

## Reviews

Bas, I. *Litaraturaznaŭčyja eciudy*. 'Mastackaja litaratura', Minsk, 1977. 224 pages.

Isadar Bas is a well-known literary scholar whose interest in the remoter corners of Byelorussian nineteenth- and early twentieth-century culture and careful archival research link his name with those of Hienadź Kisialoŭ, Ściapan Aleksandrovič and Adam Maldzis. His first important work was a comparison of the various manuscript and printed versions of *Taras na Parnasie* (*Bielaruskaja litaratura*, III, 1971, pp. 213-33), followed by a valuable collection of essays offering new bibliographical archive material on Bahrym, Bahuševič, Kupała and Kołas together with fresh information about *Enieida navyvarat* and *Taras na Parnasie: Litaraturnyja pošuchi, znachodki, dašledavaŭni* (Minsk, 1969). Two years later *Padarožža ŭ litaraturnaje minutaje* was only partially connected with Byelorussia, concentrating on the 'brotherly links' between Russian, Ukrainian, Polish and Byelorussian literature and including a good deal of peripheral material on such varied Russian writers as, *inter al.*, Čaadajev, Gogol' and Černyševskij.

In many respects *Litaraturaznaŭčyja eciudy* resembles the last collection, and one is led to wonder whether the type of material suitable for Bas's archival research is in fact coming to an end, for the present essays are marked by their slightness, a tendency to waffle (for example, the description of the Central State Historical Archive in Leningrad and of the view from the reading-room windows) and the scant relevance of some of the items to literature of any kind whatsoever.

The first section, entitled 'Staronki žyćcia' (pp. 5-70), is the most interesting, presenting as it does some new archive material on the lives of Kupała, Łučyna and Pałujan; the latter is especially welcome, for this brilliant

and tragically short-lived poet is still too little known, despite the considerable number of poetic necrologues written by his contemporaries, most notably Bahdanovič and Kupała. The second section, 'Za ūsio vysokaje, sumlennaje' (pp. 73-146), is devoted to Darafiej Bochan, a minor Russian poet of the Mahiloŭ region, Michaił Mysaŭski, the editor of a subversive newspaper, and Alaksandr Mikulčyk, the author of some unremarkable political verse. 'Archiunyja ściažynami' (pp. 147-98) is also concerned with some little-known figures from Byelorussia's past: Leŭ Šapialevič, a specialist in foreign literature; Kaetan Kasovič, the first Sanskrit scholar in the Russian Empire; two medical specialists, Siarhiej Čyr'jeŭ and Anton Čačot, whose inclusion in a collection of literary studies the author tries to justify by describing their activity as 'an interesting page in the history of Byelorusso-Russian and Byelorusso-Ukrainian cultural and scientific relations' (p. 181); and the composer and musicologist Michaił Ancaŭ who also wrote some humorous verse fables in Russian. The concluding section of this heterogeneous and somewhat slight collection is entitled 'Spadčyna' (pp. 199-221) and comprises examples of the (Russian) verses of D. Bochan, Ja. Okuń and others.

Bas is, as always, a methodical scholar and his work reflects some patient archival research, but if the book's title implies relevance to Byelorussian or any other major literature it is rather misleading, and at a time of alleged paper shortage when important works of creative writing and scholarship are being printed in lamentably small editions the justification for publishing such peripheral material must be in doubt.

Arnold B. McMillin

Bergman, A. *Rzecz o Bronisławie Taraszkiewiczzu*, Książka i Wiedza, Warsaw, 1977. 243 pages.

One of the most striking things about Taraškievič for an English historian is the way in which English historians have till now managed either to ignore him completely or to present him very briefly as an oddity. Antony Polonsky in his *Politics in Independent Poland, 1921-1939* (Oxford, 1972) makes no mention of him whatsoever; indeed he manages to refer to the Hramada only twice in what is otherwise a scrupulously detailed survey of the political life of the period. H. Roos (*A History of Modern Poland*, London, 1966, p. 136) refers to him only as an 'aged scholar', and this at the time of his arrest in 1927 when he was only 35. (Judging by the photographs of him in the book under review Taraškievič certainly did look older than he was. It might nevertheless be advisable for authors to check birth dates before using loaded words like 'aged'.)

Aleksandra Bergman's biography of Taraškievič ought to ensure that he is not so easily dismissed in future. This is a book that has obviously been written with an enormous amount of enthusiasm for a period of history that can no longer be regarded as a mere by-way, far away from the major concerns of Europe, and for the central role played in that period by Branisłaŭ Taraškievič. The author clearly has a deep admiration for 'nasz bohater', a phrase she uses on more than one occasion. Within the compass of this short biography, she obviously could not include a detailed survey of Taraškievič's achievements in the codification of Byelorussian grammar or of the artistic merits of his translations of the *Iliad* and *Pan Tadeusz*. Indeed these very important aspects of his life have already been dealt with elsewhere, even if they have not yet been treated as fully as they deserve. The strength of Aleksandra Bergman's biography lies in its exposition of Taraškievič's political development. It is now manifestly pointless to debate whether this or that path taken by Taraškievič to further the Byelorussian cause in interbellum Poland was the 'right' one or not. We will never know what he really thought of life in Stalinist Moscow after 1933, nor will we know

how he met his death, a point on which the author is understandably, if unfortunately, reticent. But it is obvious that the Polish authorities had already made life in Poland unbearable for him and, in any case, he really had no say in the exchange. It is also obvious from the treatment meted out to him by the Polish courts that he was indeed considered to be the central figure in a movement seen as potentially, if not actually, subversive.

Taraškievič's own political path involved coming to a deeper understanding of the relationship between the national and the social revolution. The stenographer's version of his words in the Vilna court room in 1928 has him say: 'Postawiłem hasło: "lud sam dla siebie", które oznaczało, iż lud może zdobyć dla siebie prawo za pomocą siły. BWRH (the Hramada — JD), zdaniem moim, musiała być organizacją obejmującą ruch nacjonalny i socjalny'. The combination of the words 'nacjonalny' and 'socjalny' is significant; the order in which they occur may also be significant. Elsewhere in the book, Aleksandra Bergman in discussing the situation further east immediately prior and just after the establishment of the BSSR, mentions the 'walka przeciwko elementom antysocjalistycznym (odsuwając tym samym kwestię narodową na drugi plan)'. It may be that Taraškievič hoped through the legitimate participation of the *Hramada* in Polish political life, to keep the national and social issues as of equal importance.

This book is a vital and fascinating contribution to our knowledge of one of the most outstanding Byelorussians of this century and of the history of the Byelorussian national movement. It is surely impossible now to accept Taraškievič as a linguist and translator and to ignore the crucial development of his political outlook. To do him full justice we must consider sympathetically all aspects of his life. The book contains some very interesting illustrations and an extensive bibliography (unfortunately omitting Rahuła's *Uspaminy*, New York, 1952). Even a small point such as the absence of the standard 'reactionary landowner' tag to the name of Raman Skirmun is a real delight. It is perhaps too early

to say whether the author is right in her assessment of Astroŭski.

One small quibble: if the BNR was really a 'twór fikcyjny', as the author asserts on p. 37, who gave Anton

Luckievič his diplomatic passport, and how had he managed to travel to the Paris peace conference on it?

J. Dingley

Čanturija, V. A. *Istorija architektury Belorussii*. 'Vyšejšaja škola', Minsk, 1977. 320 pages. Illustrations. Bibliography.

This is the second edition, revised and expanded, of a book which first appeared in 1969.<sup>1</sup> The new version is bigger and glossier, with more imaginative graphic design and better reproduced illustrations, in keeping with its status as a Ministry-approved text book for the 'Architecture' option (no. 1201). Despite the disappearance of 'pre-October' from the title, the new edition covers the same ground as its predecessor (from earliest times to the early 20th century) but, as the author explains at some length in his preface, it has been adapted in accordance with the History of Art course introduced by the Byelorussian Ministry of Higher and Secondary Education in 1974, as well as on the basis of corrections and new evidence.

The amendments and additions reflect an emphasis on the growth and planning of towns. New or expanded sections on *gradostroitel'stvo* are included at the beginning of each chapter and there is also some additional material on constructional techniques and masonry. The new edition contains an appendix (pp. 278-310) with model architectural-historical sketches of eight towns (Hrodna, Niašviž, Navahrudak, Pinsk, Slonim, Viciebsk, Pastavy, Hhubokaje), each accompanied by simple plans showing the sites of the main surviving monuments. In addition, towns of special architectural interest are divided into four categories, Hrodna standing alone in category 1 by virtue of the comparative abundance of its historic architecture. This appendix was designed as a teaching aid and as a model for students' own course projects. A further addition to the revised version is a bibliography of seventeen items. With the exception of the first two entries (Marx/Engels and Lenin), none of the works is dated before 1954. Two are in Byelorussian.

It comes as no surprise that Čanturija adheres to the standard socio-economic scheme of periodization

against which all developments in Byelorussian culture are deemed to have taken place, i.e. primordial, Old Russian State and feudal fragmentation (9th-13th centuries), formation of Byelorussian *narodnost'* (14th-early 17th centuries), predominance of the corvée system (late 17th-18th centuries), decay of feudalism and birth of capitalism (late 18th-early 19th centuries) and capitalism proper, at which point the October Revolution arrived to rescue Byelorussian architecture from an 'impasse' (p. 105). Within this scheme Čanturija considers the implications of Byelorussia's geographical position for her architecture. The 'uninterrupted and beneficial influence of kindred Russian culture' (p. 277) is conventionally treated, beginning with the view that Byelorussian architecture of the 9th-13th centuries was both an integral part of Old Russian culture (Čanturija cites the existence of three cathedrals dedicated to the Holy Wisdom in Kiev, Novgorod and Połack) and regionally differentiated (e.g. the same cathedral in Połack (1044-66) with its unusual faceted apses and compact plan). Unfortunately so few buildings have survived from this period — only five are illustrated, most of them only partially preserved — that conclusions are tenuous. 'Common ties' are again underlined in the section on the 16th-17th centuries, when the Byelorussians were allegedly striving for unification with their Russian neighbours. Čanturija mentions in passing the well-documented examples of Byelorussian work in mid-17th-century Moscow, but fails, strangely enough, to point out the striking similarity between the pointed niches in the early 16th-century church at Gnezno (p. 98) and devices in contemporary Muscovite architecture.

The incorporation of Byelorussia into the Russian Empire during the late 18th century was, according to Čanturija, 'of enormous progressive

significance for the historical fate of the Byelorussian people' (p. 207), giving impetus to both economic and cultural development. One can almost sympathize with the author's dilemma when he asserts that the post-Partition replanning of towns, conducted in most cases directly from St. Petersburg, was 'progressive', whilst at the same time revealing that many estates and sometimes whole towns were distributed to Catherine II's Russian favourites (more 'progressive' than Polish magnates?) (p. 209), and that urban replanning was in the main 'subjugated to the interests of the ruling classes' (p. 211). As it happens, Čanturija devotes a large proportion of his book to the period of pre-Partition 'Catholic repression'. Of the many fine buildings dating from the 16th-18th centuries, the numerous Jesuit colleges and cathedrals are especially impressive, e.g. the Połack college (founded 1580) with its theatre, museum, picture gallery and pharmacy alongside ecclesiastical buildings. Magdeburg Law gave rise to a number of public buildings, including the town halls in Mahiloŭ (1679-97) and Niašviž (late 16th century), whilst individuals such as A. Tizengauz, Treasurer of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, organized huge projects; in the 1760s-80s he hired foreign and local builders to erect craftsmen's cottages, shops and premises for schools of medicine, veterinary science, surveying and music in Hrodna and Pastavy. Many of the architectural features of the period came outside the 'common heritage' of Great and White Russia; one may note, for example, the widespread use of Gothic devices in church- and fortress-building, the distinctive group of 15th-16th-century fortified churches (Synkoviči, Małaje Mažejkava, Supraśl), the fortified residences and palaces of magnates (Hrodna, Mir, Niašviž etc.). The ubiquitous domes and centralized plan of Great Russia were in Byelorussia supplemented by a great diversity of ecclesiastical designs. The majority of stone churches were erected by the Catholic Church and its orders, but the Orthodox communities built many fine wooden churches and a number in stone, e.g. the churches of the Epiphany (1633-36) and St. Nicholas (1669) in Mahiloŭ, the latter with two Western towers in the

Catholic manner. Uniate churches were initially varied in form, but Čanturija suggests that by the 18th century their exteriors had become identical with those of Catholic churches (e.g. the reconstructed Cathedral of the Holy Wisdom in Połack (1738-50)). Protestant congregations also built their chapels on Byelorussian soil and an interesting group of synagogues survives (pp. 195-206).

The question of Western influence inevitably arises and Čanturija is not alone amongst Soviet art historians in evading the problem by claiming that Byelorussia took only the best and most *progressive* devices (*progressivnyje prijemy*) from Western Europe (p. 106, 277). Yet what is 'progressive' architecture? Is it the most *avant-garde*? The most constructionally sound? Is a peasant's hut more 'progressive' than a nobleman's palace? The creators of many 17th-18th-century monuments were themselves foreigners, mostly Italians and Germans, their patrons those very magnates and churchmen who allegedly hindered Byelorussian development by, amongst other things, 'breaking her fraternal ties with the Russian people' (p. 105). In 1659 the government of the Polish Commonwealth itself distributed a manual of designs for domestic architecture based on Western European sources (p. 71). How would one assess the ideological rating of such a work? It is interesting to note that gradations of 'progressiveness' are also suggested by the arrangement of topics within each section for the book. Town planning is given precedence, followed by urban, then rural domestic architecture, with ecclesiastical buildings bringing up the rear, Orthodox churches first, synagogues last. (See pp. 161-206).

The fact is that in Byelorussia, as in every region of Europe into which international styles penetrated, common designs were modified by local topography, climate and materials, by the level of local skills, availability of funds and, of course, by indigenous traditions. In Byelorussia local tradition is perhaps best exemplified by wooden architecture. Even Classical mansions were sometimes built of wood (e.g. the palace at Radziwili-monty (1780)), but, as Čanturija observes, late 18th-century stone man-

sions, too, displayed 'independence and originality' (p. 262). The notion of the conscious selection of 'progressive' features from what was on offer is inadequate to explain the complex interaction of foreign styles and local traditions, but if the reader of this book can detach himself from its ideological framework, he should be able to judge for himself the extent of Byelorussian 'independence and originality' from the many excellent photographs and drawings and the clear, often detailed descriptions which Čanturija provides.

As the author states in his preface, the study and evaluation of architectural monuments and their incorporation into new planning projects is of 'extraordinary importance', particularly, one might add, in Byelorussia, where much has been destroyed over the centuries. The bulldozer-happy days of earlier decades appear to

have been superseded by a more sensitive approach to reconstruction (see, for example, the 1976 Soviet law 'On the preservation and utilization of monuments of history and culture'), but the definition of a *monument* remains crucial. Čanturija suggests that his book will help the student 'to assess for himself the value of the surviving architectural heritage' (p. 7). It is to be hoped that it will help to instil respect not only for magnificent palaces, cathedrals and castles but also for the more humble buildings which have shaped the appearance of Byelorussian towns and villages and which Čanturija's ideological framework brings to the fore.

Lindsey Hughes

1. V. A. Canturija, *Istorija architektury Belorusii. Dooktjabr'skij period*, Minsk, 1969.

Kupała, Janka. *Zbor tvoraŭ*. Ed. by V. Barysienka et al. Vols 1-7. 'Navuka i Technika', Minsk, 1972-76. Ill., indices. (Akademija Navuk Bielaruskaj SSR. Instytut Litaratury imia Janki Kupały.)

This is the third edition of Janka Kupała's collected works since his death, the previous two having appeared in 1951-54 and 1962-63. Published under the auspices of the Janka Kupała Institute of Literature of the Byelorussian Academy of Sciences, and prepared by a team of scholars, some of them well known for their studies of Kupała's works, it claims to be, to quote the words from the preface, 'the most complete and scientifically exact edition of the works of the national poet' (Vol. 1, p. 5). The arrangement of the material follows traditional patterns. The first four volumes consist of collections of Kupała's original verse and translations from works of Polish, Russian and Ukrainian authors for the years 1904-1907, 1908-10, 1911-17, and 1918-42 resp.; in the 5th volume there are his longer poems from various years, such as *Kurhan*, *Bandaroŭna*, *Mahila Iva*, *Bieznazoŭnaje* and others, as well as longer translations, including *The Lay of Igor's Campaign* and Taras Ševčenko's *Katerina*; the 6th volume contains Kupała's plays (*Paŭlinka*, *Raskidanaje hniazdo*, *Prymaki*) and dramatic poems *Son na kurhanie*, *Adviečnaja piešnia*, *Na papasie*; the

7th — a selection of his essays, newspaper articles and private correspondence, as well as translations of W. Wolski's libretto of S. Moniuszko's opera *Halka* and E. Żuławski's play *Eros i Psyche*. All volumes are provided with full critical notes and commentaries, containing textual variants whenever such exist, as well as with useful alphabetical indexes of works contained in a given volume. The general alphabetical index to all volumes, and a detailed chronicle of the poet's life, are to be found in Vol. 7. One of the pleasant features of the whole publication is its attractive exterior appearance which does credit to the taste and ability of the artist responsible for its execution.

Some new material, not found in earlier editions, has been included in the present publication. Thus Vol. 1 contains Kupała's 21 short poems in Polish, written by him in 1906, but never before published in any book. (The only previous publication is that by A. Barščeŭski in the *Navukovy zbornik*, Białystok, 1964.) On the whole, however, the editors' claim to the completeness and exactness of the publication is not borne out by the facts. A closer acquaintance with its

contents reveals several important omissions. These may be roughly divided into two groups. The first group consists of Kupała's earlier works, written not later than the early 1920s. Among them there are well known titles such as the play *Tutejšyja* (*The Natives* written in 1922, first published in the journal *Polymia* in 1924), the long poem *Na Kućciu* (*On Christmas Eve*, first published in the newspaper *Naša Niva* in 1911, and reprinted in the book of collected poems *Šlacham žyćcia* in 1913), as well as the poems *Čaraunik* (*The Wizard*, 1913), *Na Dziady* (*On 'Ancestors' Remembrance Day'*, 1912), *Nad Niomnam* (*On the Bank of River Nioman*, 1913), *Pierad budućyniaj* (*Before the Future*, 1922) and several others. What all these works have in common is that the sentiments expressed in them can hardly please, or be approved by, the present-day establishment in Soviet Byelorussia. The second group of omissions comprises works written during the years 1935-42. It was the period which is today euphemistically called 'the personality cult', and Kupała, along with other poets in the Soviet Union, was forced to compose hymns in praise of Stalin and his rule. Doubtless, it was the price they had to pay for their survival. It was during that time that Kupała wrote the poems *Tabie, pravadyr, maje pieśni i dumy* (*To you, O Leader, belong my songs and my thoughts*, 1936), *Ab Stalinie siejbitu* (*Stalin the Sower*, 1937), *Ja Stalinu mudramu pieśni śpiavaju* (*I sing songs in praise of Wise Stalin*, 1939) and others. No doubt the powers-that-be today in Soviet Byelorussia prefer not to be reminded of this period, and Kupała himself, if he were alive, would probably not be proud of what he was forced to write. Nevertheless, in a critical edition of his collected works, these poems should be included, perhaps as an appendix, both for the sake of completeness and as a document of those tragic times.

Several other works have been

included in the present edition in an incomplete form. Thus the poem *Dudar* (*The Piper*, see Vol. 2, p. 201) is printed here without the author's dedication 'Autaru "Białoruskaj historya" Vlastu' (To the author of the "Byelorussian History" Vlast) which preceded it when it was first published in 1910 in the newspaper *Naša Niva*, and later in the book *Šlacham žyćcia* (1913). 'Vlast' is the pseudonym of Vacłaŭ Łastoŭski (1883-1938), the Byelorussian scholar and writer, author of the first history of Byelorussia ever printed in the native language, which appeared in 1910. The official attitude towards him and his works in present-day Byelorussia is one of hostility, hence the suppression of any mention of connections between him and Kupała. An example of omissions in works belonging to the second group (i.e. written in 1935-41) may be provided by the nowadays much-quoted and praised poem *Bielaruskim partyzhanam* (*To the Byelorussian Partisans*, 1941; see Vol. 4, p. 382), from which the following stanza has been omitted:

Vašy bitvy ūvieš šviet bača,  
Bača Stalin rodny naš,  
Jak fašystaŭ rod sabačy,  
Ludarezaŭ zbrod šmiardziačy  
Niščyć vaša varta-straž.

Janka Kupała is considered today to be the greatest Byelorussian poet. For this reason alone it is of great importance both for the scholar and the general reader to have an authoritative edition of his complete works. This aim the editors of the present publication have failed to achieve. Moreover, with the help of all the trappings of a critical and scholarly approach, they have misled the reader, by presenting to him Kupała not as he really was, but as they want him to appear. It would have been more appropriate if they had called their edition *Selected and corrected works*. As it stands, it must be used with circumspection.

A. Nadson

Pađužny, A. I. *Narys akustyčnaj fanieytyki bielaruskaj movy*. 'Navuka i Technika', Minsk, 1977. 166 pages.

The title of the book 'Acoustic-Phonetic Study of Byelorussian' (an

'Essay on Acoustical Phonetics of Byelorussian' according to the author's

English summary) gives little idea of the wide scope of the volume which is a general introduction to acoustic phonetics followed by a broadly based study of the sounds of Byelorussian with emphasis on machine analysis. After some platitudinous pages of would-be neuro-and psycho-linguistics and a brief explanation of sound waves, harmonics, the effects of amplitude on perception and the application of Fourier analysis, the author (p. 23) describes the Kay Sonagraph through which he has put a lot of his data. He also mentions, *en passant*, that there is a Soviet version of the same machine, the Spektr I — apparently less efficient. The other machine that he makes use of is the standard oscilloscope. The sonagrams at the end of the book were done with 300 cps (cycles per second) filters and up to 5,000 cps. To anyone like your reviewer, who has spent many hours trying to get good sonagrams, Padlužny's examples are enviably clear, especially the formants of the vowels which he describes admirably (there is a formants list on p. 103). What a pity it is, then, that since he had the possibility of going up to 16,000 cps he generally used no higher than 3,500 cps so that there is no overall picture of consonant differentiation. Altogether he is rather 'hung up' on consonants. Convinced by various perception tests — his own and other people's — that there can be confusion on consonants in the stream of utterances, he skirts round giving any precise acoustic description despite devoting forty pages to them. He differs from Liberman in maintaining that the third formant is of no importance in Byelorussian despite the fact that some of his sonagrams clearly show that this formant is playing a role (especially for *c* and *č*, illustrations nos. 29 and 30). As a compensation for vagueness perhaps, we are given physiological descriptions and descriptions of the sounds. There is also a detailed table of the phonological patterning of consonant combinations, of three-consonant groups and two-consonant groups, but since there are no statistical indications for either group we can draw no typological conclusions — a glance at

Krámský's works might have given some clues as to how he could have handled his material. To be fair, though, he does have stabs at describing the consonants in other ways — the minimal effect of *m*, *m'*, *n*, *n'*, *l*, *l'* on vowels (pp. 30-41), the comparison of length of articulation of certain consonants based on oscillograms, and the relevance of this perception, for example *p* is more stable and more easily perceived than *k*, and the feeblest for length and perception are *c* and *č*. In his analysis of the consonants that are shown in the sonagrams there is a great deal of episodic information based, no doubt, on many experiments of perception and many other sonagrams, but accustomed as one is in this field to more precise studies these analyses come over as affirmations of opinion rather than as verified and verifiable facts. His concluding section is an essay at the typological characteristics of the Byelorussian phonological system. He states that Byelorussian is characterised by high second formants — between 1,500 cps and 3,000 cps — and low first formants — between 200 cps and 500 cps; the range is too wide to be very meaningful and is of minimal significance for consonants. Judging from his English summary he places much importance on the reanalysis of soft consonants which he divides into three types, those with an *i*-type vowel following, those with some indication of softness, and those with information about softness not in their initial portion. This he derives from oscillograms. His examples do not make this clear. The other point that he makes in his summary is the importance of the voiced/voiceless distinction in Byelorussian. This is confirmed by the sonagrams.

The book suffers from a lack of clear parameters and from a continual to-ing and fro-ing between acoustic, perceptual and physiological data and observations. Nevertheless it is a treasure of information and as a description of Modern Byelorussian and its specific characteristics it will reward those who have the patience to mine it.

V. M. Du Feu