Kabašnikaŭ, K. (ed.) *Dziciaŭy falklor*. '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 *Dziciaŭy falklor* 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, Rypiński, 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-*

skie 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