

## Reviews

### BOOK REVIEWS

Broŭka, P. U. (main ed.) *Bielaruskaja savieckaja encykłapiedyja*, Vol. I. Minsk, 1969. 624 pages.

The year 1967 marked the 450th anniversary of the first book published by a Byelorussian, Francis Skaryna (see *450 hod bielaruskaha knihadrukavañnia*, Minsk, 1968). The first Byelorussian encyclopaedia, however, did not appear until 1969. There is no need to dwell on the reasons, various and complicated as they are, that have delayed publication until now. The substance of the book is impressive, and is by no means without importance to the student of Byelorussian culture.

The first volume of the B.S.E. contains more than 2,500 entries briefly describing various subjects, beginning with the letter A and finishing with the mythological Greek goddess Athene.

Many of the articles are common to all modern encyclopaedias, and deal with geography (articles on England, the Andes, Asia, Austria etc.), and well-known writers, scholars and statesmen (such as Andersen, Archimedes, Aristotle, Augustus), as well as modern inventions and industry (the automobile, automaton etc.).

Apart from these entries of general interest, there is ample material concerning Byelorussia and Byelorussians to justify the title of the encyclopaedia. There are informative articles on Byelorussian villages and lakes; on rivers, large and small; and on famous scholars and other celebrities (although not all of those mentioned in the encyclopaedia rate as such). Some of the latter are not even referred to in standard text-books.

No doubt the article on Byelorussian folk costume will attract the attention of many readers; not only because of its content, but on account of the beautiful coloured illustrations.

The German occupation of Byelorussia ('Akupacyjny režym', pp. 210-17), which lasted from June 1941 until July 1944, is described with great care and at greater length than

is usual. According to the B.S.E. more than 2,200,000 Soviet citizens and prisoners of war were killed, and about 380,000 were deported to Germany for hard labour during the three years of occupation. Extensive damage was also done to state institutions, industry, collective farms, and other enterprises. How much of this is accurate, however, one is unable to judge, since a full account of the destruction and death which ravaged Byelorussia during the last war and during the purges which preceded it has still to be published.

Although one may concur fully with what the B.S.E. says of the Latin poet Ovid, i. e. that his works 'had a great influence on the evolution of Western European literature' (p. 61), one should also point out that the works of Homer, Horace, Cicero and Ovid were preserved through the care and solicitude of those monks which the B.S.E. describes in such a negative manner. (For further observations on this question see Jean Decarreux, *Les Moines et la Civilisation*, B. Arthaud, Paris, 1962; also published in English by Allen and Unwin, London, 1964.)

A number of terms peculiar to Byelorussian language and life, for instance, 'abaranak', 'abroć', 'asviev', are not included. Also omitted are the names of several Byelorussians who are of considerable importance in the history of our culture: F. Abrantovič, A. Astramovič, F. Alachnovič, N. Arsieñnieva, Professor Abicht. On the other hand, a large number of Russians are mentioned; for instance, A. Abrykosaŭ, V. Aviečkin, M. Aharoŭ — and others of whom one can read in almost any Russian encyclopaedia, and who had little or nothing to do with Byelorussia.

These faults, however, cannot detract from the very real pleasure one feels at the publication of the first volume of the B.S.E., and one can

understand the enthusiasm of other Byelorussian writers (see, for example, Viera Pałtaran, 'Hartajučy staronki Biel. S.E.', *Matadość*, Minsk, 1, 1970, pp. 134-6). In it, despite the omissions and other defects, one finds a great

deal of sound and valuable information on a variety of subjects, and as such it will be welcomed by all who hold an interest in Byelorussian history and culture.

Č. Sipovič

Grinblat, M. Ja. *Belorusy. Očerki proischoždenija i etničeskoj istorii*. 'Nauka i tehnika', Minsk, 1968. 288 pages.

Within the compass of this small volume the author succeeds in giving a succinct account of the history of the subject and, more important, a great deal of information on the historical origins of the Byelorussian people and their material and spiritual culture. Drawing on the evidence of archaeology and, for the first time to any significant extent, onomastics, Grinblat outlines the territories of the Dregoviči, Kriviči and Rađimiči. As he says himself in the conclusion to the book, it is possible to disagree with many of his propositions and conclusions. The reader may not want to disagree with the author's assessment of the tribal basis of the Byelorussian nation, but will conceivably be puzzled by his assertion that this nation had its origin in the *drevnerusskaja narodnost'*. Was the rôle of the tribes merely geographical, or did they differ culturally from other East Slav tribes? In other words, this book does not get to grips with the problem of how disparate tribes could be welded into a nation, something more than a unified polity, then break up into three separate nations — if in fact this is what happened.

It is difficult to accept Grinblat's dismissal of Christianity as an important influencing factor in Byelorussian culture. Similarly many will disagree with his curt rejection of the Uniate church as an invention of the Poles foisted on the subjugated Byelorussians, playing no part at all in the cultural life of the country. Nevertheless, in minimizing the number of Byelorussian Orthodox converts to Catholicism, Grinblat provides some interesting information on an area of 'byelorussified' Lithuanians, who must have been Catholics since the coming of Christianity to the area. It is quite likely, however, that their importance is being overestimated in this context.

The chapters on the material and spiritual culture of the Byelorussian people are full of detail on peasant costume and tradition. Valuable though this is, it does give the impression that Byelorussian culture was exclusively a peasant one. This is a book that stimulates disagreement, argument and further research, and as such is worthy of the attention of anyone interested in Byelorussia.

James Dingley

Rakov, A. A. *Naselenije BSSR*. Minsk, 1969. 220 pages. Tables and maps.

The timing of publication of this book is a little unlucky, in that it appears just as the U.S.S.R. has taken a new census, in January 1970. The census, if it could have been included by the author, undoubtedly would have added a very great deal of up-to-date information, especially if it contains all the additional and more detailed data, asked for by demographers. However, it will be a year or two before the latest figures are published in full. Meanwhile Rakov's book gives a reasonably full picture, on the basis of material available up to January 1968. Although the work is a strictly demographic study, it is

clearly aimed at a wide readership, which lacks training in demographic techniques. The various calculations made by demographers in order to study and analyze population (for example, the Net Reproduction Ratio) are carefully explained in simple terms, making the book easily understandable by all. There are many tables of figures, but rather few diagrams and only four, poorly produced, maps. Just as the age-sex pyramids, which are given, provide a swift, visual comprehension of population structure, so other diagrams would have made some of the statistics easier to grasp by the layman.

Similarly, one would like to see more and better maps, which give a clearer picture of the geography of population, than whole chapters of text. It is also a serious deficiency that, although the maps are compiled using statistics for each *rajon*, the figures quoted in text and tables are never broken down below *voblaśc* level. Since there are only six *voblaści* in the Republic this is far too coarse a network to be very revealing. Worse still, the very significant statistics of occupation are dealt with at Republic level only, although it must be admitted that this gross deficiency is the fault of the 1959 census, which only gave these figures for Union Republics.

Despite such drawbacks, this book is a mine of information on the population of Byelorussia and on the changes it has experienced since the first census of 1897. In general, as one would expect, the population trends of Byelorussia reflect faithfully the national trends of the U.S.S.R. as a whole and particularly the trends of the European part of the country. The appalling World War II losses were especially keenly felt, as the entire Republic underwent occupation, as well as two bitter campaigns across its territory. The estimated 2,200,000 killed, plus a huge birth deficit, meant an overall loss of three and a half million people. Post-war recovery was slow; many Byelorussian towns in 1959 were still below pre-war size. But the late 1960s have seen considerable economic growth, matched by an upswing in the rate of urban growth — a trend confirmed by the preliminary 1970 figures. For the first time since the war, in 1965 and

1966 in-migration to towns outweighed the continuing, heavy out-migration from rural areas.

However, in Byelorussia, as in the U.S.S.R. as a whole, the prospects for future population growth are disturbing. The 1960s witnessed a dramatic fall in the Birth Rate, which can only partly be explained by the reduction in size of the present generation of parents due to the war-time birth deficit. The Net Reproduction Ratio, a far more significant indicator, has fallen to only just over 1.0 (1.058 in 1965-6, as against 1.253 in 1958-9) and in urban areas has been below 1.0 for over a decade. A ratio below 1.0 means a future decrease of population, unless this is made good by in-migration from other areas. At the same time, there is a gradually increasing proportion of the population over retirement age — 2.4% over 70 in 1926, 5.8% in 1967. These facts, taken together with the certain prospect of further industrial development, are likely to mean future labour shortage, a problem perhaps too lightly dismissed by Rakov, who foresees a simple answer in rationalization of labour deployment, especially in agriculture. In general, the author seems to take a rather bright view, perhaps because the readership is intended to be general, but it is certainly not shared by all leading Soviet demographers. However, the demographic problems facing Byelorussia are less severe, and likely to remain so, than those facing the more inhospitable regions of the north and east of the Soviet Union.

R. A. French

Savočkin, P. Z. (ed.) *Voprosy istorii BSSR*, 37. Izdatel'stvo BGU, Minsk, 1969. 196 pages.

The ten articles collected in this volume cover aspects of Byelorussian history from the sixteenth century onwards. Seven of them are devoted specifically to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and of these at least one has a title which is so self-explanatory that the article itself becomes superfluous — E. F. Savčuk's 'From the History of the Bolsheviks' Struggle against Byelorussian Bourgeois Nationalism during the German Occupation in 1918'. Other articles,

despite equally ponderous titles, bring together material which is new and interesting, although as is so often the case with Soviet historical journals, the problems mentioned in passing are frequently more tantalizing than the problems actually being dealt with. D. B. Mel'cer's 'From the History of the Contacts between Byelorussia and Bulgaria' (dealing with Byelorussian participation in the liberation of Bulgaria from the Turks) is a case in point.

Interest is not aroused by the sweeping grandeur of such remarks as 'The Byelorussian people always sympathized with the sorrow and suffering of the Bulgarian people and their just struggle for freedom and national liberation', so much as by a passing reference to Salomeja-Regina Ruseckaja from Navahrudak, who practised as a doctor in Turkish-occupied Bulgaria in the 1730's. The only article on the modern period dealing with Byelorussian customs, and thereby recognizing the existence of the Byelorussian nation, is M. F. Pilipenko's short study of the marital customs of Byelorussian peasants in the second half of the nineteenth century, with specific reference to *pridanoje* and *vykup*.

The most important contribution to the collection is undoubtedly A. P. Ignatenko's 'Trade Connections between Russia and Byelorussia in the Second Half of the Seventeenth Century'. The author has amassed a great deal of material from customs documents and other sources and arranged it in tabular form, but un-

fortunately uses his findings to grind a political axe. It would no doubt be possible to quote figures which would demonstrate the growth of trade between Byelorussia and other countries, but this growth would not be regarded as a prerequisite for the eventual reunion of Byelorussia with one of these other countries. Equally well documented is Ju. I. Dragun's survey of the history and economic conditions of Orša in the sixteenth and first half of the seventeenth centuries. Particularly useful here is the list of trades carried on in the town, and the explanation of the process by which it was able to gain for itself first the lesser and then the greater Magdeburg Right, by virtue of its important frontier position.

Inevitably the articles in this collection vary considerably in the contribution they make to our knowledge of Byelorussia and its people, but there is much that is both interesting and new to be found in most of them.

James Dingley

Maldzis, A. I. *Padarožža ũ XIX stahodździe. Z historyi bielaruskaj litaratury, mastactva i kultury*. 'Narodnaja ašvieta', Minsk, 1969. 206 pages. Bibliography.

Adam Maldzis is one of the most productive and reliable of the young scholars at present researching and describing Byelorussian cultural history of the 19th century. His latest work is, as the title suggests, essentially popular in character, although it offers a great deal of new and interesting information on this sadly neglected period. The book is divided into four main sections, the first dealing principally with writers, the second composers, the third with travellers and scientists, and the fourth with research into rare books and manuscripts. Not least amongst its attractions are the numerous well-chosen illustrations, many of which are taken from contemporary engravings and lithographs.

In the first part ('Jany byli pieršymi') Maldzis addresses himself above all to the less well-known Byelorussian literary figures of the 19th century, notably Čačot, Barščeŭski, Syrakomla, Karatynski, Płuh, Viaryhašanski, Jelski and Julian Bakšanski, of whom only the latter is of doubtful relevance, writing, as he did, exclusively in Polish. Maldzis's text

is interspersed with copious quotations from contemporary memoirs and from the works he discusses — a very useful practice in view of their rarity and general unavailability. Anecdotes abound: an established system of totalitarian censorship inevitably produces farce as well as repression and tragedy, and the Tsarist regime in the 19th century was no exception. We learn, for example, of a censor's report relating Jelski's manifestly conservative brochures to a new (manifestly subversive) craze for wearing sun-glasses adopted by the women of Pinsk! Historical snippets of this kind are found throughout the book and contribute greatly to the reader's pleasure.

Part two ('Na kryllach narodnaj piešni') describes the beginnings of Byelorussian national music, outlining the life and work of the principal composers, musicians and musical ethnographers of the 19th century, notably Ogiński, Moniuszko and Anton Abramovič, the composer of descriptive tone poems based on Byelorussian folk melodies.

Part three ('Na dalokich mierydjanach') relates the lives of four distinguished Byelorussian expatriates: Innat Damiejka, Adolf Januškievič, Bieniedykt Dyboŭski and Kantancin Jelski. It is good to be reminded that not all emigrés to the New World found themselves in the nightmarish jungle described in Upton Sinclair's novel. Damiejka's very real contribution to the cultural and scientific life of Chile is still remembered and, indeed, immortalised in, amongst other things, the names of a Chilean mountain range, an unusual type of mineral and a species of violet. If the travels of Kantancin Jelski were, like those of Damiejka, basically voluntary, those of the other two scientists, Adolf-Michał-Valar'jan-Jul'jan Januškievič and Bieniedykt Dyboŭski took the form of banishment for political activities. Their lives are worth

recording, for the history of science in Byelorussia, and indeed in the East Slavonic lands as a whole, largely remains to be written.

The last part of the book ('U pošukach staradaŭnich rukapisau' and 'Znachodki ŭ knižnym mory') contains quite as much interesting anecdotal and factual material as the earlier sections. Again the author's wide-ranging approach brings a welcome homogeneity to our view of a period too often in the past presented as a mere series of isolated figures and events against a background of vague and specious social preconceptions.

Altogether the book is a mine of fascinating and little-known information and may be recommended wholeheartedly to all with an interest in the literature, music, ethnography and social history of Byelorussia.

Arnold B. McMillin

Molčanova, L. A. *Material'naja Kul'tura Belorusov*. Minsk, 1968. 229 pages. Colour plates, photographs, drawings, maps.

There have been a number of ethnographic studies of the Byelorussians and of particular aspects of their culture, in its artistic and material expressions. But a broad survey of the physical objects created by their culture has been lacking. The gap is filled with a considerable degree of success by Molčanova's work. Although it covers a wide field, much detail is included. The cultural artefacts are considered under four main headings — agriculture, settlements and housing, clothing and domestic utensils — but each is interpreted fairly widely. For example, as well as descriptions of agricultural implements, ploughs, harrows, hand-tools and the like, there is a brief but useful survey of types of agricultural practice, the three-field, two-field, long fallow (*pieraloh*) and slash-and-burn (*lada*) systems. Again, Byelorussian food is included together with the utensils used in its preparation. The main items of diet are described, with general comments on methods of preparing them; those acquainted with Byelorussian cuisine might feel some regret that no recipes are included. The chapter on village patterns and house types includes farm buildings, types of fences and

building implements. The section on village types is distinctly brief, perhaps the least adequate part of the book. One misses any maps of village layout and also, equally desirable, any plans of farm layout.

Although the title of the book is all-inclusive, there are in fact two major, and obviously intentional, limitations of content. The first is a limitation to rural areas; this is possibly reasonable enough, as the urban areas were heavily influenced by outside cultures, principally Polish and Russian, but one is left wondering if the towns had no specifically Byelorussian features. The second limitation is in time. Apart from the occasional passing reference, only the artefacts of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are considered. It would have been extremely valuable if there had been an assessment of developments since, say, the sixteenth century. If these omissions are a mild weakness, within the scope actually encompassed, treatment is very good and one can have only praise for this most interesting work. A great merit is that it is splendidly illustrated. There are a number of colour plates of clothing and household utensils, and many photographs and black and

white drawings; there are also a few distribution maps. It is a pity that, following usual Soviet publishing practice, there is no list of illustrations and no index. Always an irritation, in a wide-ranging book of this nature the lack is particularly keenly

felt. Nevertheless, this is a work which will give anyone interested in Byelorussia and the Byelorussians much useful information and, indeed, pleasure.

R. A. French

Kozlovskij, P. G. *Krest'jane Belorussii vo vtoroj polovine XVII-XVIII v. (po materialam magnatskich votchin)*. 'Navuka i tehnika', Minsk, 1969. 204 pages.

In the final paragraph of his conclusion, the author states quite clearly that the purpose of this book is to refute the reactionary concepts of contemporary bourgeois historiography; the actual facts of Byelorussian rural history demonstrate the progressive development of the economy, despite all difficulties and hindrances, they show the inevitability of the replacement of one social structure by another. It is hard to understand what precisely Kozlovskij means by 'contemporary', since most of the authors with whom he disagrees were in fact writing in the 20's and 30's, and some considerably earlier; they certainly did not have access to the vast amount of material which he has used. As he himself points out, the material on which the final conclusions of this book are based, is three times greater than that used by Doŭnar-Zapolski in his *Socjalna-ekonomičnaja struktura Litoŭska-Belaruskaje dzjaržavy u XVI-XVIII stoleciach* (Minsk, 1927). It is particularly with Doŭnar-Zapolski that Kozlovskij disagrees on the extent of the decline of the rural economy in Byelorussia in the 18th century. He contends that the decline caused by the wars of 1648-1667 and the Great Northern War was checked and indeed reversed. Kozlovskij bases this on the figures contained in the tables — figures gleaned from the records of a large number of grand ducal domains in the western, central and eastern parts of Byelorussia. The figures are used to show the improved state of the rural economy as a whole in the eighteenth century, despite the increased number of (relatively) poorer peasants and the resultant concentration of wealth (expressed in terms of land and working cattle) in fewer hands. There were two factors influencing the growth or decline in property distinctions among peasants: the economic development of a village

would bring about an increase in the number of impoverished peasants there, but on the other hand the landowners themselves would be interested in maintaining a fairly level standard of wealth in order to maintain the *corvée* system. Kozlovskij does in fact cite evidence which shows that on several estates the magnates instructed their stewards to ensure that the wealthier peasants worked more days of *corvée* than the poorer ones. Yet elsewhere in the book he quotes many examples of landowners paying, either in cash (*soljarij*) or in kind (*ordinarij*), for work which would formerly have been considered *corvée*. There was thus no general trend towards replacement of *corvée* with quitrent or hired labour throughout Byelorussia, unless the apparently conflicting examples quoted above were taken from documents of different periods, and this is not made clear. Counts of hired labour and *otchodničestvo* were taken from the inventories of 5 estates, significantly less than the counts of other factors. The reason for this is the paucity of the material and the incomplete nature of the inventories. Yet it is on this material that Kozlovskij develops his theory of the emergence in what other historians have considered backward rural Byelorussia of a wealthy, 'exploiting' class of peasants.

In spite of this apparent attempt to fit data into the straitjacket of preconceived theories of social development, this book remains a valuable and interesting addition to our knowledge of the agrarian history of eastern Europe. It is of special importance for the amount of archive research it contains, and for the fact that it appears to be the first exclusive treatment of the subject of peasants on estates of the greater nobility.

James Dingley

Francysk Skaryna, *Pradmovy i pašlasťoŭi* (Prefaces and Postscripts). Compiled by Aleś Koršunaŭ, edited by V. V. Barysienka. 'Navuka i technika', Minsk, 1969. 240 pages. An article by M. Praškovič and commentaries by A. Koršunaŭ. Illustrations.

Recent years have seen a revival of interest among scholars in the life and work of the first Byelorussian printer Francis Skaryna (c. 1490-1551). This interest is perforce limited in extent as Skaryna editions today are very rare and in any case not readily accessible. The Janka Kupała Institute of Literature in Minsk must, therefore, be warmly congratulated on the publication of the present book which contains all the known original writings of Skaryna. Altogether there are 111 prefaces and postscripts to the various books of the Bible published by Skaryna both in Prague during the years 1517-19 and in Vilna in the year 1525. The postscripts are usually short, sometimes little more than colophons, but they are not devoid of interest. Thus the postscript to the Book of Numbers runs as follows: 'The fourth book of Moses... was printed with the help of God and His Immaculate Virgin Mother Mary and all the sainted men and women, by the work and care of the man of learning and doctor of medicine Francis, son of Skaryna, from the famous city of Połack, in the great city of Prague, for the better instruction of the common people' (p. 92). In a somewhat longer postscript to the Acts of the Apostles, published in Vilna in 1525, it is stated that the book was 'translated and printed by the work and care of Doctor Francis Skaryna of Połack in honour of God one in Trinity and His Immaculate Mother Mary and all the saints, and for the better instruction of the common people' (p. 152). These examples, which are typical, recall Skaryna's evident pride in being a doctor of medicine — a distinction which he obtained at the university of Padua in 1512 — as well as in being a native of the 'famous city of Połack'. He was at the same time a man of sincere piety and deep concern for the good of his fellow-men, the 'common people'. These sentiments one finds expressed in even stronger terms in his prefaces, which are by far the most significant and interesting of his writings. He concludes the preface to the Book of Esther with the following passage: 'Following the example of

this holy man (St. Jerome — A. N.) I undertook this task and, with the help of God, translated among other books this Book of Esther also, first of all in honour of God one in Trinity, and then for the instruction of my native Ruthenian people in all good things, for we are born into this world not only for our own gratification, but to serve God and the common good' (p. 108). Similarly in the preface to the Book of Psalms — the first book printed by him — Skaryna elaborates on his motives in the following terms: 'Seeing such a great usefulness (contained) in such a small book, I, Francis, son of Skaryna of Połack, doctor of medicine, have resolved to print the Book of Psalms with Ruthenian words but in the Slavonic tongue, first of all to the honour and praise of God and His Immaculate Mother Mary and all angels and saints of God, and secondly for the common good, especially for this reason, that God in His mercy let me be born into this world from among this people' (p. 11). A feeling of kinship with his fellow-countrymen and a strong attachment to his native land and people are clearly discernible in both passages. Skaryna justifies these feelings in the following passage in the preface to the Book of Judith: 'Just as the beasts prowling in the wilderness have an innate knowledge of their lairs; the birds flying in the air know their nests; fishes that swim in the sea and in the rivers sense their whirlpools; bees and their like defend their hives — in the same way men have a great love for the place in which, by the will of God, they were born and brought up' (p. 59).

There are in all 49 prefaces. Some of them are little more than an exposition of the contents of a given book of the Bible. Others, however, are more in the form of an essay, and Skaryna uses them to expound his own ideas on a variety of subjects.

For Skaryna the Holy Scripture is the source of all truth and wisdom, divine and human. Writing about the Book of Psalms he expresses himself thus: 'There is justice, there is spiritual and bodily purity. There is

knowledge of every truth. There is wisdom and perfect intelligence. There is charity and love of others without hypocrisy, and all other virtues flow thence as from a spring. There is the great mystery concerning God one in Trinity, and concerning the incarnation of Our Lord Jesus Christ, his passion and resurrection. There is the hope of the resurrection from the dead and life eternal, fear of the last judgment and eternal fire. All these things you will find in this little book, as if in a great treasure-store' (p. 10).

The human aspect of education is by no means forgotten, and Skaryna proposes to use the Bible as a kind of textbook for the so-called *seven liberated arts*: 'If you require to know grammar... you will find it in the whole Bible and in the Book of Psalms: read it. Again, if you wish to understand logic — which teaches how to distinguish truth from falsehood by reasoning — read the book of the holy Job and the letters of Saint Paul. And if you resolve to study rhetoric, which is the art of fine speaking, read the Book of Solomon... If you wish to learn music... you will find many poems and holy songs in the whole book. If it is your desire to know arithmetic, which teaches how to count quickly and without errors, read the fourth Book of Moses. If it is geometry that interests you... read the book of Joshua; if astronomy, or stargazing — you will find at the beginning of this book an account of the creation of the sun, moon and stars... And those are the seven liberated arts' (p. 62). Incidentally Skaryna was the first writer to introduce the concept of the *seven liberated arts* not only among the Byelorussians, but among the East Slavs in general.

In the preface to the First Book of Kings there is a short account of the origin of the codes of law among various nations, while the preface to Deuteronomy is nothing more nor less than a concise treatise on law, in which subject Skaryna shows himself to be surprisingly well versed. Thus he writes about the reasons for the existence of laws: 'Laws have been established for the sake of evil men, so that they, being afraid, may restrain their wills and have no power to harm others, and that good men

may live in peace among the evil ones' (p. 95). He distinguishes between natural law 'written in the heart of every man', and written (positive) law which in its turn may be 'either given by God, as are the books of Moses and the holy Gospel, or established by men, as for example the rules of the holy fathers, decreed by the General Councils, and the laws of the land, which every people together with their rulers have promulgated according to what seemed to them to be the best' (p. 95). Among the positive human laws Skaryna distinguishes common law, *jus gentium*, royal law (what today would be called constitutional law), knightly or military law, the law of the cities, maritime and mercantile laws.

Having thus displayed due respect for human knowledge, Skaryna does not fail to remark: 'Above all this we, Christians knowing that all (human) learning is of passing value, desire that which is eternal, the salvation of our souls. Let us read constantly the Holy Gospel, and reading it, let us follow the example of Our Saviour Jesus Christ, and thus with his help we shall enter into eternal life and the heavenly kingdom, prepared for the chosen of God' (p. 63).

Skaryna appears to be well acquainted with contemporary theological thought and may well be considered the first East Slav lay theologian. As a biblical scholar he was not unaware of the difficulties inherent in certain books of Holy Scripture, as the following passage shows: 'It should be known that among all the books of the Old Testament this Book of Genesis, as well as the beginning and the end of the Book of the prophet Ezechiel and the Song of Songs of the king Solomon, are difficult to understand. That is why the Jews did not allow these books to be read to young men under thirty, because of the great mysteries contained in them, which surpass human reason. For which one of the philosophers could understand that the Lord God created with his word all things visible and invisible from nothing, contrary to the assertion of the greatest of philosophers, Aristotle, that nothing can be created from nothing?' (p. 72).

The literary form and style of the prefaces show that Skaryna was a



talented writer. He had also mastered the laws of rhetoric which he used to full advantage. His three verses, on the other hand, are of no real literary value. Historically, however, they are important in that they mark the beginnings of Byelorussian, and more generally East Slavonic, poetry.

Much has been written about the language of Skaryna. The majority of scholars seem to agree that Skaryna did not translate the Bible into the Byelorussian language in the proper sense of the word, but saturated the Church Slavonic texts with Byelorussian elements. Be that as it may, in his prefaces and postscripts one feels a strong fresh breeze of the Byelorussian vernacular in the vocabulary, as well as in the use of apposite expressions, idioms and grammatical constructions.

The compiler of the book, Aleš Koršunaŭ, has performed a great service in collecting and editing the texts and providing them with most valuable commentaries. In particular he gives detailed information about all the extant copies of the Skaryna editions together with the names of the libraries and the catalogue references. Among them he mentions two Skaryna books which are to be found in Cambridge, namely a fragment of the Book of Kings (Prague 1518 edition) in Trinity College Library, and the Book of Psalms (Vilna 1525) in the University Library. It is a pity that the three Skaryna books which are in the British Museum have escaped Koršunaŭ's notice. They are: the complete Prague 1518 edition of the four Books of Kings (Catalogue No. C. 36. f. 4), and the Vilna 1525 editions of the Book of Psalms (Catalogue No. C. 51. b. 5) and of the Acts of the Apostles (Catalogue No. C. 51. b. 6).

The rather superficial and tendentious article *Francis Skaryna* by M. Praškovič is completely out of place in a publication such as this. The article is often a paraphrase of another treatise on Skaryna written by V. Zajcaŭ in the first volume of the *History of Byelorussian Literature of the pre-October Revolution Period* which appeared in Minsk in 1968 (see the review of this book in *JBS*, II, 1, p. 110). Sweeping statements, often contradictory, such as that in which Praškovič claims that Skary-

na's social ideals were 'an ancient democracy with a wise and enlightened monarch' (p. 175), are among the lesser flaws and merely indicate that a knowledge of ancient history is not among the author's scholastic attainments. What is more serious is when Praškovič (closely following Zajcaŭ), in order to prove the allegedly secular character of Skaryna's publications, states categorically that in his edition of the Bible Skaryna 'made changes in the order, omitted whole passages, and rephrased the Ten Commandments in his own words and not in the order in which it is usual to recite them' (p. 169). One is led to doubt whether Praškovič embarked upon a thorough analysis of the biblical texts published by Skaryna, before committing himself to such broad and highly questionable generalisations. As for the Ten Commandments, in the preface to the Book of Exodus Skaryna does indeed put them into verse form in his own words — a practice by no means unusual among ecclesiastical writers of his time. Far from changing their order, however, he strictly followed the order of the Commandments traditionally accepted in the Catholic West, which to this day differs slightly from that in the Orthodox East. Nor does one know what to make of Praškovič's attempt (again following Zajcaŭ very closely) to pass off as Skaryna's own the words of St. Paul, 'It is impossible that with the blood of oxen and goats sin should be taken away' (Hebr. 10, 4), which Skaryna quoted in his preface to the Book of Leviticus; adding immediately the astonishing proposition that 'this thesis goes not only against the whole "Bible" (the inverted commas are Praškovič's — A. N.) but against the whole ecclesiastical practice of the remission of sins for a certain consideration' (*sic!*) (p. 170).

These aberrations in Praškovič's article, however, in no way diminish the value of the publication as a whole, the main contents of which are, after all, Skaryna's own writings. Even a brief acquaintance with them is sufficient to convince one that the appearance of Skaryna's works constituted in their time a remarkable literary and cultural event in the history of the Byelorussian people. One is therefore grateful to the editors for

making the prefaces and postscripts of Skaryna more readily available to those interested in the history of Byelorussian culture, even if only 1200 copies of this work were published. It is to be hoped that the appearance of this publication, of which it can be truly said in the words of Skaryna himself that it contains 'so many useful things in such a little book', may stimulate

further interest in the life and work of Skaryna.

The book is artistically produced and contains a great number of reproductions of the magnificent engravings (over 40) and ornaments in Skaryna's original editions, thus giving an idea of yet another facet of the activity of this truly remarkable man.

A. Nadson

Barysienka, V. V. et al. (eds) *Historyja bielaruskaj dakastryčnickaj litaratury* (The History of Byelorussian Literature in the pre-October Revolution Period), Vol. 2. 'Navuka i technika', Minsk, 1969. 620 pages. Chronicle of literary events. Index of names. Illustrations.

The second volume of the *History of Byelorussian Literature in the pre-October Revolution Period* (for a review of the first volume see *JBS*, II, 1, p. 110) encompasses the period from the beginning of the 19th century to the year 1917. Like the first volume, it is produced by a team of authors under the auspices of the Janka Kupała Institute of Literature in Minsk.

The book is divided into two parts. The first part deals with the 19th century, and the second with the early 20th century up to the year 1917. Both parts are written according to the same plan: a general account of the development of the literature, followed by special studies of the most prominent individual writers of the period. The 19th century writers singled out for study are V. Dunin-Marcinkievič (in a chapter written by V. P. Zuraŭloŭ), Francišak Bahuševič (by U. M. Kazbiaruk), Janka Łučyna (by A. A. Siemianovič) and Adam Hurynovič (by D. J. Halmakoŭ). The second part of the book contains special studies of the works of Ciotka (by D. J. Halmakoŭ), Janka Kupała (by M. R. Jaroš), Jakub Kotas (by Ju. S. Pšyrkoŭ), Maksim Bahdanovič (by M. M. Hrynčyk), Jadvihin Š. (by Ł. S. Hołubieva), Zmitrok Biadula (by V. A. Kavalenka), Ciška Hartny (by S. Ch. Aleksandrovič) and Maksim Harecki (by M. I. Mušynski). The subjects selected for special study are well chosen and represent the best in Byelorussian literature, and the studies themselves are competently written.

Modern Byelorussian literature has its origins in the 19th century, and developed in very difficult circumstances. The Polish and polonised

Byelorussian upper classes generally held everything Byelorussian in contempt, while for the Russian government Byelorussia was nothing more than the north-western province of their indivisible empire, and a backward province at that. The social and economic conditions of the peasants, who at that time constituted the overwhelming majority of the Byelorussian people, were little short of appalling. It is against this background that one must consider the birth and development of modern Byelorussian literature from the first attempts by Čačot or Rypinski, whose interest was more ethnographical than literary, to the conscious affirmation of the national identity in the works of the poet Francišak Bahuševič towards the end of the century. An excellent account of this development is found in the general introductory section to the first part of the book (pp. 7-90), written by A. Maldzis. The author clearly has a deep knowledge of the subject and illustrates his writing with an impressive number of well-documented, often little known, concrete facts and examples. In particular he gives short descriptions of the Byelorussian works of several authors other than those considered in special chapters. Some of these authors are better known for their works in the Polish language, but they, nevertheless, made an important contribution to the development of Byelorussian literature. Maldzis also tries to give a more balanced view of writers such as J. Barščeŭski and A. Rypinski, who until recently have been dismissed by official historians of literature as mere 'polonisers' and 'reactionaries',

without taking into account the times and circumstances in which these men lived and wrote.

The general account of the development of Byelorussian literature in the early 20th century (pp. 171-279) is written by four authors: V. V. Barysienka provides the introduction, M. I. Mušynski writes on poetry, Ł. S. Hołubieva on prose and A. M. Piatkiewiċ on the theatre.

The early 20th century was a period of vigorous growth for Byelorussian literature. The number of writers whose work appeared in print at that period exceeded one hundred. Many of them, however, could be called writers only with certain reservations, as their known literary output did not go beyond one or two poems or short stories of no great merit. They are interesting only as representatives of the phenomenon known today as 'mass literature'. It was also at this time, however, that there appeared for the first time in print the names of Janka Kupała, Jakub Kołas, Maksim Bahdanoviċ, Maksim Harecki, Zmitrok Biadula, Aleš Harun and others, whose works have become classics.

The years 1906-1915 were a particularly fruitful period. It was in the course of these years that there appeared in Vilna a weekly newspaper, *Naša niva*, which became the focal point of the Byelorussian cultural and national revival. The importance of this paper in the history of the modern Byelorussian literature cannot be over emphasised. Suffice it to say that Janka Kupała (he became editor of *Naša niva* in 1914) and Jakub Kołas each published in it over 150 of their works for the first time. Among other significant events one could mention the establishment in 1906 in St Petersburg of the publishing association *Zahlanie sonca i ũ naša akonca*, which during the subsequent eight years published several books by old and new Byelorussian authors (among them works by Kupała, Kołas, Biadula and Ciška Hartny), thus rendering the masterpieces of Byelorussian literature more accessible to the general reader. One might have expected that these and other similar features of the Byelorussian scene would be considered in some detail in the introduction by V. V. Barysienka.

Instead, however, the author makes only a passing mention of them, as though they were factors of little importance; at the same time he devotes two whole pages to describing the influence of Maksim Gor'kij on the development of Byelorussian literature. The fact that Gor'kij showed interest in the nascent Byelorussian literature, and spoke with appreciation of Kupała and Kołas, is all to the credit of this great Russian writer, who was ready to acknowledge genuine talents wherever he came across them. No doubt the Byelorussian writers were equally well acquainted with the works of Gor'kij, and among them he had his admirers. To talk, however, of any significant influence of Gor'kij on the development of Byelorussian literature in the early 20th century appears to be an attempt to extend his role as the father of 'socialist realism', assigned to him by present-day official Soviet literary historians, to a period far beyond that which the facts warrant. Any such suggestion should be dismissed as fanciful.

The sections on poetry and prose deal with general aspects of the development of these branches of literature (themes, form, style etc.), without considering in detail the works of any particular author. There is much to be said for this approach. It is perhaps the only sensible way to study 'mass literature' whereas the great writers are by no means disregarded, since their work is considered individually in subsequent special chapters. There was, however, a whole group of writers, such as A. Ziaziula, H. Leuċyk, A. Paułoviċ, Stry Ułas and others, who rose well above the level of 'mass literature' and left their individual imprint on the literature of their time (the works of some of them appeared in book form), albeit without reaching the prominence of a Biadula or a Harecki. It is these writers who suffer most in this type of general treatment. They usually appear in the book as little more than names, with a possible mention of one or two titles of their works, which, in the absence of further information, mean little or nothing to the reader. This is particularly true of the poets. Generally the section on poetry is

written in a somewhat arid and abstract manner, with far too few concrete examples being provided.

When writing about the search by the Byelorussian poets for new forms, the author of the section on poetry states that 'a particularly great role in this field was played by J. Kupała, M. Bahdanovič and A. Harun' (p. 221). One naturally becomes intrigued by the third poet mentioned in such distinguished company, and feels disappointed when, apart from the casual mention here and there of Harun's name, nothing further is said of him and no single concrete example is provided of his poetry. The truth is that Ales Harun (pseud. of Alaksandar Prušynski, 1887-1920) was one of the most outstanding and original poets of his time, highly appreciated by no less a critic than Maksim Bahdanovič and by the first historians of Byelorussian literature, M. Harecki and Ja. Karski. His literary work is of such merit as to deserve a special study in a separate chapter. The fact that his political views were incompatible with those of the supporters of the present establishment in Byelorussia in no way affects his position as an outstanding poet.

The names of other writers, such as V. Łastoŭski and J. Losik, are completely omitted for reasons which, one feels, have nothing to do with literature. It is worth mentioning that Łastoŭski (using his usual pseudonym of Vlast) was the author of the *Short History of Byelorussia* which appeared in book form in 1910. It was the first work of its kind written by a Byelorussian in the Byelorussian language. Its appearance is mentioned in a

chronicle of literary and cultural events published at the end of the present book (p. 595), but the name of the author has for some reason been omitted.

The early 20th century also saw the beginnings of Byelorussian literary criticism. Writers such as Anton Navina (pseudonym of Anton Łuckievič), Maksim Bahdanovič, Siarhiej Pałujan, Alhierd Bulba, Lavon Hmyrak, through their critical articles, did much to further the development of Byelorussian literature. A short reference to their work would have further enhanced the value of the present study.

At the end of the book there is an interesting chronicle of cultural and literary events in Byelorussia during the period in question, and a most useful index of names. It is regrettable that the editors have not thought it worth while to include a good bibliography on the subject. The bibliographical references in the footnotes of the pages are, with a few exceptions, very inadequate and, of course, most inconvenient to use.

The present volume is the first serious attempt since the appearance of the works of Harecki and Karski some 50 years ago to produce a comprehensive history of Byelorussian literature during the 19th and early 20th centuries. As might be expected, the authors and editors had to overcome many difficulties and often to break new ground. Despite certain inevitable defects they have on the whole been successful in their task, and have produced a valuable work which augurs well for the future of literary scholarship in Byelorussia.

A. Nadson

Šott, I. M. *Fol'klor v tvorčestve Janki Kupaly (dorevoljucionnyj period)*. 'Nauka', Moscow, 1968. 190 pages.

The Western reader of Soviet treatises on folklore is frequently reminded of the immense gap that exists between his own concept of this subject and that favoured in orthodox socialist circles. The author of the present work sees folklore as 'a poetic chronicle of the workers' dramatic struggle against the terrible forces of nature and social oppression' (p. 154) and it is this interpretation that provides the particular emphasis and direction of her monograph, both in

its approach to folklore as a whole, and also with regard to Kupała, a poet 'given wings by the "rebellious years" of preparation for and development of the first Russian revolution' (p. 4).

The book is divided, somewhat arbitrarily, into two main parts, with an introduction and a conclusion: 'Poemy Janki Kupaly, osnovannyje na fol'klornych siužetach ("Bondarova", "Mogila l'va")', pp. 29-89; 'Fol'klornyje obrazny i motyvy v poe-

mach Kupaly "Kurgan", "Son na kurgane", "Izvečnaja pesnja", pp. 90-178. In both the author emphasises the 'organic' nature of Kupala's links with folklore and the people, rightly contrasting it with the artificial approach of the painters of stylised 'country scenes' popular at the turn of the century. In this connection it is significant that, like some of Čačot's verses, Kupala's Romantic 'folk' poems were not infrequently adopted by the common people from whom they had drawn their inspiration.

Mrs Sott clearly has a sound knowledge and understanding of Byelorussian folklore (much of her background material is drawn from the publications of Šejn, Romanov and Fede-

rowski), but it is to be regretted that her approach over-emphasises the social aspects of the subject. The book is rendered clumsy by the duplication of all quotations from Kupala (in both Russian and Byelorussian, usually but not always in that order) and by the over-repetitive, although not unreadable style in which it is written. Despite these shortcomings, however, the work constitutes a useful addition to the already considerable volume of literature on the subject, and casts some new light on an important aspect of one of the most fruitful periods of Kupala's creative career.

Arnold B. McMillin

Hluščanka, H. S. and Šciepancevič, K. I. *Bielaruskaja savietskaja muzyčnaja literatura*, Minsk, 1969. 166 pages.

This work appears as an excellent text-book for those studying Byelorussian music, especially that of the past fifty years. The first of the nine chapters considers Byelorussian music and its history in general, whilst the following chapters treat the subject according to genre. The work encompasses all fields of Byelorussian music and is very richly illustrated with musical examples, so arranged that they can be played on the piano. In many cases shorter folk songs are given in their entirety.

Chapter two of this book deals with various types of Byelorussian folksongs, both vocal and instrumental, and shows how Byelorussian folklore has served as an inspiration for the works of Byelorussian composers, and describes the work of H. I. Citovič, R. Šyrma, and I. Zynovič in this field.

The third chapter handles the vocal and choral music of Byelorussian composers, and the following interesting chapter treats Byelorussian symphonic music. After a short description of its general development, several symphonic works are handled in detail. Among those considered are the Sinfonietta in B flat by M. Čurkin, the Sinfonietta in C by M. Aładaŭ, the first symphony of A. Bahatyroŭ, and Ja. Cikocki's Symphony No. 4. The musical examples given are extremely interesting, and often show how the composers were inspired by Byelorussian folk music.

Chapter five considers Byelorussian chamber music, its general characteristics and again some works in particular. Especially of interest here are the Piano Quintet of M. Aładaŭ and 'Kalyčanka' — a string quartet by M. Čurkin.

The following chapter of this work tells us about music for Byelorussian folk instruments. One would like to have more information about this interesting facet of Byelorussian music. It is a pity that more musical examples of D. Kaminski's 'Concerto for Cymbalom and Folk Orchestra' were not provided, though the description of this work is quite good.

Chapter seven handles the Byelorussian cantata and chapter eight opera in Byelorussia. Here the authors seem to contradict their earlier statements regarding the first Byelorussian opera. On page five one reads that the first Byelorussian opera was S. Maniuška's 'Sialanka' with libretto by V. Dunin-Marcinkievič — published already in the 19th century. In chapter eight on page 116, however, we are told that the first Byelorussian operas were 'Vyzvoleńnie pracy' by M. Čurkin, and 'Taras na Parnasie' by M. Aładaŭ. Perhaps the authors had in mind the first operas of the Soviet era.

The last chapter of this book tells us about the history of Byelorussian ballet — a comparatively new form of Byelorussian musical art.

After the concluding word, a good section of the book is dedicated to

biographical material about various Soviet Byelorussian composers.

Anyone studying the history of Slavonic music, and Byelorussian music in particular, will find this

interestingly written book very useful in complementing his knowledge in a field where literature is unfortunately a very great rarity.

R. Patry-Tamushanski

Čanturija, V. A., *Istorija arhitekтуры Belorussii. Dooktjabr'skij period*, 'Vyšej-šaja škola', Minsk, 1969. 263 pages. Illustrations.

One of the most interesting features of Byelorussian culture, as well as one of the most rewarding, is the architectural heritage. Certainly there are few art forms which express so eloquently the individuality of a nation. Yet it is an art form which has suffered from serious neglect in the past, and which, if one is to judge from the state of the monuments as they appear from the photographs in Čanturija's work, is in danger of suffering further neglect and even damage. Superb Byzantino-Gothic churches are commonly used as barns or warehouses, and the now fast-crumbling walls and towers of the 16th century castle of Mir are used for climbing-practice by groups of amateur mountaineers.

Individual monuments in Byelorussia have been the subject of serious, and sometimes copious study. However, works of this description seldom view a given building or location against the general background of Byelorussian architectural traditions, and it was only in the exceptionally favourable climate of the 1920s that the first attempts at synthesis were made by the eminent art-historian, Mikoła Śčakacichin (1896-1940). Unhappily he was only able to publish the first volume of his exceptionally well-documented treatise on Mediaeval and Renaissance architecture in Byelorussia (*Narysy z historyi biełaruskaha mastactva*, I, Minsk, 1928). Subsequent studies during the Soviet period by other authors were concerned almost exclusively with contemporary architecture which, despite its undoubted merits, tended to obscure the essential continuity of a Byelorussian tradition in this field. After 1953, however, Byelorussian art-historians began to take a fresh look at the past, and works such as Kacer's excellent *Biełaruskaja architekтура*, published in 1956, took up the task which Śčakacichin had perforce been compelled to abandon.

Čanturija's work is the result of protracted study and of a number of expeditions which extended over the period from 1954 to 1968. The fruits of his research are summed up in the opening words of his preface: 'From the beginnings of their history, the Byelorussian people have created an architecture which was both highly developed and original' (p. 7). The author divides the history of architecture into seven periods, which include the protohistoric period extending from the earliest times to the 9th century, the period of the 'Western lands of Ruś' (9th-11th c.), the feudal period (12th-13th c.), the period of 'formation of Byelorussian national consciousness' (14th-16th c.), the period of feudal oppression (16th-17th c.), the transition from feudalism to capitalism (18th c.) and the period of capitalism proper (19th c.). The tendentious nature of the nomenclature used by the author in somewhat uncharacteristic style — for example the use of the phrase 'Ancient Russian' to describe the earliest period of the history of the Byelorussian people, and the reference to the 'formation' of a Byelorussian national consciousness in the 14th-16th centuries — no doubt reflects the well-known views of the author's 'recensor', Professor L. Abecedarski.

The first chapter deals briefly with material of an archaeological character, and covers such items as hill-forts, earthworks and burial mounds. The second chapter deals at greater length with the architectural relics of 'ancient Ruś' on the territory of Byelorussia. Čanturija provides descriptions of the most ancient Byelorussian churches — the Cathedral of the Holy Wisdom and the St. Saviours Euphrosyne Convent Church (12th c.), in Polack, the Church of the Annunciation in Viciebsk (12th c.), the Church of SS. Barys and Hleb in Hrodna — and the fortified tower in Kameneč (13th c.). Although the

author does not hesitate to point out features which are common to the East Slavonic tradition, he is at pains to stress essential differences, which even at this early stage were becoming a distinctive feature of Byelorussian architecture (p. 21). For the sake of completeness, it is regrettable that he was not able to include in his study the early mediaeval churches of Smolensk, which although now in Russia, more properly belong from an architectural point of view to the Polack-Viciebsk tradition.

The period extending from the 14th to the mid-17th century must rate as one of the most fruitful in the evolution of a specifically Byelorussian style in architecture. Čanturija pays due regard to the common traditions of the East Slavs, but he archly introduces a fourth 'Brother nation' (*sic*) (p. 26), namely Lithuania proper with its capital in Vilna, which played a predominant role in the reception of West European tastes and ideas into Renaissance Byelorussia. Indeed, Gothic influences were strongly felt in the building of such monuments as the old castle in Hrodna, the fortified castle of Mir, and the manor-house of Hajciuniški, as well as in the splendidly original churches of Synkavičy (late 15th c.) Małamažajsk (early 16th c.), Supraśl, the Church of the Bernardins in Vilna and the beautifully proportioned church of Smarhoń. These churches are closely related by certain common features, such as their elaborately gabled façades, their four corner towers with plain conical roofs, their Gothic arches and honeycomb fan-vaulting. Although built principally as Orthodox places of worship, they are quite unlike any comparable building of similar date in Russia. Other churches in Byelorussia at Iškaldź, Kamai, Hniezna,

Astaŭn and Hrodna display similar Byzantino-Gothic characteristics, and it is to the great credit of the author that he has widened considerably the scope of our knowledge of architectural forms from this period by his research.

The baroque style made an early and spectacular appearance in Byelorussia during the period 1584-1593, when an Italian architect, Giovanni Bernardoni, built the Great Church at Niašviž. Among the most original structures of this style Čanturija mentions the churches of Hrodna, the Uniate church of Kniažycy, the Church of St Nicholas in Mahiloŭ, and the charmingly simple church of Michališki. The author gives numerous examples of baroque style town-halls (Minsk, Niašviž, Viciebsk, Mahiloŭ, and Čaŭsy) urban dwelling-houses (including urban *ensembles* and model villages built by some of the more enlightened magnates in Hrodna, Pastavy and Varniany) and country palaces and manors. He also provides a section on wooden churches and synagogues. The 18th century witnessed some extremely proficient town planning schemes, and the building of innumerable churches in the rococo style with an elaborately gabled façade flanked by two towers, which are so much a part of the Byelorussian rural scene.

There is a particularly interesting chapter on 18th and 19th century wooden *chaty* and farm buildings. More than any other previous author, Čanturija, (who strangely enough is a Georgian by nationality) has given a coherent, well-balanced and extraordinarily fully documented survey of Byelorussian architecture. In view of the work's exceptional quality, it is hard to see why only 2000 copies have been printed.

H. Pichura

Kacer, M. S., *Izobrazitel'noje iskusstvo Belorussii dooktjabr'skogo perioda*, 'Nauka i tehnika', Minsk, 1969. 202 pages. Illustrations.

The history of Byelorussian art has yet to be thoroughly explored. Individual studies on particular aspects of Byelorussian painting, engraving and sculpture, have been published in the past, both prior to and during the Soviet period, by authors such as P. Pokryškin (the

Supraśl frescoes), M. Ščakacichin (the engravings of Skaryna and Voščanka) and T. Rževuskaja (the wall-paintings of the Tupičevskij monastery), but no systematic attempt has been made to present the history of Byelorussian art as forming a coherent whole. A few tentative, and indeed valuable,

steps were taken in this direction by the Institute of Byelorussian Culture in Minsk during the later 1920s, but these were abruptly checked by the unaccountable vagaries of officialdom. Since the end of the last war, however, scholars have shown a reviving interest in the history of Byelorussian art, particularly during the period before 1917. Kacer has proved himself to be one of the most able and dedicated pioneers in this field, and the amateur of Byelorussian antiquities will remember his brief but admirable outline of the history of architecture (*Belorusskaja architektura*, Gosizdat BSSR, Minsk, 1956). His latest work appears with the blessings of the leading official sculptor of the BSSR, Z. Azhur, and the cooperation of A. Lis, the biographer of that most authoritative historian of Byelorussian art, Mikoła Ščakacichin.

Kacer discerns eight distinct periods in his work, six of which he deals with at some length. The monuments of the protohistoric period, which fall more properly within the province of the archaeologist, are considered very succinctly.

The second period, which Kacer, with some reluctance, calls that of the 'West Russian' principalities, includes the evolution of frescoes and miniatures in the lands of Połack, Hrodna, Turaŭ-Pinsk, Viciebsk, Minsk and even Smolensk. Although he readily points out that miniatures such as those from the manuscript *Life of the Blessed Abraham of Smolensk* (12th-13th centuries), have many characteristics in common with similar works from Russia and the Ukraine, Kacer is at pains to explain that the common heritage of 'Ancient Rus' was analogous to the spread of a common 'Romance' style of architecture and art throughout mediaeval France, England and Germany (p. 20). In addition to the often described frescoes of the St. Savirosy Euphrosyne Church in Połack, the author gives details of the lesser-known wall-paintings of the Annunciation Church in Viciebsk, and the stone bas-relief icons of Minsk (pp. 25-6).

The period extending from the 15th to the late 16th century is officially known as the period of the 'formation of Byelorussian national consciousness'. To this era belong the famous icon of St. Paraskieva Piat-

nica (14th-15th c.), that of St. Onuphrius from Mścistaŭ, and the frescoes of the monastic Church of the Annunciation in Supraśl (1551). In an introduction to this chapter, Kacer stresses the continuing links and interaction between the cultures of Byelorussia, Russia and the Ukraine throughout this period; indeed, he seems to attribute to these links an importance equal to if not greater than that of the West European influences penetrating into Byelorussia through Lithuania (pp. 32-3). The evidence which he produces in support of a Russian or even a *dreverusskij* influence on Byelorussian art during this period is unconvincing. As an example, Kacer refers (p. 36) to the Mścistaŭ icon of St. Onuphrius, in which, however, the realistically drawn body of the Saint, and the clean-shaven nobleman kneeling in prayer and dressed like some Burgundian count, have more in common with Flanders than with the iconography of Moscow. Even the more purely Byzantine Andrejka, who in the 15th century decorated the Chapel of the Holy Trinity in Lublin with frescoes of great splendour, depicted Biblical scenes, such as the flagellation of Christ, which are never encountered in Ancient Russian art, and which are obvious examples of Gothic influences (p. 39).

In dealing with portrait-painting in Byelorussia during the Renaissance period, Kacer very rightly sets out to correct the popular misconception fostered in some official publications that this style only developed in Byelorussia during the 17th and 18th centuries (p. 42), and he establishes that a flourishing school of portraitists existed as early as the 15th century. The great Renaissance engraver Francis Skaryna is dealt with very adequately, but Kacer's section on sculpture relies overmuch on the works of expatriate Byelorussian artists working in Moscow. Similarly the delicate miniatures of Bohdan Anisimovič, which properly belong to this period, are passed over in silence.

In the chapter covering the art of the late 16th and the 17th centuries, the author follows his usual course in considering successively the development of painting, portrait-painting, frescoes, engraving and sculpture. Thanks to Kacer's research, the whole



of this troubled period of Byelorussian history comes to life, as the author describes the rise of the baroque style in art, through the works of the iconographer Apanas Piharevič, and the engravers P. Mścislaviec (late 16th c.), T. Makoŭski (1575-1630), and Maksim Voščanka (fl. 1680-1708). His treatment of the school of engraving at the Vilna Confraternity of the Holy Ghost, is not, however, as well-documented as it might be (pp. 96-7); the many delightful woodcuts from the life of Christ which appeared in its publications are passed over in silence, whereas the relatively slight contribution of Mścislaviec, a collaborator of the much-publicised Muscovite printer Ivan Federov, and a rather fussy artist, occupy an undue amount of space (pp. 88-93); similarly the school of Kuciejna, admittedly rustic, but vigorous nonetheless, which flourished in eastern Byelorussia during the mid-17th century, barely rates a mention (p. 96). Few, if any, examples of Byelorussian sculpture dating from this period appear to have survived, though Kacer notes the existence of one or two finely carved crucifixes, including one from Novy Sveržen (p. 104).

During the 18th century Byelorussian painting remained notably provincial. This was an era of national decline, and circumstances in the political and economic fields were hardly conducive to a flowering of the arts in Byelorussia. Ecclesiastical paintings were generally executed in a rather decadent baroque style, which had never evolved into rococo. Some of these, such as the wall-paintings of the Catholic church in Mahiloŭ, are not devoid of grace and a nice sense of composition, and the works of identifiable artists such as P. Ihnatovič in the Markoŭ monastery in Viciebsk (18th c.) provide a pleasant personal touch to an otherwise uninspiring scene. Schools of portrait-painting flourished round the courts of the magnates, and some engravers of portraits such as H. Lejbovič at the court of the Radziwiłłs displayed a very real talent (pp. 128-9).

It was, however, during the early part of the 19th century that art in Byelorussia experienced a flowering comparable to the so-called 'Golden Age' of the 15th and 16th centuries. Painters of genuine talent and sound

technical proficiency, such as the portraitists A. Šemeš (1808-1864), V. Vaňkovič (1799-1842), K. Korsalin (1809-1872) and I. Oleškievič, fixed on canvas the elegant life and features of the luminaries of Vilna society in the age of Barščeuški, Čačot, and Dunin-Marcinkievič. Perhaps the most genial painter of the age was I. Chrucki (1806-1885), the son of a Byelorussian Uniate priest, who excelled in the painting of portraits, still-life and scenes of domestic life. The importance of this artist's role in Byelorussian art as a whole has yet to be elucidated (pp. 148-51).

In the section dealing with the art of the latter part of the 19th century, Kacer considers the work of the *genre* painters such as N. Silivanovič (1834-1919), and the sculptor Raphael Ślizien (1803-1881).

The final chapter of the author's work covers the period immediately preceding the Revolution of 1917, which was dominated to a great extent by the Viciebsk school of Jury Pen and his pupil Marc Chagall, and the very able Minsk portrait-painter, Ja. Kruger (1868-1918). It was during this time that a Byelorussian writer, known to literature as Kasruš Kahaniec (1868-1918), achieved distinction as an engraver and satirical cartoonist under his true name of Kazimier Kastravicki (pp. 193-5).

Kacer's treatise is a pioneer work in this field. He produces for the first time a relatively comprehensive and well-balanced picture of a specifically Byelorussian art, created by artists born of Byelorussian stock and, for the most part, established there. Kacer's book is far from complete, and the paucity of foot-notes and absence of any bibliography, will doubtless frustrate the reader whose appetite will have been whetted by the author's obvious enthusiasm for his subject. The photographic reproductions are not always of the standard one would look for in a work of this calibre, and it seems little short of astounding that only 1100 copies of this absolutely basic study should have been printed. Despite its shortcomings, it is a thoroughly commendable book which, it is earnestly to be hoped, will incite others to engage in further research on this little-known subject.

H. Pichura

Ralko, I. D. *Bielaruski vierš. Staronki historyi i teoryi. 'Vyšejšaja škola'*, Minsk, 1969. 232 pages. Index of names.

Ralko's book represents the first monograph ever to be devoted to the problems and history of Byelorussian versification, and it would, therefore, be unreasonable to expect a complete survey of the subject. In fact, the author limits himself to two main topics, both of which relate to periods of major significance in the history of Byelorussian prosodic development. The first part of the book, 'Origins (16th — early 17th centuries)' (pp. 5-77), analyses the role of Simiaon Połacki in introducing syllabic verse to Byelorussia and Russia; the second part, 'Accentual Verse (19th — early 20th centuries)' (pp. 78-220), outlines the basis of accentual verse in the versification systems of the Slavonic languages as a whole, with particular reference to those of Byelorussia, Russia and the Ukraine.

The author's approach is a vigorously polemical one, particularly in the first part of the book where much of the matter is still controversial. Here he demonstrates convincingly that Połacki's introduction of syllabic verse to the East Slavs was far from the mechanical process it is conventionally held to have been. Ralko discovers 'national' elements in Połacki's earliest verses and traces their roots, in part, to the Polish poet Kochanowski whose verse structures often appear to imitate popular models. The development of the Leonine verse and its importance in the history of Slavonic versification is also fully described with copious examples, as is the growth of the trochaic cadence in cultivated poetry, and the tendency towards trochaic rhythms within syllabic prosody. Here the author finds himself in general agreement with Tredjakovskij's assertion (supported by subsequent phonetical and physiological research) that the trochaic cadence is 'the most

natural' for Russian (and the other East Slavonic languages).

One of the most interesting sections of the book is that dealing with the influence of Byelorussian and Ukrainian on old Polish versification, although our comparative ignorance about many aspects of the latter renders much of Ralko's argument speculative rather than definitive. This section is also amongst the most polemical, particularly on the question of the origins of masculine rhymes in Polish poetry, where the author attempts, with partial success, to refute the hitherto generally accepted theories of Professor Kryżanowski.

The second part of the book offers a very scholarly comparative analysis of the basis and development of accentual verse amongst the Slavs, with particular reference to the role played by Ševčenko. But although the Ukrainian poet's influence on Janka Kupała is demonstrated very clearly, it is a pity that more attention is not paid to Kupała's Byelorussian predecessors, many of whom (Barščeŭski, Čačot, Dunin-Marcinkievič, for example) made extensive use of the *kałamyjk* verse form which was so important in the creation of accentual verse. The role of Bałuševič, too, is rather understated, although the author gives due weight to Bahdanovič and his 'vierš biełaruskaha składu'.

In general, this is an admirable little book, soundly based and with a wealth of examples. It presents a refreshingly broad and uninhibited view of a subject that has for too long languished in neglect, and may, thus, be recommended to all who take more than a superficial interest in the art of poetry.

Arnold B. McMillin

Bułyka, A. M. *Ražvićcio arhafrafičnaj sistemy starabielaruskaj movy*, Minsk, 1970. 176 pp. Illustrations. Bibliography of sources.

One of the most difficult tasks in historical grammar is to present a simple and readable account of the evolution of the orthography. The earliest period in the literacy of a nation is usually one in which an existing system is taken over and gradually adapted to its new role.

Innovations and reforms, partly dictated by the writer's perception of the sounds of living speech, partly prompted, especially after the development of printing, by considerations of economy and rationalisation, meet with constant resistance and even reversal. Where the existing

model is associated with religion reverence for tradition may long prevail over other considerations.

Bułyka's survey covers the period from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century. Of the items listed in the bibliography of sources only 6 are shown as reprinted in 19th or 20th century editions. The others comprise 39 manuscripts in 8 libraries of the Byelorussian, Russian, Lithuanian and Latvian republics and 15 early printed books, of which the earliest is F. Skaryna's Prague Bible of 1517-1519 and the latest *Zbor vypadkaŭ karotki* published at Supraśl in 1722, the only 18th century work included. These sources provide ample material for an analysis of the Old Byelorussian orthographic system and for the identification of the main trends and the various factors which induced or resisted change.

The work consists of three parts, the first concerned with the function of the letters, vowel and consonant, the second with the relationship of the orthography to contemporary speech, the third with minor space-saving devices, supralinear letters and marks of abbreviation.

Bułyka carefully differentiates at each chronological stage between various types of source, religious, official, literary, and takes into account the different problems which faced scribes and printers. Thus the treatment by Skaryna of *e* and *ě* (*jať*) is seen as partly dependent on the availability of the two characters to the typesetter, and Ciapinski's usage of the homophonic letters *i* and *iže* (*i* and *ɨ*) is shown to have a typographical function.

The author reveals a gradual process of rationalisation whereby some of the unnecessary letters were discarded and others, which from the point of view of phonetics merely duplicated existing alternatives, were given a specific orthographic function, initial, medial or final, pre-vocalic, post-vocalic, post-consonantal, and, in the case of *ot*, even a morphological one.

Žuraŭski, A. I. (main ed.) *Z žyćcia rodnaha slova. Leksikalahičny zbornik. 'Navuka i technika'*, Minsk, 1968. 180 pages.

The Institute of Philology is undoubtedly one of the most productive departments of the Byelorussian Academy of Sciences, and the publications made by the academic staff there are of a generally high stan-

Among the innovations which later achieved currency also in Muscovite Russian is the reverse *e* (9), which appeared in Byelorussian at the end of the 15th century.

The great phonological changes typical of Byelorussian find only sporadic reflection in the sources. *Akaŭnie, jakaŭnie* and the assibilation of soft *ł* and *đ* are not accepted by the writers. Commenting on the etymological spelling of unstressed *o* and *e*, the author suggests that the Byelorussian writers in this way brought their system closer to the Ukrainian orthography of the time, a significant fact in the context of a common Byelorussian-Ukrainian literary language. But the most important factors here were surely, beside the influence of Church-Slavonic admitted by the writer, Polish orthography and the normal resistance of the literate to 'careless' speech, as is shown by the hypercorrect spellings quoted by Bułyka, one of which, *blogoslovennyje*, is rather a Polonism.

Bułyka's analysis takes into account not only the cases where a given letter appears but also those where it might be expected to appear. His treatment of the material is both thorough and imaginative while his conclusions are formulated with admirable clarity. Some of the terminology does not seem very happily chosen: *patencyjal'na mahčymy* (19,84) seems tautological, *polivaryjantnaść* and *hipernormalizmy* (38, 75) grate on a classicist's ear while *cviordym napisañniem, miakkaha napisañnia* (80,81) appear to confuse phonetics and orthography.

For the most part the examples are well chosen to illustrate the author's point. However it must be pointed out that *vosk* (34) does not continue Common Slavonic reduced vowel (*ŭ*) but *o*, and that the spelling *vładykove* (81) does not have *y* of Polish or Ukrainian origin but from Church Slavonic.

H. Leeming

dard. It is, however, a great pity that much of this work has to be published in non-periodical albeit thematically linked miscellanies like the present volume, since in a very few years' time this short-sighted policy

will render them relatively obscure and difficult of access for scholars. In this respect *Z žyćia rodna ha slova* follows collections like *Bielaruskaja mova* (1965) and *Linhvistyčnyja dašledavañni* (1968), and, indeed, most of the contributors are the same. Of the seventeen articles, seven are concerned with historical lexicology, six with individual semantic fields in the modern language (with the usual

emphasis on words relating to material culture) and four with particular groups of prefixes and suffixes. Despite the unnecessarily haphazard nature of its publication, the collection contains a considerable amount of new material and will be of interest to students of Slavonic lexicology.

Arnold B. McMillin

De Bray, R. G. A. *Guide to the Slavonic Languages*, 2nd. revised edition, London — New York, 1969, XXVI + 798 pages. List of contents. Prefaces. List of abbreviations. Introduction. Bibliography.

Professor de Bray's unique and prodigious work was first published in 1951. To borrow a phrase from the non-Slavonic, non-linguistic field, it indeed constituted a great leap forward, providing the English-speaking student of Slavonic languages with a handbook which contained between its covers sections on each of the literary languages of the Slav world: Old Slavonic, Russian, Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Bulgarian, Macedonian, Serbocroatian, Slovenian, Czech, Slovak, Polish and Lusatian, Upper and Lower.

Each section consists of a concise grammar preceded by information on the alphabet, pronunciation, dialects, vowel gradation and lengthening, and, perhaps most valuable to students of comparative Slavonic philology, lists of the characteristic features. The latter are presented in various categories: common Slavonic characteristics, features which integrate a group and those which typify only the given language, so that kinship and individuality are both given their due. Each section also contains some texts for the reader to test his knowledge of the grammar. He will find, says the author, that he has embarked on a journey of endless fascination, and the present reviewer takes the opportunity to endorse those words with gratitude.

Professor de Bray writes with deep affection for the languages and their speakers in the introductory notes which head each section, and with sympathetic understanding for the student's needs in the general introduction to the book.

Simple presentation and avoidance of specialised terminology enable the author to present to a wide public a whole field of study which otherwise

might have remained difficult of access.

In this second edition the sections on Bulgarian, Czech and Polish have been corrected, revised and slightly expanded. The section on Byelorussian has been revised and brought up-to-date. Readers of this journal have already had the opportunity of reading the author's comments on the innovations made to bring this into line with the new authoritative grammar of Byelorussian published by the Byelorussian Academy of Sciences in Minsk. (See 'Grammatical Changes in Modern Literary Byelorussian', *JBS*, I, 3, London, 1967, pp. 215-20.)

There are very few misprints for a book which numbers 798 pages. On page 206 *thought* should be corrected to *though*; on page 460 the heading *Plur.* in the new edition is misplaced over the singular of *duše*; on page 470 the colon after a *dual form* in the footnote on *těmi* could be misunderstood — a comma or no punctuation mark would make it clear that the reference is to the next word *těma*. On page 202, by what might be called, in discussing a work of such epic design and proportions a Homeric slip of the pen, the Indo-European diphthong *ei* appears among those causing the Second Slavonic Palatalisation: the formula is correctly given on page 5.

All English-speaking Slavists will wish Professor de Bray well with his continuing work on the Slavonic languages. We look forward to the next edition in which the Slovene and other sections will be amplified, and express the hope that a recording of the texts and possibly some of the other material of particular interest to phoneticians will be by then available.

H. Leeming

### REVIEWS OF PERIODICALS

BOŻYM ŚLACHAM, London, 1969.

A note on the life and activities of the Byelorussian printer and engraver Piotr Mścislaviec is accompanied by excellent reproductions of his engravings of the four saints. Mścislaviec, who was born in western Byelorussia, produced his first work in Moscow (1564-5), whence he travelled to Zabłudava and later (1569) to Vilna where he joined the newly founded printing press of the Mamonič brothers. Although less original than those of Skaryna, Mścislaviec's engravings possess considerable charm

and technical mastery, thus ensuring for their author an important place in the history of Byelorussian graphic arts (112/8-9).

There are two interesting reminiscences: 'Moj żyćciapis' by Fr Vitalis Chamionak (b. 1889) (113/8-11), and 'Maja vioska' in which B. Ptytycki describes the village of Łuni in the Braclav region (115/11-14). Finally, the sad loss of the gifted Byelorussian composer Mikola Kulikovič is commemorated in two obituaries, by Dr V. R. and by Vaciaŭ Panucevič (114/6-9).

MAŁADOŚĆ. A monthly. Minsk, 1969.

The short story *Żonka hieroja* (The Wife of a Hero; II-55) by the young writer Aleś Żuk (born in 1947) is among the best prose works published in this year's *Maładość*. The story is an episode from the life of a collective farm peasant woman who is forced to play the role of the widow of a war hero. She has to conceal the personal sorrow she has suffered from the fact of the hero being a worthless husband to her: he left her soon after their marriage, and it was another woman who saw him off when he was called up to the army. The story ends with the following passage: 'On the next day they came into the field from the district museum with orders for her to come and talk again about her heroic husband. And she obediently went over to the canvas-covered jeep — a small woman, moving clumsily in her rubber boots and cotton-wool anorak — she went through the damp fresh field, by-passing white clusters of potatoes which had just been unearthed.' Other short stories of interest include *Pieršy snieh* (The First Snow; XI-67) and *Dzied* (Grandfather; *ibid.*) by Viktor Karamazaŭ and *Bačka i syn* (Father and Son; VIII-67) by Anatol Kudravec. Among the longer prose works there is a successful novel with a strong autobiographical element, *Zabaronienaja pieśnia* (The Forbidden Song; XI-7, XII-17) by Kłaŭdzija Kalina. Essentially it is the story of a little Byelorussian peasant girl living

in Polish-occupied western Byelorussia before 1939.

The poetry section includes new works by Mikola Aročka, Danuta Bičel-Zahnietava, Viera Viarba, Nił Hilevič, Vasil Zujonak, Siarhiej Panižnik, Uładzimir Paukaŭ, Juraš Švirka, Anatol Sierbantovič, Uładzimir Skarynkin, Michaš Stralcoŭ, Raman Tarmoła, Anatol Kryvicki and others.

Aleś Bačyla in *Skarby z kufra Bahdanovičaŭ* (Treasures from the Bahdanovičs' Family Chest; VI-139) continues the story of his search for new documents and facts from the life of the poet Maksim Bahdanovič. Siarhiej Panižnik in *Z buntarnaj dušoŭ* (The Rebellious Soul; II-148) reveals a few new facts from the life of the poetess Ciotka (1876-1916) which he succeeded in discovering in the archives of L'vov. Aleś Isakoŭ in *Iuka* (VII-128) provides a few details about Janka Kupała's life in the village of Laŭki, where he had his summer house. In the same issue in the article *U volnuju chvilinu* (In a Free Moment; VII-130) Viečaslaŭ Rahojša reveals some little known aspects of Kupała's work as the editor of *Naša niva* in 1914. The life and work of Joseph Stabrouski, the archaeologist and founder of the Stonim museum, is the subject of the article *Staronki adnaho żyćcia* (Pages from One Life; XI-134) by Michaił Ralko. Dzimitry Halmakoŭ in *Z dumaj pra narod* (With the People in Mind; I-123) writes about the poet Adam Hurynovič (1869-1894)

on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of his birth.

The work of two painter brothers, Uładzimir and Michaś Basalyha, is the subject of the article *Duet mastakoŭ* (The Duet of the Artists; XI-129) by Uładzimir Jelisiejėu, while Uładzimir Karatkievič contributes a short appreciation, entitled *Kniaź i huślar* (The Prince and the Bard; VIII-113), of the work of another well-known artist, Arlen Kaškurevič. Both articles are richly illustrated with reproductions of the works of the artists concerned. Alaksiej Hardzicki publishes under the title of *Čaraŭnik pieśni* (A Wizard of Song; V-125) his interview with the famous Byelorussian tenor Michaś Zabejda-Sumicki, who lives permanently in Czechoslovakia; the text of another interview, entitled *Kupalinka* (IV-125), is that of Nela Isačanka with the actress Lidzija Ržekajka. Arkadź Astramiecki, the well-known player of the Byelorussian musical folk instrument, the cymbały, in *Padarožža cymbał* (The Travels of a Cymbały; X-137), describes his recent concert tours through numerous countries of Europe and Asia.

The philologists Viktor Martynaŭ and Arnold Michniewič contribute a series of most interesting articles under the general title of *Bielaruskaja etymatohija* (Byelorussian Etymology; II-143, IV-133, V-140, VII-149, IX-148, X-133, XII-139). The archaeologist Leanid Alaksiejėu in *Na zamkavaj hary* (On the Castle Hill; IV-143) describes his recent archaeological excavations in the city of Mścistaŭ in eastern Byelorussia. One disturbing piece of information in this otherwise excellent article is that the finds of the excavation were exported to Moscow, i. e. outside Byelorussia. And yet Alaksiejėu himself in another place writes indignantly about the 19th century Russian scholar Batjuškov who, in the pursuance of the official policy of russification of Byelorussia, had removed from the Vilna museum a great number of what he classed as 'Polish' objects and sent them to Moscow. (Cf. L. Aleksejev, 'Belorusskaja archeologija i istoričeskoje krajevedenje vo vtoroj polovine XIX — načale XX v.', *Sovetskaja archeologija*, 3, Moscow, 1968, p. 86). Another interesting article by Alaksiejėu is *Kryž Jefrasinni Potackaj* (The Cross of Euphrosyne of Połack;

VII-143). Leanid Pobal, also an archaeologist, writes on *Poŭki prabačkaŭščyny slavian* (The Search for the Original Home of the Slavs; II-139).

Zianon Paźniak in *Brastava* (Brasłaŭ; IX-118) gives a charming description of the centre of the Byelorussian lake district and its surroundings. Uładzimir Karatkievič in *Zvany z pradonnych azior* (Bells from the Depths of the Lakes; XII-88) gives his impressions of present-day Byelorussian Palessie, its people and its artistic treasures. The latter, according to the author, are in a very bad state: some priceless historical and artistic monuments have been wantonly destroyed, the others are left to decay. Thus in Pinsk the local authorities decided to convert the 16th century Jesuit church into a brewery. Since the conversion proved to be too costly, they finally blew it up. (Cf. p. 110). According to Karatkievič, such monuments as the Franciscan church and Jesuit college in Pinsk (the latter building saved with difficulty by a local architect from the demolition recommended for it by some highly-placed official from Minsk) and the palace of Ružany are left to decay. He suggests that the authorities put up a new roof over the palace, 'using proper tiles, not those from the Brest factory, which crumble to pieces after three years' (ibid.).

A similarly sad picture can be gathered from the article by Valancin Ždanovič, *Mikra... horad ci ŭskraina?* (Residential Estate or Suburb?; III-118), dealing with the problems of town planning: 'In Viciebsk they first blow up the 12th century church and then, feeling that it was a bad thing to do, start to think how to protect the remains with a glass roof. The authorities begin to consider the restoration of the castle of Mir, that outstanding monument of Byelorussian culture, only after half of it has been demolished by the local people for bricks, and after tourists organised on its walls last year... a mountaineering competition. One can quote endless examples of the shortsighted architectural policy in our country...' (p. 119). The article *Harady abjadnoŭvajuč* (The Cities Unite Us; V-103) by Viktor Horad is a plea for sensible town planning in which there would be room for the conservation of that which should constitute the national

pride of the people. In particular he and Ždanovič are critical of the new plans for the reconstruction of the Minsk centre, in which the little that has remained of the old city would disappear forever.

POŁYMIA. The monthly journal of the Union of Byelorussian Soviet Writers. Minsk, 1969.

The longest prose work to appear in *Potymia* during the course of this year is the novel *Sotaja matadośc* (The Hundredth Youth; IX-16, X-5, XI-24) by Uładzimir Karpaŭ, Byelorussia's chief exponent of the so called 'industrial novel'. It is the third part of a trilogy which has as its theme the reconstruction and development of post-war Minsk. The first book, *Za hodam hod* (The Years Go By), appeared in 1957, and the second, *Viasieñnija liŭni* (Springtime Showers), in 1961. In *Sotaja matadośc* one encounters the same characters, only somewhat the worse for the passing of years, and the leading character, the chief architect of Minsk Jurkievič, is on the verge of his first heart attack. The author seems lost in a welter of concrete material which he attempts without much success to arrange to fit in with some of his preconceived ideas. As a result his characters sound dull and unconvincing. On the whole this work is not a particularly inspiring piece of literature.

The second novel, *Čuży chleb* (Not One's Own Bread; XII-3) by Ilja Hurski is a polemical work directed against certain Byelorussian political emigrés. Whatever the motives behind the publication of this work, it does little to promote the reputation of *Potymia* as the foremost Byelorussian literary journal.

Vasil Bykaŭ makes one of his rare contributions to *Potymia* (he usually publishes his new works in *Matadośc*) with the publication of his new novel *Kruhlanski most* (The Kruhlanski Bridge; II-3). As usual, it is a war novel, but Bykaŭ — who was a regular army officer during the war — tackles here a subject which for him is unfamiliar, namely the guerrilla warfare in enemy-occupied Byelorussia. Notwithstanding this, the author remains true to his usual approach in that he is interested not in actual fighting, but in the conflict of characters. There are fine short stories

The journal is richly illustrated with photographs, drawings and coloured reproductions; it makes a most pleasing impression both on account of its contents and its artistic presentation.

*Žavaranak* (The Skylark; I-37) and *Prylipala* (The Sticker; *ibid.*) by Viktor Karamazaŭ, and *Jetačka* (The Fir-tree Patterns; V-113) by Anatol Kudravec. Other novels and short stories are by Aleś Asipienka, Visaryjon Harbuk, Arkadž Marcynovič, Aleś Masarenka, Ivan Navumienka, Raman Sabalenka, Ivan Čyrynaŭ and others. There are also three plays: *Muryn bor* (Mura Forest; VII-54) by Ivan Isačanka, *Brescki mir* (The Brest Treaty; III-3) by Kastaŭ Hubarevič, and *Zaciukany apostat* (The Besotted Apostle; XI-95) by Andrej Makajonak. The first is an historical play about the uprising of Vaščyła in the mid-18th century. It is also the best of the three. The third play is an anti-religious work in rather dubious taste.

The poetry section includes the usual rich variety of new works by Ryhor Baradulin, Piatruś Broŭka, Hienadz Buraŭkin, Anton Bialevič, Vasil Vítka, Siarhieŭ Hrachouški, Vasil Zujonak, Kazimir Kamiejša, Jeŭdakija Łoš, Maksim Łužanin, Alaksiej Pysin, Juraś Švirka, Anatol Sierbantovič, Maksim Tank, Kastaŭ Čvirka and others.

A noteworthy feature is the publication of a Byelorussian translation of the Latin poem *Carmen de statura, feritate ac venatione bisontis* by Nicholas Husoŭski (VI-69). The poem, which was first published in 1523 and which was written during the author's sojourn in Rome, is essentially a description of the hunt for bison (*zubry*) in the Byelorussian forests. The translation by Jazep Siemiažon admirably renders the original text.

Unfortunately another contribution by Jazep Siemiažon, the article *A jak vyjšła ŭ ludzi* (As She Came of Age; I-196) is not an unqualified success. It represents a survey of works of Byelorussian literature translated into other languages, but the many inaccuracies contained in the article make it completely unreliable as a

source of information. Attempts to check the references relating to publications in the English, French and German languages produce in most cases negative results. Thus, contrary to Siemiażon's assertions, there is no mention of Vasil Bykaŭ and his works in the English literary magazine *Stand*, IX, 3, 1968, and the poems by Maksim Tank, Mikoła Aŭramčyk and Jeŭdakija Łoś have never been printed in *Poésie vivante* (Siemiażon calls this journal *Paezija* without giving its proper name in French) which appears in Geneva. Several other examples of similar inaccuracies could be quoted.

The literary critic Aleś Adamovič in his *Šyrynia piśmieŋnickaha svietu* (The Breadth of the Writer's World; II-201, III-222) examines the works of the foremost Byelorussian pre-war novelist Kuźma Čorny (1900-1944). The subject is not new for Adamovič: his first book on Čorny, *Šlach da majsters-tva* (The Path to Mastery), appeared in 1958. Now, after ten years interval, he takes a fresh look at the same writer, but in a wider context, comparing him both with Dostojevskij and the western existentialists (Camus, Kafka, Sartre). He finds that, despite obvious differences, all these writers share an interest in human beings placed in a concrete situation. This is particularly evident in Čorny's early novels, such as *Siastra* (The Sister), *Ziamla* (The Earth) and the short story *Vierašniovyja nočy* (September Nights) — all written in the 1920's. They were attacked by the official critics of the time, who wanted to stress 'first the social process, and then the human being' (II-206). Works written by Čorny in the 1930's and early 40's are somewhat different in character; somewhere in the middle of each novel of that time a kind of break-down is noticeable: 'Roughly speaking, in the first part of each (*Backauščyna*, *Trećiaje pakaleŋnie* and *Luba Łukianskaja*) there is an analytical movement towards the essence of life, into the history of the people. In the concluding parts, on the other hand, there is progression of events themselves towards the present day' (III-238). Thus characters were subordinated to events, and the net result was the general lowering of the standard of the work.

Ryhor Biarozkin in *Pa zakonach*

*krasy* (According to the Laws of Beauty; IV-212) discusses the aesthetic views of Maksim Bahdanovič (1891-1917). In another article, *Ciotka* (XI-213), he considers the works of this poetess (1876-1916) and focuses attention on the dynamic quality of her poems. Uładzimir Kalešnik in *Staronki biełaruskaha ramantyzmu* (Pages from Byelorussian Romanticism; I-229) writes on certain aspects of Byelorussian literature in Polish-occupied western Byelorussia during the period 1921-39. The war novel is the subject of an article *Pra vajnu pašla vajny* (About War after the War; X-219) by Vasil Žuraŭloŭ. *Adam Hurynovič — folkloryst* (Adam Hurynovič the Folklorist; I-236) by Janka Sałamievič is an interesting study of the ethnographical work of the 19th century Byelorussian poet and revolutionary Adam Hurynovič who died in 1894 at the age of 25. Jaŭhieŋnia Umieckaja in *Dva prašeŋni Dunina-Marcinkieviča* (Two Petitions of Dunin-Marcinkievič; VIII-225) traces the unsuccessful attempts, frustrated by the Russian censors, of Dunin-Marcinkievič to publish his Byelorussian translation of Adam Mickiewicz's *Pan Tadeusz*. D. Mickievič and M. Bazarevič publish some unknown letters of Jakub Kołas to various correspondents during the period from 1936 to 1956 (II-174). The educational views of the leader of the anti-Russian uprising of 1863 and editor of the first Byelorussian clandestine newspaper *Mužyckaja praŭda*, Kastuś Kalinoŭski (1838-1864), form the subject of the article *Z pozirkam u budučyniu* (Looking Ahead; II-197) by Alesia Truchan. The poet Uładzimir Duboŭka in *Ščasliwy, što viedaŭ* (Happy are Those who Knew Him; X-168) gives personal reminiscences of the literary critic Adam Babareka (1899-1938). Adam Maldzis traces the history of Byelorussian-Lithuanian literary relations in his *Družba daŭniaja, plonna-ja* (An Ancient and Fruitful Friendship; XII-221). The musicologist Izidar Nišnievič contributes an interesting article *Maksim Bahdanovič i muzyka* (Maksim Bahdanovič and Music; X-185) and another, *Cudadziej muzyki* (The Musical Wizard; V-191) about the composer M. Čurkin on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of his birth. The theatre director Alak-



sandar Skibnieŭski in *Nad Zachodniaj Dźvinoj* (On the Banks of the Western Dźvina; III-207) and the actor Cimoch Siarhiejeŭk in *Teatr viartajecca damoŭ* (The Theatre Comes Home; VI-175) write about their work in the Jakub Kołas Theatre in Viciebsk. The theatre critic Barys Burjan in *Serca z sercam hutaryć* (Heart Talks to Heart; IV-206) and *Na scenie-Seleh* (Seleh on the Stage; XII-201) writes about two well-known contemporary Byelorussian actors Lidzija Ržeckaja and Anatol Seleh respectively. There is an article *Movaju tanca* (In the Language of the Dance; III-196) by Julija Čurko about the development of Byelorussian ballet. In *Spievaki i pieśni* (Singers and their Songs; IX-182) the ethnographer Zinaida Mažejka gives an interesting account of the old village women of Palešsie, living repositories of the traditional folk songs, their repertoire and their manner of singing.

The literary historian Sciapan Aleksandrovič in *Z majho padarozža* (From my Travels; VIII-168) describes his recent journey to Poland and Czechoslovakia in search of traces of Byelorussian documents and of Byelorussians who lived there. The poet Ryhor Siemaškievič in *Ličyła dni ziaziula* (The Cuckoo Counted the Days; X-148) gives an entertaining account of his first year in the teaching profession when to his consternation he found himself, fresh from university, appointed the headmaster of a village secondary school. At the same time he gives an excellent

description of life in a present-day Byelorussian village. The archaeologist Leanid Alaksiejeŭ traces the history of the archaeological study of Byelorussia in his *Viartajučy narodu minulyja stahodždzi* (Giving Back to the People their Past; XII-189).

Michaś Kłyška publishes the final parts of his 'Materials for a Dictionary of Synonyms and Words with Approximately the Same Meaning' (II-247, VI-222, XII-230). Leanid Padhajski in *Žyvaja spadčyna* (A Living Heritage; VI-217) studies the riches of the language of the major Byelorussian prose writer Maksim Harecki (1893-1939), and Ryhor Siemaškievič makes a most valuable publication of what remained of the manuscript of a dictionary compiled by Professor B. Epimach Šypiła (1859-1934) (VII-225). Other articles on linguistic themes include *Pra tapanimiku Brestčyny* (On the Toponymy of the Brest Region; II-239) by Michaś Aleksiajuk, *Da etymaŭohii bielaruskich frazieatahizmaŭ* (On the Etymology of Byelorussian Idioms; VI-213) by Fiodar Jankoŭski and *Tłumačalny stoŭnik bielaruskaj movy* (A Dictionary of the Byelorussian Language; VIII-200) by Aleś Kairus. The last article is concerned with the purity of the Byelorussian language, as is also another contribution by the same author, *Hraniaŭ ci hraniej* (On the Genitive Plural Case Ending of the Noun *hrań* - 'edge'; II-245), as well as *Samabytnaść slova* (The Originality of the Word; II-242) by Uładzimir Jurevič.

SLAVIA ORIENTALIS. A quarterly. Vol. XVIII. Warsaw, 1969.

Vol. XVIII of *Slavia Orientalis* contains only a few articles relating to Byelorussian culture. Elżbieta Smułkowa who in earlier issues of this journal has already offered detailed descriptions of a number of different semantic fields from the material, particularly agricultural lexicon of Byelorussian, contributes an interesting article dealing with Byelorussian words for 'stubble field', with particular reference to the question of lexical and word-formational differentiation (I-69). Michał Kandratyuk considers a number of places with two names in the ethnically

Byelorussian Bielsk and Hajnówka regions of Poland, and concludes that 'the loss of certain place-names does not always mean that the settlements to which they refer have disappeared' (I-77). Włodimierz Aniczenko (Aničenka), a member of the Institute of Philology at the Byelorussian Academy of Sciences, treads familiar ground in his article on the lexical, phonological and other polonisms found in Byelorussian and Ukrainian literary monuments (both religious and secular) of the 16th and 17th centuries (III-325).

VIEŠCI AKADEMII NAVUK BSSR — Seryja hramadskich navuk. Bimonthly. Minsk, 1969.

U. V. Aničenka writes on the *Ukrainian Lexical Variants in the Old Byelorussian Language* (V-103). A. M. Bulyka contributes three interesting articles, namely: *The Problem of Byelorussian Elements in the Church Slavonic Language* (I-98), *The Church Slavonic Elements in the Old Byelorussian Language* (II-118) and *The Character of Lexical Borrowings in the Old Byelorussian Language* (VI-109). The joint article by A. U. Arašonkava, E. I. Hreniavieckiene, I. P. Kavalčuk, Ju. F. Mackievič, Ja. M. Ramanovič and L. F. Šatałava, *On the Vocabulary of the Byelorussian Dialects in the Western Region* (IV-123) is a study of the lexical contents of those western Byelorussian dialects which are in contact with other languages, in particular with Lithuanian. T. P. Bandarenka writes on the *Identity of the Types of Substantival and Adjectival Word Connections* (IV-114) and *Interaction of the Non-prepositional Verbal and Adverbial Word Connections* (II-109). P. V. Viarchoŭ continues his study of nominal suffixes in his articles *Nouns Ending in '-čyk' in the Byelorussian Language* (VI-119) and *The Suffix 'ciel' in the Byelorussian Language* (I-107). Some problems of syntax are considered in the articles by L. T. Karpovič, *Syntactical Constructions of Adjectives with Adverbs* (I-118) and *Combination of Qualitative Adjectives with Adverbs of Degree* (V-111). The second article is a comparative study based on material from the Byelorussian and English languages. I. F. Maładavan writes on *Nouns of Common Gender in the Byelorussian Language* (V-117), and there is an article by M. J. Jarmaš, *Semantic Classification of Collective Nouns in the Byelorussian Language* (III-118).

The archaeologist L. D. Pobal writes on *Collaboration between Byelorussian and Polish Archaeologists* (II-136), *New Researches into the Early Middle Ages in Poland* (I-130) and *Burial*

*Customs in Southern Byelorussia during the Period of Disintegration of the Primitive Tribal Society* (III-74). The same author in collaboration with A. S. Šaławata in *Study of the Monuments of the Late Zarubnieckaja and Pševorskaja Cultures* (V-95) describes the new developments in this field achieved as a result of cooperation between Byelorussian and Polish archaeologists. Another archaeologist, H. V. Štychaŭ, contributes an article on *The Origin of the East Slavs and Ruš* (V-134).

There is an article by I. I. Salivon, *New Anthropological Data on the Origin of the Byelorussian People* (II-74), and another by L. I. Ciahaka, *Anthropological Studies in Byelorussia* (III-83).

The historian Z. Ju. Kapyski writes on the *Statutes of 1529, 1566 and 1588 as Sources on the History of Byelorussian Towns* (III-91). A. M. Karpaczoŭ deals with the *Self-government of the Byelorussian Cities according to the Magdeburg Law in the late XVII-XVIII Centuries* (II-56), and V. I. Mialeška contributes an article on *Farming in Eastern Byelorussia and the Market in the Late XVII-XVIII Centuries* (I-73).

In the field of literary studies there are two articles by A. D. Ataževa, *The Sources of the Byelorussian Poem* (III-100) and *The Poems of Janka Kupala from the pre-October Revolution Period* (V-56). Janka Kupala is also the subject of the article by I. S. Bas, *The Works of Janka Kupala in the Literary Criticism of the pre-October Revolution Periodical Press* (II-99). Much new material is contained in the article by M. A. Malaŭka, *Some Problems Connected with the Study of the Works of Adam Hurynovič* (I-91).

In *Forgotten Pages of Byelorussian Concert Music* (V-87) by D. J. Nizina, the author writes about a neglected concerto for piano and orchestra, written by A. K. Klumaŭ in 1940.