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 knižica* (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 knižica* 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 zdietai* or *malavanija zižditiei* 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. Nemirovsky ('*Albom 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