Reviews

BOOK REVIEWS

Bandarčyk, V. K. *Historyja bielaruskaj savietskaj etnagrafii*. 'Navuka i tehnika', 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 (*krajažnaŭstva*) 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 falklarystyka. Biblijahrafičny pakazalnik* (1945-1970), by M. J. Hrynbiat, 1972, and *Bielaruski falklor* (1926-1963), *Karotki biblijahrafičny daviednik*, by I. U. Sałamievič, 1964.

R. J. Tamušanski

Barysava, T. *Maljer na bielaruskaj scenie*. 'Navuka i tehnika', 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 ślachectvie* by the well-known actor and producer Florian Ždanovič (1884-1942), and directed by Jeŭscihniej 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