of 'Lud Białoruski' by Michał Fedorowski* (III-325). M. Kondratiuk (Warsaw) considers *Dual Names of Certain Localities* (III-333) in the Białystok region — the one of popular Byelorussian origin, and the other official — and Z. Kuraszkiewicz (Poznań) writes on *The Name of the River Prypiać* (III-339). N. Vajtovic contributes an article *On the Development of the Non-dissimilative 'Akannie' in Byelorussian Dialects* (III-437). P. Zwolinski (Warsaw) in his *The Earliest Byelorussian Secular*

Printed Text (III-463) contends that the Byelorussians were the first among the East Slavs to have not only a religious printed book (Skaryna's Bible in 1517-19), but also a secular work. The publication in question is a map of Muscovy prepared in Vilna by a German, Antony Wied, and printed in Antwerp in 1542. The map was provided with a Byelorussian text. A. Żuraŭski (Minsk) contributes *Notes on the Linguistic Characteristics of Jeŭlašeŭski's Memoirs* (III-467). This article reveals the interesting fact that the original manuscript of the *Memoirs* has apparently been traced at last to the Polish Central Archives of Ancient Acts. The problems of the Polish language in Byelorussia are considered by S. Urbańczyk (Cracow) in his *Beginnings of the Polish Dialect in the Vilna Region* (III-433) and by V. Viarenič (Minsk) in *Accentuation and Combination of Vowels in the Polish Dialects of Palešsie* (III-449). J. Siatkowski (Warsaw) in his *The Word 'Ručnica', 'Rušnica'* (III-359) considers the origin of this name as used for the arquebus in Polish, Byelorussian and other Slavonic languages.

One should finally mention the excellent reviews of Ułašcyk's edition of the *Chronicle of Bychaviec* (Moscow, 1966) by F. Sielicki (I-89), and of *Bielaruskaje movaznaŭstva* (Minsk, 1967) by E. Smułkowa (I-114).

VIEŠCI AKADEMII NAVUK BSSR — Seryja hramadskich navuk. 5 numbers. Minsk, 1968.

Among the contributions to this year's *Proceedings* one should mention first of all *Byelorussian Elements in Ukrainian Written Documents of the 15-17th Centuries* (IV-115) by N. Aničenka — an interesting study of a hitherto practically untouched subject. A. Hruco continues his valuable research into the historical syntax of the Byelorussian language in his *Dependant Complementary Clauses with Relative Pronouns as Conjunctions* (IV-105), based on a wealth of concrete material taken from written documents of the 16-17th centuries. P. Viarchoŭ writes an article on the *History of the Suffixes '-it', '-bit' in the Byelorussian Language* (II-110) and V. Čekman contributes an article on the *Question of the 'Lisping' 'S' and 'Z' in Byelorussian Dialects* (III-

83). There is also an interesting article by I. Łučyc-Fiedarec on *Comparative-typological Analysis of One Lexical Group from Prypiać Palešsie* (III-98), dealing with the group of words relating to house and farm buildings from that region.

N. Janhoł in his *Problems of Collecting and Studying Byelorussian Proverbs and Folk Sayings* (III-67) traces the history of collecting Byelorussian proverbs from the 17th century to the present day. In particular he contends that the pioneer in that field was Solomon Rysinski whose *Polish Proverbs* published in 1618 in Lubča contained much Byelorussian material. Unfortunately the author has not taken sufficient care in checking the general historical facts, which would have saved him making such an

erratic statement as that the printing of Byelorussian books was prohibited in the 17th century. He also gratuitously endows Francis Skaryna with the initial 'H.', standing, one assumes, for *Hieorhij* (George).

The ethnographer L. Małčanava writes on the *Changes in the Structure of Byelorussian Peasant Dwellings during the Soviet Period* (I-109). From a very valuable article by Z. Mažejka, *Harvest Songs of Palešsie* (II-119) one can see that the traditional element is still very strong in the folklore of that region. H. Duleba describes *Certain Traits of Present-day Family Customs among Byelorussian Kolkhoz Peasants* (III-75) based on material from the Barysaŭ region.

In *The Bahuševičy Settlement in the Minsk Province* (III-61) the archaeologist L. Pobal, on the basis of material discovered by him during his recent excavations of that ancient settlement in central Byelorussia, tries to shed some light on the problem of the northern borders of the so-called Miłharad and Zarubiniec cultures, and on the relations between the Baltic and Slavonic tribes in the early Iron age.

V. Zajcaŭ in his *Skaryna in Padua* (IV-98) describes the intellectual milieu of that university in the early 16th century and tries to assess its influence on the formation of the

intellectual and spiritual outlook of Francis Skaryna.

The economic history of Byelorussia is the subject of the articles *The Influence of Railways on the Development of the Economy of Byelorussia in the Second Half of the 19th Century* (II-75) by Z. Abehauz and *The Corn Trade in Byelorussia during the Agrarian Crisis at the End of the 19th Century* (IV-56) by Ch. Bejłkin.

The great majority of articles on historical, economic and other subjects deal with the Soviet period. Some of them, such as *50 Years of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic* (V-5) by N. Kamienskaja, and *With a Sure Step* (Byelorussian Literature during the Soviet Period) (V-106) by M. Jaroš, are superficial and essentially propagandist in character. Others, like the *Development of Federal Relations between Byelorussia and the Russian Socialist Federal Republic prior to the Formation of the USSR* (IV-5) by S. Marhunski, might have been interesting if the treatment of the subject were not so one-sided. None of the articles in this group reveals any new facts.

Finally, one would like to think that the Justification of the *Method of Calculation of Profit in Fixing the Wholesale Prices for Glassware* (VI-56) by B. Antropaŭ owes its publication in the Proceedings to some sort of oversight on the part of the editors.