

Reviews

BOOK REVIEWS

Bandarčyk, V. K. *Historyja bielaruskaj saviackaj etnagrafii*. 'Navuka i technika', Minsk, 1972, 168 pages. Illustrations.

In this small book the history of the study of the culture and folklore of the Byelorussian people is traced throughout the years of the Soviet regime.

In its seven chapters, which are copiously illustrated, the book deals with this question from the 1920s to the present day.

The first section deals with the organisation of ethnographic work in the early days of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic and about the study of ethnography, local topography and folklore. The works of the First and Second All-Byelorussian Conventions on Topography and Folklore (*krajaznaŭstva*) and the ethnographic journal *Naš kraj* are discussed in some detail.

Further developments in the Byelorussian ethnographic field in the 1930s are discussed in the second section, and in the third, the post-war period is handled. The remaining sections of the book treat the problems of the ethnogenesis and national development of the Byelorussian people, the study of the material and creative

culture of the nation, its family and community life, etc.

The final section deals with beliefs and rites. A rather forced section about the so-called 'atheistic folklore' of Byelorussia is included as well.

The value of this little book is greatly marred by an over-emphasis on the marxist-leninist outlook. One would almost have the impression that either marxism was the only possible light under which to handle ethnography, or that the author is trying to convince himself as well as the reader of its possible use to the subject.

Although Bandarčyk's book does not provide a bibliography on Byelorussian Soviet ethnography apart from his footnotes, it may be useful here to note that recently two such bibliographical works have been published in Minsk: *Bielaruskaja etnagrafija i falktarystika. Biblijahrafičny paka-zalnik* (1945-1970), by M. J. Hrynbiat, 1972, and *Bielaruski falktor* (1926-1963). *Karotki biblijahrafičny davied-nik*, by I. U. Sałamievič, 1964.

R. J. Tamušanski

Barysava, T. *Maljer na bielaruskaj scenie*. 'Navuka i technika', Minsk, 1972, 119 pages. Illustrations.

The plays of the French playwright Jean-Baptiste Molière (1622-1673) first became known in Byelorussia through translations into Polish and performances at the court of the Radziwiłł family in Niasviž (1749-1756). However, it was not until the beginning of the present century that productions of his plays could be staged in the Byelorussian language.

In 1922, to mark the 250th anniversary of the death of the great French dramatist, the newly formed Byelorussian State Theatre Company

arranged a performance of *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, translated into Byelorussian under the title *Mieščanin u šlachectvie* by the well-known actor and producer Florian Ždanovič (1884-1942), and directed by Jeŭsiehniej Mirovič. The production proved to be a successful and highly accomplished venture, thanks to an outstanding scenario designed by A. Maryks, and the participation of a number of leading Byelorussian actors such as H. Hryhonis (1889-1955), F. Ždanovič, and the great Uładzimir

Krylovič (1895-1937). The play ran to 700 performances, and much of its proficiency may be attributed to the fact that Mirovič had had the opportunity of seeing the play performed shortly beforehand in Moscow by the ensemble of the Comédie Française.

This production was followed two years later by a sumptuous performance of *Georges Dandin* and *L'Ecole des Femmes*, staged by the State Theatre's new director M. Papoŭ, who had come under the influence of Stanislavkij. Once again Maryks assisted by Cichanaŭ was responsible for the décor, and the original music by Lully was played during the performance. Without a leading cast, however, the production did not enjoy the same popular appeal as the previous one and the run proved to be relatively short. Thereafter the State Theatre turned more and more to experimental works of socialist realism, and apart from a performance of *Le Medecin malgré lui*, in Viciebsk, and *Tartuffe* in Minsk in 1934, the plays of Molière were neglected.

In 1937 *L'Avare*, translated into Byelorussian by J. Ramanovič, was staged by the then director of the Theatre L. Rachlenka, and three years later in 1940 *Le Medecin malgré lui* was given its first performance in Minsk. Although Maryks again designed the scenario, a shortage of funds restricted the style of the performance and deprived it of much of its impact.

The war and subsequent period of reconstruction witnessed no further productions of Molière, saving a couple of performances in the provinces of *Georges Dandin* (Palesian

Dramatic Theatre, 1948). One of the major problems, it must be said, was the lack of proficient translations of the plays into Byelorussian. This obstacle was partially removed when in 1957 there appeared a translation of selected works by Molière in two volumes, though it was only in 1967 that the complete works finally appeared in four volumes. In May of that same year the posters outside the Janka Kupala theatre in Minsk announced a new production of *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* in a translation by Jurka Haŭruk and with a light modern décor designed by the talented young artist B. Halavan. The production proved a notable success, and there is every expectation that a brilliant future lies ahead for the French theatre on the Byelorussian stage.

Barysava's small book casts an interesting light on changing attitudes over the years to classical West European drama in Soviet Byelorussia. It cannot be doubted that, after a promising start in the 1920s, the State Theatre suffered serious setbacks with the loss of Mirovič in 1932, and with the inhibiting theories of the Stalin era. The author provides a wealth of detail on what was in fact a very restricted number of productions, illustrating her book with extracts from the earlier translations of Molière into Byelorussian. There are numerous illustrations and photographs of actors, costumes and décor, which bring home very forcibly the initial obstacles encountered by the State Theatre in venturing into this field.

H. Pichura

Buŭachaŭ, M. H. *Historyja prymietnikaŭ biełaruskaj movy XIV-XVII stst.* Častka 2. Sintaksičny narys. BDU, Minsk, 1971. 296 pages.

Syntax has never been as popular as phonology or morphology in Slavonic historical linguistics. Nevertheless, research during the last two decades has laid the foundations, in description, for the historical syntax of a number of Slavonic languages, especially Russian, Czech and Polish. The diachronic syntax of Byelorussian, however, is still very much virgin territory. Apart from Karskij's monumental *Belorusy*, the main contributions in the field (by scholars

like Lomtev, Šakun and Buŭachaŭ) have been scattered and often difficult of access. This study by Buŭachaŭ of the historical syntax of Byelorussian adjectives from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries therefore fills an important gap — and all the more so since it forms a complementary part to the author's *Prymietnik u biełaruskaj movie* (1964), which was concerned with historical inflexional and derivational morphology.

This book is distinguished by its

methodical accumulation and classification of material. The exposition is divided into a number of sections:

ATTRIBUTIVE ADJECTIVES (pp. 5-27), which gives a sound account of the evolution of the 'long-form' adjective and its gradual ascendancy over the 'short-form', with reference to many morphological-semantic classes of adjectives (relational, qualitative, de-numeral, possessive). Bułachaŭ further argues that at this time, the ordering of adjective and noun had no special semantic relevance, an important fact in the historical typology of the Slavonic languages. PREDICATIVE ADJECTIVES (pp. 28-48), which deals systematically with the development of the predicative Short and Long Forms, and of the case system in this position (Nominative-Accusative-Dative-Instrumental). Bułachaŭ also discusses the types of semi-copulative verb permitted in this function, the gradual loss of the present tense copula, and the N-V-Adj type of construction (*make John ill*).

THE ADJECTIVE — INFINITIVE CONSTRUCTION (pp. 48-54); THE ADJECTIVE — NOUN PHRASE SLOVOSOČETANIJE (pp. 56-249), which covers both the Preposition — NP and the prepositionless Noun Phrase modification of the Adjective. DEGREES OF COMPARISON (pp. 249-273), with some interesting data on the case assignment with compared objects (ADJ_{Comp} *than* NP Case?), but is weaker on synthetic *versus* analytic comparative forms.

ADJECTIVES MODIFIED BY ADVERBS (pp. 273-91).

The data, as one would expect from the overall distribution of historical materials in Byelorussian, are more concerned with hagiography, histories and religious writings in the earlier part of the period under study; this material progressively gives way to

official and legal documents and codices, especially Lithuanian, in the latter part of the period. Bułachaŭ's documentation is broad, detailed, and well-balanced. He does not underplay the importance of religious materials, as some Soviet commentators have done in the past. The result is a careful and conscientious analysis, soundly based on linguistic fact.

By any standards, this is a substantial work of scholarship, comprehensive in material and solid in description. My main regret is that the standard Soviet format does not include an index, which would make access to the material much easier. I believe, nevertheless, that this documentation is the book's main contribution. Bułachaŭ's theoretical framework is the now rather elderly 'slovosočetanije' model, which is taxonomically adequate, but theoretically unilluminating. The choice of model may well be responsible for Bułachaŭ's omission of adjuncts (the man returned *drunk*), adjectives in relative clauses, and the order of adnominal attributive adjectives (fine white house *versus* white fine house). The very systematic treatment of the ADJ-NP 'slovosočetanija' does something to redress the balance; but one could wish for at least an outline of the syntax of Byelorussian at the start of the period under analysis, and rather more in the way of comparative comment to place the description in a wider diachronic context.

To be fair, Bułachaŭ is building foundations rather than descriptive superstructures. Seen in this light, *Historyja prymetnikaŭ biełaruskaj movy XIV-XVII stst.* is a meticulous and scholarly contribution, and one which will doubtless become a basic source-work for future research into Byelorussian historical syntax.

Roland Sussex

Bułyka, A. M. *Daŭnija zapazyčaŭni biełaruskaj movy*. 'Navuka i technika', Minsk, 1972. 384 pages.

Students of Byelorussian philology should be overjoyed at the publication of this excellent dictionary of old loan-words in the Byelorussian of the 14th to 18th centuries.

More than 9,500 lexical entries are provided — Byelorussian words deriv-

ed from other languages. Each word is illustrated with quotations and examples from Byelorussian literary monuments of the period in question.

A. M. Bułyka gives evidence of a thorough examination of the historical Byelorussian literature and makes use

of documents and manuscripts otherwise inaccessible to students outside the Soviet Union.

Apart from each word being shown in context, the definition is given for nearly all the words, showing the modern Byelorussian equivalent where one exists, as well as the most probable derivation. A list of the further derivations in the Byelorussian language itself is also given under each word entered. A useful bibliography of sources is provided at the end of the book.

In a work of this scope it is easily possible to make some errors and omissions, since it is obvious that one cannot examine all the works of a language in a 400-year period, many of which are no longer extant. For about thirty entries, no derivation is given and the definitions omitted as well. Whereas *haltar* (s. v.) can be presumed to be derived from the German *Halter*, one wonders where such words as *angennin*, *bararinok*,

bastrument, *burkonaj*, *vipka*, *ordok*, *rosot*, *sakson*, and others, come from and what they mean.

Occasionally one meets a questionable derivation. *Astranom* is given as a derivation from the German through the Polish, when it is more likely of Classical origin. *Bonda* is said to be derived from the Lithuanian *banda*, when a Germanic origin is more probable. *Drab* is given as a derivative of the Middle High German, through the Czech and Polish, when it is the Czech *dráb* which gave rise to this word in both German and Polish. Several other similar oversights have been noted, but considering the size and scope of this work they hardly detract from its great value.

One looks forward to seeing the publication of many more such excellent and useful books on philology and the historical grammar of Byelorussian.

R. J. Tamušanski

Historyja Bielaruskaj SSR. Tom I: Pieršaabščynny ład na terytoryi Bielarusi. Epocha feodalizmu. Ed. by K. I. Sabunia et al. 'Navuka i technika', Minsk, 1972. 630 pages. Index. Bibliography. Illustrations. Maps.

This is the first volume of the five-volume History of the Byelorussian SSR, prepared by the Institute of History of the Byelorussian Academy of Sciences in Minsk. It covers the period extending from the origins to the year 1861. The second volume deals with the period 1861-1917, whilst the remaining three volumes will be devoted to the fifty years or so of the Soviet period. The allocation of space to various periods may seem out of proportion to their actual duration. Nevertheless, it is an improvement on the work's immediate predecessor, the Russian-language two-volume *Istorija Belorusskoj SSR*, published in 1961. The advance is evident in many respects, in particular with regard to the language of publication. Furthermore, the 1961 publication was intended to be a work of final authority, and its editors accordingly dispensed with all bibliographical references, with the exception of the works of Marx, Engels and Lenin. By comparison, the editors of the present book have shown commendable modesty and included footnotes in the text as well as a short bibliography.

The book is a collective work, consisting of contributions by single authors on specific subjects, all of which, however, follow a general pattern, for which no doubt the editorial board is responsible. The list of editors and contributors is impressive and includes names of some of the best known Byelorussian historians, archaeologists as well as authorities in other related fields.

The first chapters, dealing with prehistoric times on the territory of Byelorussia, make extremely interesting reading and bear witness to the remarkable progress made by Byelorussian archaeology in recent years. Various types of succeeding civilisations, beginning with the Stone Age, are described with a wealth of concrete details. By contrast, the authors are disappointingly vague on the subject of the ethnic character of the original population of Byelorussia prior to the advent of the Slavs in the middle of the first millennium A. D. In fact the whole problem is dismissed in the following few short lines: 'The problem as to which tribes were responsible for the Dniepr-Džvina

civilisation — whether they were Slavs, Balts or Ugro-Finns — has not yet been solved. The majority of scholars take the view that those tribes belonged to the East-Baltic linguistic group. This is supported by the fact that the names of rivers and lakes on the territory of Dniepr-Džvina civilisation (Obol', Lučosa, Kasplja, Vop etc.) are of Baltic origin' (p. 65). They then immediately pass on to describe the social order among the East Slavs in the 6-9th centuries, leaving the reader asking himself when and how these Slavs came to be there in the first place. They also skirt the problem of the early stages of the formation of the Byelorussian people and the role played in it by the original population.

On the whole the authors of the *Historyja* tend to follow the lead of Russian historians in considering the East Slavs in the early stage of their history as one ethnical and political whole. This is sometimes done at the expense of accuracy as when it is stated that 'all East Slavic tribes spoke the same old Russian language' (p. 75). There is a general agreement among scholars that the East Slavs did for some time have a common literary language, which arrived together with Christianity towards the end of the 10th century, and which was basically Church Slavonic. It was not, however, the spoken language of the people and did not reflect dialectal differences between various regions. Some of these differences which later became characteristic traits of a given language, must have originated very early. Thus, according to Martynaŭ and Michnievič, the first stage of the formation of the Byelorussian language was achieved before the appearance of the Kievan state: 'Already then a considerable part of the Baltic population of the Dniepr region was assimilated by the Slavs who in their turn did not escape a reciprocal influence and absorbed several Baltic ethnical and linguistic traits'.¹

With regard to the political unity of the East Slavs within the Kievan state during the 9-12th centuries it must be said that even from the description given in the book it appears to have been very tenuous indeed. This applies especially to the principality of Połack which, according to the Byelorussian historian M. Ušaŭčyk, 'was the

first to free itself from the domination of Kiev, and in fact never recognised its authority'². One may add, to use the same author's words, that 'the history of the Połack principality, the Połack land of the 9-13th centuries, is to a large extent the history of the whole of Byelorussia'³.

The role played by the Scandinavian element in the early political history of the East Slavs is passed over in complete silence.

The reason for the representation of the early East Slavs as a single ethnical and political entity would seem to provide a historical basis for the theory of the essential unity of Russians, Ukrainians and Byelorussians and so to justify the continuous claims advanced by the Russians from the 15th century onwards to the Byelorussian and Ukrainian territories. A large part of the Ukraine was incorporated into the Russian state in the mid-17th century, and Byelorussia followed suit towards the end of the 18th. It is interesting to note that the chapter in the *Historyja* dealing with this event is entitled *Uzjednańnie Bielarusi z Rasijaj* (p. 444) i.e. 'The Reunification of Byelorussia with Russia', even though Byelorussia had never previously formed part of the Russian Empire. The Soviet Byelorussian historian of the 1920s Ihnatoŭski refers to it more correctly as 'inkorporacyja'⁴, i.e. 'incorporation' whilst Martynaŭ and Michnievič use the word 'dałučeńnie'⁵, or 'annexation'.

The treatment of the period from the mid-13th to the 18th century, when Byelorussia formed part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (which had formed a separate state until the Union with Poland in 1569) is somewhat contradictory. On the one hand there is no attempt to deny the fact that Byelorussian culture flourished during that period, or at least during the first half of it. On the other hand there is an obvious attempt to minimise the role played by Byelorussians in the political life of the country. The description of political events is curiously faceless, and one looks in vain for the names of such prominent Byelorussian statesmen and soldiers as Gregory Chadkievič and his nephew John, Leo Sapieha, Eustace Valovič and others. Thus the general impression is created that the Byelorussian

people lay under foreign domination and that their chief ambition was 'reunion with the brotherly Russian people within the borders of the Russian state' (p. 254). In accordance with this view Russian armies, whenever they invaded Byelorussian territories, are represented as liberators (see e.g. the chronological table on p. 599, where the taking of Połack by the armies of Ivan the Terrible in 1563 is described as 'vyzvalenie', i.e. 'liberation'); and any internal uprising or unrest, whatever its real causes, is viewed as a 'struggle of the popular masses against feudal, national and religious oppression' (p. 242), or a 'struggle of the Byelorussian people for reunion with Russia' (p. 305). One such uprising took place in 1595-96 under the command of the Ukrainian cossack Nalivajka. He and the band of his followers, after devastating Volhynia, moved into southern Byelorussia, leaving behind themselves a trail of death and destruction. There is no reason to suppose that they had any aims other than desire for easy gain. The author of the relevant chapter in the *Historyja*, L. S. Abecedarski, sought to portray Nalivajka as a kind of Robin Hood who robbed the rich to give to the poor. In support of his view, when describing the taking of Mahiloŭ by Nalivajka, he invokes the authority of contemporary documents, without however quoting them: 'The Chronicle of Barkuabava and other sources testify that the insurgents dealt resolutely only with noblemen and rich burghers — the "honest folk"' (p. 247). One would give much to know what those other unspecified sources have to say, but the Chronicle of Barkuabava leaves no doubt as to who the real victims were: 'They killed, mutilated and violated burgers, noblemen, the honest folk — men, women and children alike (*Meščan, bojar, ljudej učivnych tak mužej, jako i žonok, detej malych*) — and took immense booty from shops and houses'⁶. Thus the true picture is somewhat different from that conjured up by Abecedarski, whilst his identification of 'honest folk' with rich burghers and noblemen can hardly be taken seriously.

This is not the only example of near-misrepresentation. Another author, S. A. Padokšyn, when writing about Francis Skaryna, resorts to the

following exegesis: 'The Church leaders taught that human life had no value and that it was only needed to attain eternal life beyond the grave. The humanist Skaryna treats this problem in a different manner. For him the kingdom of heaven is nothing else but the world of living men, because 'God is not the God of the dead, but of the living'. 'The world of the living' was declared (by Skaryna — A. N.) the only fate worthy of man, and human life — the most precious of all possessions' (p. 281). The words 'God is not the God of the dead, but of the living' are not Skaryna's, but a quotation from the New Testament (Mt. 22:32). Skaryna uses it only once in the preface to his edition of the Book of Joshua. It may be worth quoting the relevant passage in full: 'Just as Joshua, son of Nun, led the people of Israel into the promised land, so Jesus, Son of God, shall lead the faithful into the kingdom of heaven, which is the land of the living. King David says about it: "I believe to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living" (Ps. 26, 13 — A. N.). He was the king in the promised land, but had the faith that he would be (one day) in the land of the living, that is in the kingdom of heaven. For it is in this manner that the Saviour himself answered those who asked him about the resurrection from the dead: "I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living"'⁷.

It may truly be said that the difference between the real significance of Skaryna's passage and that constructed by Padokšyn is like that existing between heaven and earth. What is unfortunate is that the extravaganzas of Abecedarski and Padokšyn tend to cast grave doubts on the credibility of the book as a whole. This is obviously prejudicial to the many serious scholars who collaborated in producing the work. For despite these criticisms there is a great deal in it that is good. The section on the archaeology of Byelorussia, written by U. Budźko, U. Isajenka, L. Pobal, H. Štychaŭ and others, has already been mentioned. There are also excellent chapters by Z. Kapyski, S. Ščarbakoŭ, D. Pachilevič, P. Kazloŭski, A. Karpačoŭ and others on social

conditions and economic development of towns and villages. The same can be said about contributions by M. Hrynbiat, A. Koršunau, M. Kacer, H. Halenčanka, S. Misko, B. Smolski and N. Pierkin on the development of Byelorussian culture.

The book is richly illustrated and contains 10 well-executed maps. One cannot, however, help feeling certain misgivings about the use as illustrations (luckily few) of works by modern artists, which, whatever their artistic merits, are of no value to the historian and at the same time are often suggestive of a partisan interpretation of the historical events they purport to illustrate.

On balance, despite its many commendable points, it is a rather disappointing work which leaves one

with a feeling that the history of Byelorussia has yet to be written.

A. Nadson

Notes

1. V. Martynaŭ, A. Michnievič, 'Biełaruskaja etymaŭohija'! *Maładość* 12, Minsk, 1969, p. 139.
2. M. Ułaščyk, 'Kniha pra Połackuju ziamlu'. *Potymia*, 4, Minsk, 1967, p. 242.
3. *Ibid.* p. 239.
4. U. Ihnatoŭski. *Historyja Bielarusi ŭ XIX i pačatku XX stалеccia*. Minsk, 1928, p. 5.
5. Martynaŭ & Michnievič, *op & loc cit.*
6. A. N. Mal'cev (ed.), 'Barkulabovskaja letopis'. *Archeografičeskij ežegodnik za 1960 g.* Moscow, 1962, p. 306.
7. F. Skaryna, *Pradmovy i paslaštoŭji*. Minsk, 1969, p. 53.

Hravyury Francyska Skaryny. Compiled, introd. and annot. by L. Barazna. 'Biełarus', Minsk, 1972. 158 pages. Illustrations.

This collection of engravings, ornamental plates and illuminated initials from the *Biblija Ruska* (Prague, 1517-9) and the *Malaja podorožnaja knižica* (Vilna, 1522) is the first attempt to present to the general public a comprehensive survey of the graphic art of Francis Skaryna (c. 1485-1540). It is appropriate that such a book should appear during the year which marks the 450th anniversary of printing in Byelorussia. A few years ago the first complete text of Skaryna's *Prefaces and Postscripts* was also published in Minsk (see *JBS*, II, 2, pp. 230-1), and so the complete original works of the great Byelorussian humanist of the Renaissance have now been made available to students.

The present collection is handsomely presented: the standard of the photographic reproductions and enlargements of the engravings is satisfactory, although one might have hoped that the editors would have used a facsimile process such as line engravings, rather than somewhat blurred photo-blocks. The commentary is in Byelorussian and Russian, and consists of a preface and a study of the engravings with explanatory notes. The preface proper gives a few details of Skaryna's life, his probable artistic training and his place in the contemporary European context. The

authors also deal very briefly with previous writers who have made studies of Skaryna's artistic work, such as Stasov, Karataev, Vladimirov and Ščakacichin. There follow the photographic reproductions together with a number of enlargements of Skaryna's forty-seven known engravings, and of the frontispieces, headpieces, vignettes and ornamental lettering to his books covering the period 1517-25. In the commentary at the end of the collection the author L. Barazna embarks on a summary analysis of the engravings which, following Ščakacichin, he divides into five groups, according to their composition, general style and draughtsmanship. In seeking to differentiate each group, Barazna attempts nothing more than a classification by subject matter, and design; he does not go as far as Ščakacichin in questioning the authorship of groups (see the present reviewer's *The engravings of Francis Skaryna*, *JBS*, I, pp. 159 ff.). Whether Skaryna was the author of all the engravings in his works or not, and whether he was helped by a number of assistants, as some writers have thought, Ščakacichin's grouping of the engravings by style seems preferable to the rather more nebulous criteria of classification by subject matter adopted by Barazna. Some of the engravings, such

as *Jeremiah*, the *Coronation of the Beloved*, and the *Divine Wisdom* are quite outstanding, both in execution, composition and design. Others depicting larger groups, and perhaps more animated scenes, are equal in excellence, though lacking the masterly compositional unity of the three former engravings: such are, for example, *The Judgment of Solomon*, *The anointing of David*, *David dancing before the ark*, and *The Seraphim in prayer*. Yet a number of engravings lack, sometimes quite strikingly, the finesse and sense of unity so evident in the two foregoing groups, and their artistic quality varies widely, from the relatively proficient *Ruth* or *The Creation* to the somewhat feeble *Job*. Other engravings seem, stylistically, to ante-date the better examples by at least a decade; such are the markedly Gothic *Moses teaching the Second commandment*, and more surprisingly, the illustrations from the later *Malaja podorožnaja knjižica* (1522), such as *Christ teaching in the Temple*, *The Annunciation* and the *Baptism of Our Lord*.

Yet there are undeniable links between all these groups of engravings, notwithstanding these stylistic differences: the constantly recurring motif of the sun and moon in works of varying quality, the general high standard of the facial expressions, and the similarity of detail in the draping

and folds of the clothing. Barazna is therefore probably justified in supporting the widely accepted view that some at least of the engravings were executed by assistants, following drawings prepared by Skaryna.

In addition Barazna advances one or two interesting new theories. He suggests for example that the engraving of the Holy Virgin on the frontispiece of the *Malaja podorožnaja knjižica* is a copy of the Icon of Our Lady from the Holy Trinity monastery in Vilna. Similarly he surmises that the enigmatic letters 'MZ.' in the bottom lefthand corner of Francis Skaryna's portrait are not the initials of a possible contemporary artist such as M. Zasinger or M. Zegel (as Rovinsky suggested), but represent in abbreviation the words *Malavaŋnie zdiełał* or *malavanija zižditiel* which are to be read in conjunction with Skaryna's own name which is depicted a little lower on the block.

Despite its shortcomings, which have been dealt with more extensively elsewhere by E. Nemirowsky ('*Album staropečatnych gravjur*', *V mire knigi*, 1973, 2, pp. 74-5), students of Byelorussian graphic art will welcome this publication as an essential basis for their research into the models and origins of Francis Skaryna's artistic formation.

H. Pichura

Ja-r. *Narodnaja mudraść i materyjalnaja kultura na chutary Vysoki Hrud, što na Pružanščynie*. Heidelberg, 1969. 36 pages. Illustrations. (Mimeographed).

In this interesting monograph the author, who originates from the north-western part of Byelorussian Palešsie, describes the everyday life, customs and folklore which prevailed in a family home on a Byelorussian farm prior to the year 1939. The Popko family owned a sizable estate in the Pružany district, comprising some 100 hectares of arable and marshland and supporting a clan of 16 people living in three separate households. Details of local flora and livestock, as well as numerous illustrations of farm implements, tools and household articles, ranging from pitchforks to mousetraps, have been painstakingly recorded by the author.

He also gives a collection of pro-

verbs, riddles and sayings commonly used on the estate, together with a number of local ritual songs, folk-songs and tales. It is worth noting that Vysoki Hrud was visited by the distinguished Byelorussian musicologist Ryhor Šyrma who recorded a number of folk-songs from the wife of the head of the family, Hanna Popko (born Ivaniukievič), during one of his ethnographical expeditions.

The study appears at a time when many of the customs and usages of rural Byelorussia are tending to disappear. It casts an attractive and lively light on the passing of country life in a secluded but ethnographically interesting area.

H. Pichura

Kabašnikaŭ, K. (ed.) *Dziciačy falktor*. 'Navuka i technika', Minsk, 1972. 736 pages. Musical illustrations.

Fiadosik, A. (ed.) *Zahadki*. 'Navuka i technika', Minsk, 1972. 448 pages.

Continuing the comprehensive collection of Byelorussian folklore and literature initiated by the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore, the Byelorussian Academy of Sciences has brought out two further works, bringing the total number of volumes published to five (for reviews of earlier publications in the series see *JBS*, II, 4, pp. 400-1).

In *Dziciačy falktor* the editors have drawn on original material as well as on collections by earlier writers and ethnographers in compiling their volume devoted to the folklore of childhood, in particular those of Čačot, Rypiški, Šejn, Ramanaŭ, Fedaroŭski and Dabravolski. For the Soviet period the collections of Seržputoŭski, Šlubski, Citovič and Hrynbiat are cited. The volume comprises two introductory essays by F. Bartaševič on childrens' folklore (pp. 5-33) and by V. Jalataŭ on childrens' songs (pp. 34-58). The material is divided into three sections, the first of which deals with lullabies and entertainment songs (pp. 61-228), the second with calls, forfeits and teasing-songs (231-390), and the third with counting-songs and games (pp. 390-550). There is an extensive commentary with footnotes (pp. 553-703) as well as an index.

The volume *Zahadki* is devoted to riddles, which are also drawn from a variety of sources past and present, beginning with the earliest collection of folk-riddles published in *Mogilev-*

skije gubernskije vedomosti (1849, No. 9), and continuing with the collections of I. Nosovič, Ramanaŭ, Dyboŭski, Šejn and others. A. Hurski provides an introductory treatise on the folk-riddle, and discusses its place in Byelorussian literature and folksong. (pp. 5-18). There follows a corpus of some 3,479 riddles, some of which are little but local variants of others. The editors have sought to classify them according to the subject matter to which they relate: Nature and Man (pp. 21-187), work and material conditions (pp. 189-338), Community and family life (pp. 341-78), joke- and puzzle-riddles (pp. 381-96), and riddles of the Soviet period (pp. 399-416). There is the usual commentary (pp. 417-38) and index. The riddles of the Soviet period tax the ingenuity but little ('Who is that genius of the twentieth century who made a man out of a slave? — Lenin'). Most of the genuine folk items however, are less predictable, though more entertaining ('Two daughters, two mothers and a grandmother with her granddaughter; how many are there together? — Three [grandmother, mother and daughter]').

Both these collections bear an impressive witness to the wealth and variety of the culture of the Byelorussian people, and the compiled collection will be something of a landmark, even in the international field.

H. Pichura

Lubachko I. S., *Belorussia under Soviet Rule, 1917-1957*. The University Press Kentucky, 1972. 219 pages. Bibliography. Index. Maps.

The history of Byelorussia, early or modern, has to this day remained *terra incognita* for Western scholars. Apart from N. Vakar's rather unsatisfactory *Belorussia: the Making of the Nation* (Harvard U. P., 1956) there has not been until recently any single book on the subject in the English language. Prof. I. Lubachko's book, *Belorussia under Soviet Rule*, is the first serious attempt to fill the gap. As its title indicates, it is concerned with the modern period of Byelorussian history. The reader will find in

it sections on historical background, the beginnings of the Byelorussian national movement and attempts to establish an independent Byelorussian Republic after 1917, the fate of Polish-occupied Western Byelorussia during the years 1921-39 and the German occupation of the country during the Second World War. The main part of the book, however, is devoted to the formation and development of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic. While not neglecting the peculiar traits of the development of Soviet

Byelorussia, the author does not separate it from the general context of the history of the USSR and tries to show throughout the book how various changes in the Soviet policy affected that country. The last chapter entitled 'Belorussia and War Diplomacy' deserves a special mention, as it seems to be the first attempt 'to study the Byelorussian problem as an international issue during the last war, and the events leading to that country becoming one of the founder members of the United Nations Organisation.

The book is written in a style which is generally clear and factual, and the subject-matter is illustrated with several valuable statistical tables and finely drawn maps. The author takes great care to indicate his sources of information, and the bibliography at the end of the book (17 pages) seems very impressive. One would sometimes wish to see a more critical approach to the bibliographical sources. This would have prevented the author from making mistakes such as when he, following Vakar, makes two Byelorussian political leaders die twice — first at the hands of the Polish police (p. 137) and then in the Soviet Union during the Stalin purges (p. 115). Another example of such an insufficiently critical approach is the reliance placed by the author on the booklet *Belorusskaja SSR* by I. Kravčenko *et al.* (Moscow, 1956) — hardly a work of authority on any subject — as his main source of information about Francis Skaryna, whose name incidentally he for some reason gives as *Frantsishka* (p. 81). Moreover, his statement that Skaryna translated into Byelorussian 'many books, including the Bible' (*ibid.*) is misleading because it implies that Skaryna translated books other than the Bible, which is not the case. In Lubachko's bibliography Je. Karskij is given as the author of *Kurs belorusovedenija* (Moscow, 1918-1920), a publication consisting of lectures read by various persons at the so-called 'Byelorussian People's University' in Moscow in July-August 1918 (p. 202). In reality the editors of the book added to it Karskij's ethnographical map of Byelorussia, but this is the

only link between him and that publication or, indeed, the 'University' in which, contrary to Lubachko's statement (p. 27), he took no part.

Without wishing to belittle the remarkable achievements of Byelorussians in the cultural field in the 1920s, one feels that to call a period which lasted less than ten years the 'Golden age of Byelorussian culture' (p. 80) is to overstate the case somewhat.

A number of queries may be raised with regard to the statements contained in the first chapter, entitled 'Historical background'. These include the author's somewhat oversimplified explanations of the origin of the name 'Byelorussia' and of the East Slavic peoples. Similarly, few scholars, even slightly acquainted with the history of the Byelorussian language, could agree with the statement that what later came to be known as Byelorussian was initially 'Old-Slavonic in its West Russian version' (p. 2). To give another example, if one is to believe Lubachko, the substitution of Polish for Byelorussian as the official language of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was made not in 1696, but a century earlier (p. 3). It is also curious to know why the author mentioned only the first 1529 version of the Statute of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (p. 2) and passed over in silence the fact that the Statute had three official versions — of 1529, 1566 and 1588, — and that the last of them was printed in three editions between 1588 and 1594.

These criticisms are not intended to detract in any way from the real value of Prof. Lubachko's book. In fact they mostly relate to secondary points and can be rectified easily in any subsequent edition.

Being in the nature of a pioneer work in its particular field, the book is bound to upset certain well-established ideas. Without necessarily sharing all the views expressed by Prof. Lubachko, one feels that by treating Byelorussia as a distinct unit he has made a valid contribution towards forming a more balanced view on the history of the whole of Eastern Europe.

A. Nadson

Ściacko, P. U. *Narodnaja leksika i slovaŭtvareńnie*. 'Navuka i technika', Minsk, 1972. 288 pages. Short bibliography.

Jurčanka, H. F. *I kocicca i valicca*. 'Navuka i technika', Minsk, 1972. 288 pages.

Miacielskaja, Je. S., Kamaroŭski, Ja. M. *Stoŭnik bielaruskaj narodnaj fraziełohii*. With an Introduction by Nił Hilevič. BDU, Minsk, 1972. 320 pages.

Each of these three books illustrates in a different way the still little-known riches of the popular Byelorussian language. Ściacko's study, like his earlier *Narodnaja leksika* and *Dyjalektny stoŭnik* (both published in 1970 — see *JBS*, II, 3, p. 318), is concerned with the dialect of the Zelva region of western Byelorussia. Again the semantic fields are purely material (*bytavy*) in character, ranging from words for buildings to various tools and types of harness. Again also the author includes all the words of this type used in the Zelva region, and does not confine himself to those peculiar to it. Each word in the first section (pp. 1-223) is given, in addition to its meaning and illustrative context(s), a suggested etymology, and this leads to the inclusion of a good deal of already familiar material. Repetition of well-known linguists' views on the etymology of Common Slavonic words (Berneker and Vasmer on *dvor* (p. 5) or *dom* (p. 15), to give two random examples) can hardly be justified in days when books remain unpublished for want of paper. The second section (pp. 224-83) describes the principal features of word-formation in the Zelva region. As in the vocabulary, the exposition is clear, albeit somewhat laborious. The bibliography comprises only 22 items.

I kocicca i valicca — 'there is an abundance' — is an apt title for Jurčanka's study of the dialectal phraseology of his native Mściślaŭ region. This work follows his *Narodnaja sinanimika* (1969 — see *JBS*, II, 3, p. 317) and, covering as it does phrases whose initial word begins with letters from A — Z in the Cyrillic alphabet, is intended as the

first half of a two-volume project. There is an index of dialectal words occurring in the examples, and a general index is to appear in the next volume. Although many of the phrases are well-known in the regular literary language, others remind the reader of the richness and variety of dialects in a country as yet little affected by linguistic normalisation: it will be a matter for great regret if expressions like *vykidać koniki* — 'to behave eccentrically', *vyjedziennaje jajco* — 'a trifle', or *działa jak saža biała* — 'a dreadful mess' become erased from the popular memory as a result of the standardising pressures of the modern media.

Stoŭnik bielaruskaj narodnaj fraziełohii casts its net wider, comprising phrases which, in the compilers' words, 'are still not part of the literary language, but which are well-known in dialects throughout the BSSR and even beyond its frontiers'. With about three thousand thoroughly illustrated entries, the book is certain to become a useful reference work for writers and scholars, to say nothing of those readers of Byelorussian literature who may hitherto have been stumped by expressions like *ad puza* — 'at will', *i ni łysy* — 'feigning innocence', or even *amen žycio* — 'death'. All three works make a valuable contribution to the specialist study of their field, and the two phraseological works also represent pleasant reference books for the more casual reader. The popular Byelorussian language is at last beginning to be shown in a light which reflects not only its academic interest but also its liveliness and charm.

Arnold B. McMillin

Stankievič, M. *Greatlitvanian (Byelorussian) Cookbook*. Hawthorne, N. J., 1972. 64 pages.

The existence of a distinctive Byelorussian tradition of cooking has been acknowledged for a number of years,

both by Byelorussian and foreign writers (see B. Norman, *The Russian Cookbook*, London 1970, pp. 11-12).

The appearance in 1967 of the collection by D. Gelin *et al.*, *Sbornik receptur belorusskich nacional'nych bljud i kulinarnych izdelij* created something of a controversy in the Soviet Byelorussian press. The basis of the outcry was that the treatise was cosmopolitan rather than Byelorussian, including as it did such obviously Russian and Caucasian dishes as *Boeuf Stroganoff* and *Tefteli* (see J. Korzun, 'Pra biełaruskiju kuchniu', *Potymia*, 2, Minsk, 1968, pp. 228-31).

No such aberrations are discernible in Mme Stankievič's collection of more than 200 traditional Byelorussian recipes, representing a much improved and more comprehensive version of an earlier edition which appeared in 1961. The collection includes such simple but most acceptable classics as *Zacirka*, *Vieraščanka*, *Babka*, *Łamancy* and *Abaranki*, dishes which haunt the pages of Kołas' *Novaja Ziarnla* and other works. These robust delicacies come as a breath of fresh country air to the urban palate and olfactory nerves, jaded with spices and commodity foods. Even though the author's approach occasionally verges on the style of the weary Women's Institute cookbooks in her devotion to simplicity (in the present reviewer's experience the average Byelorussian housewife's imagination runs riot in using *prismaki* and spices or herbs *jak ty chočaš*), it is a pleasant surprise to find in such a small tome a number of regional recipes such as veal Ašmiany-style, Mahiloŭ milk-soup, and Minsk *zrazy*. One wishes the author had pursued this interesting line of research a little further: source-material on regional cookery is not lacking, and Šejn, Nikifaroŭski and Ramanau give a goodly number of regional recipes from the Hrodna

and Viciebsk areas. Similarly it is a little surprising that such ancient and popular dishes as *Talakno*, *Kamy* and *Husiačy ściudzien* should have found no place in this otherwise valuable little collection.

Perhaps the most striking omission is that of the grand seignorial cuisine of the old aristocratic families. To leave this out is to impoverish the national culinary heritage to a very substantial degree. As early as the 17th century, the praises of one of the great Byelorussian contributions to international cookery, duck stewed with green peppers, were being sung by Ivan Mialeška, castellan of Smolensk, and was served two centuries later by Alhierd Abuchovič (1840-1898) to his friends in Paris. Many other excellent and noble recipes are given in Jan Szyttler's *Kucharz dobre usposobiony* (Vilna, 1830), which although written in Polish, contains many dishes of undisputably Byelorussian origin formerly served at the table of the Sapieha and other aristocratic families e.g. *Zupa Chłodnik ruski*, *Zupa ruska Kalion z ogórkowym rasołem*, *Kaldunki z rakowych szyiek*.

From a technical point of view Mme Stankievič's recipes are easy to follow, and give good results, though some of her more blatant Americanisms (e.g. Potato Nick, Blintzes) are a little confusing. It would, however, be invidious to tax the author with these shortcomings in what is, after all, an introductory and essentially practical book. Mme Stankievič is something of a pioneer in this field, and together with the ladies of the Byelorussian Women's Association, is to be congratulated on an imaginative and attractive work. It will afford considerable pleasure to the amateur of genuine East European folk-cookery.

H. Pichura