Recent developments in the Norms of the Byelorussian Literary Language

BY

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I

The development of the Byelorussian literary language over the last fifty years shows a persistent trend from the relative freedom (some might say anarchy) of the 1920s and early 1930s to a detailed concern with the ‘culture of language’ (kultura movy) exemplified in such publications as the recent Sučasnaja bielaruskaja mova whose foreword opens with the statement that ‘The strict unity of lexical, grammatical and phonetic norms, the correctness, purity and expressiveness of the literary language in its written and oral forms are the essential conditions for it to fulfil its function of relations between people most fully and effectively. Every deviation from unified norms, every inaccuracy complicate mutual comprehension and obscure or even completely distort the sense of an utterance.’

In the 1920s and early 1930s (and in Western Byelorussia until the outbreak of the Second World War) grammarians concerned with the establishment of literary norms favoured much rural dialectal material, especially forms emanating from the West Central dialects, and the preservation of some archaic material. Russisms and Polonisms were to be avoided; instead neologisms were to be coined on the basis of native or international models. Within this general framework, however, there was considerable disagreement as to exactly which forms should constitute the literary norm and certainly no really co-ordinated attempt to produce a normative grammar. Even B. Taraškievič, whose pioneering work Bielaruskaja hramatyka dla škol first appeared in 1918, was forced to admit in the preface to the fifth edition, published in 1929, that although various critics had suggested possible improvements and corrections and although he himself could see the need for and possibility of a number of reforms, particularly in the sphere of orthography, he was unwilling to introduce them at present because in isolation such changes for the better could stand in the way of good reform. He considered that the reform of the orthography must be carried out as a whole and in conjunction with a reappraisal of the morphology.

This close link between orthographical and grammatical reform was a theme which was echoed in the 1930s first of all by the plan

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for a new Byelorussian orthography4 (for instance pp. 26-27 set out rules for the use of the endings -а and -у in the genitive singular of masculine nouns of the second declension; on pp. 29-30 recommenda-
tions are made for the endings of the second person plural of the present/future tense and imperative mood of verbs) and then in 1933 by the spelling reform itself, albeit in a more restricted way.5 Just as earlier Taraškievič’s orthographical reform had provided the impetus for grammatical reform, since the two were often inter-
connected, so in the period from 1933 to the beginning of the Second World War there appeared a number of authoritative grammars and textbooks incorporating the principles laid down by the 1933 spelling
reform.6 At the same time these textbooks, which were intended primarily for use in schools and higher educational establishments, were characterised by a wealth of detailed examination of grammatic-
ical questions, in particular questions of morphology. Although in
many instances the grammars of this period tolerated alternative
decensional endings they nevertheless attempted to categorise the
spheres of usage of the latter, sometimes introducing changes in the
norms established earlier, in the 1920s. Thus, for example, for the
instrumental singular of feminine nouns with a stem ending in a
consonant (third declension) Taraškievič had considered the ending
-oй(-ёй, -аї) as predominant,7 whereas in the 1936 Bielaruskaja hra-
matyka. Marjalohija the authors regard the original ending of this
decension -ьо (қосцо, мьышшу, крьў) as the norm, while acknowl-
edging -ой(-ёй, -аї) as a literary variant in a few instances (e.g.
гра́зю/гра́зёй).

In other respects the grammars of 1935 and 1936 were less con-
vincing. In particular they failed to make a proper distinction be-
tween the literary language and the language of works of literature,
with the result that their recommendations on, for example, the
genitive plural ending of feminine nouns of the first declension (e.g.
бу́р/бу́раў) or the instrumental plural ending (e.g. сла́зами/сля́зэй,
плячам/пля́чыма) included as the literary norm a number of
variants whose sphere of usage was confined to the language of works
of literature. This provoked considerable discussion, most notably in
Žviazda and Sovetskaja Belorussija in the years 1938-9,8 but the

4. Bielaruskı̆ pravapis (praejekt), AN BSSR, 1930.
5. Ab źmienach i spraščeńni bielaruskaha pravapisu, Pastanova Savieta Na-
rodnych Kamisaraũ BSSR, 1933.
6. Т. П. Łańcziou, Bielaruska hramatyka. Fanietyka i pravapis, Minsk, 1935;
Bielaruska hramatyka. Marjalohiia (ed. T. P. Łańcziou), Minsk, 1936;
Sintaksis bielaruskaj movy (ed. J. Kolaš, K. Hurski, H. Šklař), Minsk, 1939;
K. I. Hurski, T. P. Łańcziou, T. Z. Šklař, S. L. Rochkind, Kurs sučasanaj
7. Taraškievič, op. cit., p. 82.
8. See, for example, K. Hurski, ‘Ab bielaruskim pravapise’, Žviazda, 9 April
1938; P. F. Chadarenka, ‘Patrėbna nieadkladnaje spraščeńnie bielaruskaha
pravapisu’, Žviazda, 6 July 1938; P. Dzīk, ‘Da pytānia ab sučasanaj biela-
ruskaj afahrafii’, Žviazda, 16 Oct. 1938; V. Borisenko, ‘O proekte reformy
beloruskogo pravopisanija’, Sovetskaja Belorussija, 16 Feb. 1939; A. K.
Bondarenko, ‘Nabolevšíje voprosy belorusskogo pravopisanija’, Sovetskaja
Belorussija, 9 April 1939; ‘O reforme beloruskogo pravopisanija (obzor
pisem)’, Sovetskaja Belorussija, 3 June 1939.
Kurs sučasnaj bielaruskaj movy published in 1941 showed no concessions to the arguments advanced.

The immediate post-war period to the middle 1950s was characterised by orientation of the Byelorussian literary language towards Russian. The effects of this were to be seen in all aspects of the language to a greater or lesser extent but perhaps most clearly in lexis. Linguists now began to favour dialectal forms from the East Central dialects and material shared by Russian; there was a reaction against the coining of neologisms and a corresponding tendency to introduce Russisms and international words, especially if the latter were shared by Russian. In the colloquial language too there was a shift from rural to urban norms which would seem to imply, as Wexler suggests, a preference for the Russianised speech of bilingual city-dwellers.9 After the publication in 1950 of Stalin’s Marksizm i voprosy jazykoznanija books and articles devoted to the Byelorussian literary language (like other Soviet works on language of that period) were characterised by the obligatory quotation or two from Stalin’s work. Some linguists went further and wrote articles explicitly based on Stalin’s writings on language.10

Nevertheless, to see the development of the Byelorussian literary language over this period purely in terms of Russianisation would be to take too simple a view. In 1951 an Orthographical Commission of the Institute of Language, Literature and Art of the Byelorussian Academy of Sciences published its Projekt źmien i źdakładnieńniau bielaruskaha pravapisu. As its title suggests, this was mainly concerned with problems of orthography, but like its 1930 counterpart it also examined certain grammatical points. In very few respects could its proposals regarding the latter be said to represent an attempt at Russianisation. It is true that it recommended the unification of the genitive plural of third declension nouns by the absolute use of the ending -ei(-ii) — the characteristic ending for such nouns in Russian — but at the same time it favoured the extension of the ending -y in the genitive singular of masculine nouns of the second declension to some new lexical groups (for example the names of chemical elements), a strict delineation between the first person plural of the present/future tense of first conjugation verbs (-om, -öm, -am, -em) and the first person plural imperative (-óm, -ém) and the use of the ending -aié(-ąué) i.e. with the stress on the final syllable of the ending, for the second person plural of the present/future tense. By contrast in Russian the use of the genitive singular ending -y is restricted to a very small group of nouns and then only to particular constructions, the forms of the first person plural of the present/future tense and imperative mood coincide for all verbs, and the ending of the second person plural present/future tense is never stressed on the final syllable.

The publication of this plan provoked wide-ranging discussion: on

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10. For example, K. Krapiva, 'Pytańni bielaruskaha pravapisu ź śviatle vučeñnia I. V. Stalina ab movie', Viesci AN BSSR, 2, 1952.
25-26 January 1952 a conference was held to discuss its proposals; a number of articles were written on these and other problems of the norms of literary Byelorussian, notably several by M. H. Bułachaŭ, but it was not until 1957 that the Soviet of Ministers of the BSSR published its recommendations, which in almost all respects confirmed the proposals put forward in the 1951 projekt. These recommendations were incorporated in the 1959 Praviły bielaruskaj arfahrafii i punktuacyi, published by the Byelorussian Academy of Sciences, which remain the most recent official statement of the orthographical and punctuation norms of Byelorussian.

The year 1962 saw the publication of two works of great importance for the establishment of the norms of the Byelorussian literary language: a Byelorussian-Russian dictionary and the first volume of the Academy of Sciences Hramatyka bielaruskaj movy, which was devoted to morphology. In the succeeding years both these works, but principally the latter, have served as the foundation for the many grammars, collections of articles and in particular school textbooks which have appeared.

The Academy Grammar set itself two aims: to be descriptive but at the same time normative. Accordingly, in addition to setting out in great detail the morphological characteristics of Byelorussian it devotes considerable space to what it terms 'deviations from the norm' (adchileńni ad normy), the majority of which are to be found in the language of works of literature. In this connection it takes a particularly severe attitude towards deviations characteristic of the 1920s and 1930s but which are still to some extent perpetuated in modern times. While in the main the Academy Grammar's recommendations are consistent with the practice of the literary language, the twin aims of description and normalisation, perhaps inevitably, do not always co-exist entirely happily and some of the norms seem unnecessarily restrictive.

More than a decade has passed since the publication of the Academy Grammar — a decade in which scholars have become increasingly concerned with the 'culture of language' and in which a considerable amount of reappraisal has taken place of the norms of Byelorussian in the light of developments in the language over that period. In

12. Pastanova Ab udakładnieńi i ćastkovych ćmienach isnujučaha bielarus-kaha pravapisu, začvierđzǎanaja Savietam Ministraŭ BSSR 11 maja 1957 h.

Interestingly enough, the one proposal concerning grammatical normalisation contained in the 1951 projekt which was not subsequently incorporated in the 1957 reform was the recommendation that the genitive plural ending of third declension nouns should be standardised as -ęč(-ę̆), i.e. the proposal which more than any other could have been construed as an attempt at Russianisation of the Byelorussian literary language.
15. Ibid., p. 3.
recent years concern has begun to be expressed over the contamination of Byelorussian by Russian with the large numbers of people, particularly among the urban population, growing up apparently bilingual, but in reality only imperfectly so, with the result that they are not always able properly to distinguish between the two languages.\textsuperscript{16}

The purpose of this article is to examine recent developments in the morphology of the Byelorussian noun and to attempt to establish their relationship to the literary norms laid down in the Academy Grammar which is still regarded as the definitive authority on the norms of the modern Byelorussian literary language.

\section*{II}

\textbf{Genitive singular of masculine nouns (second declension)}\textsuperscript{17}

The use of two different endings in the genitive singular of masculine nouns of the second declension, \textit{-a(\&)} and \textit{-y(-\textit{\&})},\textsuperscript{18} has always posed problems for grammarians attempting to establish norms for the literary language. These problems have been compounded, at least in part, by a certain confusion and inconsistency in the application of normative criteria. Thus, Taraškievič mixed semantic criteria with the criterion of stress position,\textsuperscript{19} while in the 1933 spelling reform, although mainly semantic criteria were used, the fact that the ending \textit{-a(\&)} was recommended for nouns denoting chemical elements and compounds was inconsistent with the long-established tradition of using the ending \textit{-y(-\textit{\&})} for a group of semantically related nouns — those denoting materials and substances.\textsuperscript{20} It was only in 1957 that this anomaly was eradicated by the recommendation of the ending \textit{-y(-\textit{\&})} for nouns denoting chemical elements and compounds.

In the 1940s and 1950s — a period when Byelorussian was subject to considerable influence by Russian — the ending \textit{-a(\&-\textit{\&})} tended to spread at the expense of the ending \textit{-y(-\textit{\&})} even in those categories where the later had long been established as the norm.\textsuperscript{21} On the other hand in the dialects of Byelorussian the reverse trend is almost

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{16} In the recent \textit{Sučasnaja bielaruskaja mova}, Minsk, 1973 the authors of several articles point to this as one of the major reasons for deviations from the literary norm: A. I. Padlužny, 'Normy bielaruskaha litaraturnaha vymuželjennia', pp. 6-7; M. V. Biryla, 'Nacisk', pp. 35-6, 46, 50; A. A. Kaũrųs, 'Užyvačnie asobnych s tostring và', pp. 154-80 passim.
  \item \textsuperscript{17} In accordance with the most widespread convention (not only in Byelorussian but in the Slavonic languages generally) the term 'second declension' is used in this article to refer to nouns of what is historically the o-stem declension, and 'first declension' for nouns of the čaká, žbá type (historically the a-stem declension). Somewhat confusingly, certain sources (including the Academy Grammar) use the reverse convention.
  \item \textsuperscript{18} The ending \textit{-y(-\textit{\&})} is not original in this declension but derives from the now defunct u-stem (fifth) declension.
  \item \textsuperscript{19} Taraškievič, op. cit., p. 73.
  \item \textsuperscript{21} M. A. Žydovič, \textit{Nazočnik u bielaruskaj movie}, I, \textit{Adzinočny lik}, Minsk, 1969, pp. 70-5.
\end{itemize}
universal: the ending -y(-io) is widely used in those semantic categories in which -a(-я) is regarded as the norm in the literary language.22

The Academy Grammar, following on from the 1959 Pravily bielaruskaj arphantsi i punktaczy which in turn reflected the recommendations of the 1957 spelling reform, gives the following rules for the use of the endings -a(-я) and -y(-io) in the genitive singular of masculine nouns of the second declension:23

A. The ending -a(-я) is to be used for nouns denoting:

(a) animate beings, e.g. чалавéк — чалавéка, конь — кань, Міхайл — Міхаїла, лéў — льва;
(b) concrete objects which are numerable, e.g. стол — сталá, нож — наж, машина — машинá, ручáй — ручай;
(c) social organisations, enterprises, establishments, e.g. прафсаёза — прафсаёза, калгáс — калгáса;
(d) geographical and astronomical terms, nouns denoting inhabited areas, e.g. Мінск — Мінска, Дняпрó — Дняпра, Мéсяц — Мéсяца, Марс — Мárса;
(e) units of measurement of time, weight, currency, e.g. год — год, кастрычнiка — кастрычнiка, часvёр — часвáр, кіламéтра, рубéль — рубля;
(f) parts of the body, e.g. нос — нóса, хвост — хвастá. NB: an exception is made for твáрь which has genitive singular твáры;
(g) some concrete concepts (mainly mathematical and linguistic terms), e.g. квадрáт — квадрáта, назбóнiк — назбóнiка.

B. The ending -y(-io) is to be used for nouns in the following semantic categories:

1. Abstract nouns denoting:

(a) intellectual concepts, qualities and characteristics, e.g. прарагрэс — прарагрэс, вопыть — вопыту, звы'чай — звы'чаю, геарэзм — геарэзу;
(b) processes, actions, states, emotions, feelings, e.g. разбёр — разбёр, напáд — напáду, бег — бéры, спакóй — спакою, боль — боль, гнеv — гнёву;
(c) spatial and temporal concepts, e.g. усходь — усходу, заходь (but NB: поўдзень — пoўдня presumably by analogy with дзень — дня), свет — свету, аб'ём — аб'ёму, край — краю, мóмант — мóмант, век — вёку;
(d) social groupings, socio-political and scientific movements, scientific theories etc., e.g. капітальзм — капітальзу, дарвінізм — дарвінізу, реалізм — реалізу, футурызм — футурызу. NB: specific exception is made for камунізм — камунізу, сацыялізм — сацыялізу, марксізм — марксізу, ленінізм — ленінізу which 'by tradition' take the ending -a;
(e) natural phenomena, e.g. вецер — вёту, холáд — хольду, сухавéй — сухавею, пажáр — пажáру.


Names of trees take either ending depending on whether one is referring to the tree itself or the wood obtained from it. Cf.:

з клёна падала лісце the leaves fell from the maple
лінейка зроблена з клёну a ruler made from maple (wood)

3. Collectives, e.g. лес — лесу, натоўп — натоўпу, тавар — тавару, пралетарыўт — пралетарыўту, флот — флоту, хвойнік — хвойніку. NB: народ takes either ending with a semantic difference:

сабра́лася мнóга нарóду many people gathered
гістóрыя беларуска́га нарóда the history of the Byelorussian people

4. Additionally the ending -у(-й) is used in a number of set expressions, a few of which involve nouns normally taking the ending -а(-я) e.g. з гóду ў год, без гóду ты́дзень (cf. гóда).

Despite this detailed exposition of normative rules recent research has shown that there are still many deviations from the literary norm. Thus H. U. Арашонкава, in an analysis of the language of newspapers and periodicals published between 1969 and 1972, finds that the only categories in which the norms are consistently adhered to are the semantic groups of animate beings and parts of the body.24 Although in many instances it is hard to understand why these violations occur — e.g. the use of the ending -у(-й) for such concrete nouns as твор, тэлефóн, павільён or of the ending -а(-я) for some nouns denoting substances (пяска, рáза) — in other instances their occurrence may be seen as resulting from analogy with words of similar meaning or composition, or from the occasional apparently arbitrary exception in the assignment of endings to nouns in a given semantic category, as well as the very real difficulty in some cases of determining whether a given noun is abstract or concrete.

Analogy can be seen in, for example, the use of the ending -у for a noun such as водаправод — compare the cognate прывяд and the semantically similar кабель, for both of which the ending -у is the norm; in the use of гóду (for гóда) outside the set expressions з гóду ў год, год ад гóду, без гóду ты́дзень etc; and in the form аўсц (for аўсá), абес being one of only two nouns denoting a substance which are exceptions to their particular semantic category in taking the genitive singular ending -а. In the example of аўсц quoted by Арашонкава analogy is reinforced by the contextual proximity of a semantically cognate noun: залаціствих хвалі жы́ті і пашаніцы, аўсц і ячмёню (quoted from Cyryvonaja ªmiena, 25 March 1969).

Where a noun may take either ending in the genitive singular with different semantics, it is clearly easy for contamination to take place. Such contamination could ultimately lead to the generalisa-

tion of one ending, although there is as yet no evidence of this having happened in the literary language. Nevertheless a consider-
able amount of fluctuation occurs in such nouns, for the most part
involving the use of the ending -у(-уо) where the meaning and
context demand -а(-я). Thus, it is generally accepted that the noun
народ should take the ending -у in the genitive singular only after
quantitative words such as мнóра, малá etc. i.e where it means
people = crowd; in the meaning of people = nation the correct
ending is -а. Арашонкава quotes a number of examples of this norm
being violated, mainly by the use of -у for -а, and finds only one
instance of -а incorrectly replacing -у. Other nouns in which this
kind of contamination takes place with the ending -у being used in
place of -а include: суд = court, the ending -у being correct only
where the meaning is thought, idea, conclusion; загáд and дагавár
when denoting documents rather than actions; пад'язд in the mean-
ing of entrance as opposed to approach in the abstract sense.

Particular problems are posed by nouns in which the 'concrete-
ness' or 'abstractness' of their meaning is not sufficiently well-
defined for them to be readily assigned to a given semantic category,
or by nouns which, though basically abstract in meaning, are frequen-
tly used in a concrete or particularised way. Here again there is
hesitation between the two possible endings and among the nouns
in which it occurs are падáтак, бáджет, жáнр, прагáнт, укáз, абá-
рót, сюжéт, варýйáнт. А. И. Наркевич feels that this situation
probably arises because it is scarcely possible in formulating rules
to legislate for each individual lexical item. However, both the
Бielarускa-рускa слóйник and the authors of a more recent ortho-
draphical dictionary seem to have no such inhibitions, giving -а as the
correct ending for the nouns прагáнт, укáз, сюжéт, варýйáнт and
-у for the nouns падáтак, бáджет, абáрót and жáнр.

Fluctuation between the two possible endings of the genitive
singular of masculine nouns of the second declension is also wide-
spread in a group of nouns associated with sport: чэмпíянат, тýрнýр,
týніс, валейбóл, бокс, футбóл, хакёй etc. Арашонкава has no
hesitation in declaring the ending -а(-я) to be the norm for such
nouns. Although this would seem appropriate in the case of
чэмпíянат and тýрнýр since these two nouns would come under the
Academy Grammar's category of 'concrete concepts', it makes much
less sense in the case of nouns denoting names of sports. The latter
would not seem to be covered by any of the semantic categories
defined by the Academy Grammar as requiring the ending -а(-я);
nor do they meet the criterion suggested by K. Крапива, namely

25 Ibid., p. 62, e.g. любóй да беларускага народу (Польс, 5, 1969, p. 6); барыцяў народу Ірландыі (Виданні Мінск, 9 Окт. 1969); мнóга народá (Літаратура і мастацтва, 5 Нов. 1971).
26 А. Наркевич, Варыянтнасць склонавых форм назоінікаў в Ab niekato-
ych asblivaóciach bielaruskaj literaturnaj movy, Minsk, 1965, p. 72.
28 Арашонкава, op. cit., p. 60.
that 'the endings -a(-я) are taken in the genitive case... by nouns which can be used with the element на́ў and the things denoted by them considered as units.' 29 Indeed this criterion and the fact that they denote basically abstract concepts (albeit with a concrete manifestation) would if anything tend to classify them with those nouns which require the ending -у(-іо). The fact remains that Arásonkava is undoubtedly expressing the normative view: in Łoban and Sudnik's Arfahráičny slóünük the genitive singular ending for all sports is given as -а(-я). Perhaps the confusion which exists is best summed up in one of the examples quoted by Arásonkava as a violation of the literary norm: зага́дчык кáфедры футбо́ла-ха́кэю (my italics) Белару́скага інсты́тута фізкультуры (Viáderni Minsk, 1 October 1969).

If none of the violations of the norms laid down by the Academy Grammar described so far can be said to have acquired the status of a literary norm or to have become an acceptable literary variant, this does seem to have happened with one small group of words. These are the nouns камуні́зм, лені́нізм, марксі́зм, сацьяля́ізм, formerly constituting specific exceptions to the general rule for nouns in their particular semantic category (see above) in that they took the ending -а in the genitive singular whereas such nouns as капіталя́ізм, дарві́нізм, фармаля́ізм etc. took -у. Why these four nouns should have constituted an exception to the rule remains unclear. Certainly it would be difficult to justify this situation on linguistic grounds: the nouns involved are indisputably abstract in meaning, which places them firmly among those which require -у in the genitive case, and as far as formal considerations are concerned they belong to the most homogeneous of all the semantic categories isolated by the Academy Grammar, all nouns in this category having a common suffix -ізм(-ийзм). Indeed, the Academy Grammar makes no attempt to justify the use of the ending -а on such grounds, simply stating that the nouns concerned have this ending 'by tradition'. However, this seems a doubtful criterion on which to base a normative rule, particularly in view of the fact that at the same time the Academy Grammar uncompromisingly rejects a number of the literary traditions of the first half of the twentieth century with regard to the genitive singular ending of nouns in other semantic categories.30

When one considers the associations of the four nouns concerned one is tempted to see here the influence of an extra-linguistic factor and one is reminded of the exceptions to the spelling rules for unstressed vowels formerly made for 'international words denoting concepts of the revolutionary era'.31

29. Quoted by Arasónkava, ibid., p. 64.
30. For example, the use of the ending -у for nouns denoting towns and other inhabited areas (Мі́нск, пасёлкі) or for the nouns сва́з and твор.
31. N. I. Hurski, M. H. Bulacháй, M. C. Marčanka, Biełaruskaja мова, 2nd ed., Minsk, 1958, I, pp. 91-2. Examples included сове́т, камуні́зм, больша́ві́к, пролетары́ят. In the 1957 spelling reform, however, these words were brought into line with the general pattern of the language and are now written with а for unstressed о, ё — сове́т, камуні́зм, больша́ві́к etc.
Whatever the reasons, the fact remains that as far as the Academy Grammar is concerned the genitive singular ending -а is the norm for the nouns камунізм, ленінізм, марксізм and сацэялізм. Grammars and textbooks published in the 1960s support this view and even the third and most recent edition of Łoban and Sudnik’s Arťhrafiečny sloŭnik gives only the ending -а as correct. Some scholars, however, clearly feel this distinction to be no longer valid or at best artificial. Thus M. C. Kavalova and P. U. Ściacko, in a textbook on modern Byelorussian published in 1970, in setting out the categories requiring the ending -у in the genitive singular list камунізм, ленінізм, марксізм, сацэялізм along with матэрыялізм, дарвінізм, реалізм etc.

This view is shared by A. Kaūrus, who favours the spread of the ending -у(-ιо) to several categories where -а (-ι) is at present the norm. He makes the point in an article in Žviazda in reply to Ł. Burak who, in an earlier article in the same newspaper, argued for the reverse development. Burak favoured the abolition of the ending -у to avoid ambiguity between the genitive and dative singular cases in such expressions as апэ'яка футурызму, пагроэ за імперыялізму etc. Such a change would, however, need to be artificially imposed in the face of a persistent trend towards the predominance of the ending -у.

*Prepositional singular of masculine nouns (second declension)*

Both masculine and neuter nouns of the second declension have a variety of endings in the prepositional singular: -е, the original ending for nouns of this (o-stem) declension with a stem ending in a hard consonant (although, of course, the consonant softens before the ending); -і, the original ending for o-stem nouns with a stem ending in a soft consonant, and -уі, its equivalent after formerly soft consonants (ж, ш, ч, р, щ); -у(-ιо), originally the prepositional singular ending of the now defunct u-stem declension. The distribution of these endings in modern Byelorussian, however, no longer coincides in all instances with their distribution historically. This has resulted in a certain amount of duality of endings and created a climate in which there is considerable deviation from the literary norm.

Neuter nouns of the second declension show very little fluctuation in the endings used in the prepositional singular. This is in large measure due to the fact that the endings are determined solely on the basis of formal considerations: -е after a hard consonant; -іа after the formerly soft consonants ж, ч, ш, р, щ; -і after soft consonants (including [j]); and -у after stems in к, х (which eradicates the consonant alternation к/ц, х/с). Isolated exceptions

32. It is interesting to note that in an introductory section on the orthography of certain endings (p. 58) the authors make no mention of these four nouns constituting exceptions to the norm in their semantic category.
33. M. C. Kavalova, P. U. Ściacko, Bieloruskaja nova, Minsk, 1970, p. 84.
are малакó which has a prepositional singular in -э (<-е) — малакэ́, and the dual endings -ы and -а for the noun вядро — вядры́/ вядрэ́.36

With masculine nouns the picture is very different. Here endings are prescribed on the basis of a mixture of formal and semantic criteria, and the Academy Grammar lays down the following literary norms:37

1. The ending -e is used for the majority of nouns with a stem ending in a hard consonant or ý and also for some nouns with a stem ending in the velar consonants r or x. In the latter case the velars show palatalisation to the sibilants, 3, с. Examples: (аб) дўбо, марээ, гольце, кومة, востраве, бёрэце, кажу́се. Colloquially, stressed -ý is also used for some of these nouns e.g. (у) тылў, кажуху́; occasionally there is a semantic distinction between the two endings: на вугле эрўба — на вуглý вуліцы.

2. The ending -ы is used for nouns with a stem ending in п, Ѱ, ж, ш, ч, e.g. (аб) бары́, рубжы́, плацы́. An earlier distinction between двары́ (as in на двары́ завода) and дварэ́ (as in на дварэ́ холадна) is regarded as no longer valid.

3. The ending -i is used for nouns with a stem ending in a soft consonant or [], e.g. (аб) ты́дні, вестьбо́лі, пакói.

4. The ending -у(-ио) is used by nouns in the following categories:
   (a) all common nouns denoting human beings, regardless of stem, e.g. (аб) браму, сьму, металургу, гаспадárу, мўжу, кавалб.
   (b) proper names with stems in п, Ѱ, ж, ш, ч, soft consonants, [,] г, к, х, e.g. (аб) Аляксандру, Мёлежу, Лукашу, Маку́цю, Багданови́чу, Васілю, Андрэ́ю, Краўчукў, Цімо́ху.
   NB Proper names with a stem in a hard consonant take -e, e.g. (аб) Глебэ, Максіме, Кóлaxe.
   (c) some concrete nouns with a stem ending in г, х, e.g. (аб) саци́гу, пірагу, маху́, мўху, цэ́ху, шлайху.
   (d) abstract nouns with the stem ending in г, х, e.g. (аб) бэгу, пойзвігу, смэ́ху, стра́ху, рўху, разма́ху.
   (e) all nouns with a stem ending in к, e.g. (аб) досвітку, пача́тку, здабы́ту, баравікў.
   (f) loan-words with a stem in г, к, х, e.g. (аб) абшлайгу, дыфтóнгу, блóку, дрóку, міты́нгу, шáкху.
   (g) certain nouns, normally taking the ending -e, when used in set expressions with the prepositions у, на, па, e.g. у ладу́ (сф. аб ладзе́), у кругу́ (сф. аб крўзе), па ходу́ (сф. аб хóдзе).

Most violations of these norms involve the ending -у(-ио) either spreading to categories where it is not prescribed or conversely not being used in those categories where it is prescribed, and in this

36. Hramatyka bielaruskaj movy, t. I, p. 64.
37. Ibid., pp. 52-6.
respect the most contentious area is the semantic category of common nouns denoting human beings.

The majority of textbooks and other works on the grammar of modern Byelorussian which have appeared since 1962 support the Academy Grammar's view that the ending -y(-io) is the norm for all common nouns of the second declension denoting human beings regardless of stem and that the use of the endings -е (after hard consonants), -ы (after р, ц, ж, ш, ч), -i (after soft consonants and [j]) is a violation of the literary norm, although frequently encountered in works of literature.38

Not all scholars agree with this assertion. Thus, Arasonkava considers that the Academy Grammar's dictum goes against the recommendation of the 1957 spelling reform that for nouns with a stem ending in a hard consonant the ending is -е, no exception being made for common nouns denoting human beings.39 Furthermore, she expressly states that the use of the ending -y in the prepositional singular for such nouns should be regarded as a violation of the literary norm, and sees its occurrence in the literary language as being due to dialect influence.40 That the ending -y is widespread in Byelorussian dialects in nouns of this category is supported by the findings of M. A. Zydovič; indeed, in dialect speech it also embraces the category of proper names, a category specifically excepted by the Academy Grammar. In the literary language, however, Zydovič notes two seemingly contradictory trends: on the one hand, the spread of the ending -y(-io) to all categories of masculine nouns in the prepositional singular, but on the other hand a tendency to preserve the old endings. Significantly, it is precisely in nouns denoting human beings that the latter tendency is most evident.41

Arasonkava only admits the ending -y(-io) for common nouns denoting human beings if they have a stem ending in a formerly soft consonant (р, ц, ж, ч, ш), a soft consonant or a velar (х, р, х) i.e. she sees them as subject to the same normative rules as proper nouns. Somewhat surprisingly this view is shared by Loban and Sudnik who, in the introduction to their Afrahrajičny strojnik (third edition), give the following examples: партьзан — аб партьеване, брат — аб браце, Якуб — аб Якубе, Чэха — аб Чэхаве; каваль — аб каваль, Миха́с — аб Михасю, Василь — аб Василью, Го́галь — аб Го́галью, Микала́й — аб Микалай; настаўник — аб настаўніку, дзе́ч — аб дзе́ччы, кача́г — аб кача́гу, Алёг — аб Алегу, Мёлек — аб Мёлеку, Гайдар — аб Гайдару, Кобец — аб Кобецу.42 This is the more surprising in view of the normative character of the Afrahra-

39. Arasonkava, op. cit., p. 64.
40. Ibid., p. 66.
fičny sloūnik, its avowed concern with the 'culture of language' and its reiteration in general of the norms prescribed by the Academy Grammar.

Narkievic takes the opposite view to Arašonkava and Łoban and Sudnik. In supporting the contention that the use of the ending -e in the prepositional singular of common nouns with a stem ending in a hard consonant which denote human beings is now a violation of the literary norm, he suggests that it would be better to extend the use of the ending -y to proper nouns denoting human beings, thereby eradicating an anomaly which is in any case highly susceptible to the effects of analogy — one already comes across such forms as Iváňu, Czylňáňu in works of literature.\(^{43}\) So far, however, he seems to have no support among other scholars of Byelorussian for this proposal and for the present the norm for such nouns remains as defined in the Academy Grammar.

The mixture of formal and semantic criteria used in determining the prepositional singular ending for masculine nouns of the second declension has led to other violations of the norms. In the main these have consisted in the disregarding of semantic criteria in favour of analogy on the basis of formal considerations.

The ending -ý is found in some inanimate nouns with a stem ending in a hard consonant e.g. на маставу, у тылу, на гарбu (for на мосце, у тылē, на гарбē). These forms are undoubtedly influenced by the existence in Byelorussian of a number of set expressions in which the ending -ý is normal (cf. на ляту, у хаду etc.), but the spread of this ending may also indicate the influence of Russian where such forms occur in a large number of (mainly monosyllabic) nouns when used in conjunction with the prepositions в and на and having strictly locative meaning.\(^{44}\) In Byelorussian, by contrast, the number of such nouns is small, and the only inanimate noun with a stem ending in a hard consonant (excluding the velars, chuitantes, p and ũ) regularly taking the ending -y as the literary norm is пост.\(^{45}\)

Nouns with a stem ending in the velar consonant k show no deviations from the norm but in those with a stem ending in either of the other velar consonants (r, x) there is a considerable amount of fluctuation in the endings: -y replacing -e and, conversely, -e replacing -y. In the latter instance this is partly due to the preservation of the alternation between the velars r, x and the sibilants z, c — an alternation which was previously characteristic of all nouns with a stem ending in a velar consonant and which dates from the Common Slavonic period; however, in both situations it is morphological analogy which is largely responsible. As far as the literary norm is concerned, in broad terms there is a division between nouns with a stem ending in r, x denoting concrete objects (which take the ending -e with the appropriate palatalisation of the final stem consonant e.g бěpar —

\(^{43}\) Narkievic, op cit., pp. 80-1.


\(^{45}\) *Hramatyka bielaruskaj movy*, I, p. 53.
бёразе, верх — вёрс) and those denoting abstract concepts together with all loan-words (which take the ending -y e.g. бег — бёры, рух — ру́ху, митыв — митыву, шах — ша́ху). Formally, however, there is little to distinguish for example парóг and падлóг, кажýх and рух, and the existence of a small group of concrete nouns which regularly take -y (e.g. лóр, абýх) only serves to increase the likelihood of morphological analogy. In these circumstances it is hardly surprising that such deviations from the norm as бёра́гы, снагы (for lit. бёразе, снёсе) or смéче, стрá́це, ру́ке (for lit. смéху, стрá́ху, ру́ху are frequently encountered, both in dialect and the literary language; indeed, the Academy Grammar recognises the reality of this situation in the case of -y replacing -е, considering it admissible in colloquial style or in the language of works of literature.\footnote{Ibid.}

Less readily understandable is a recent tendency in the press and in the spoken language for nouns denoting towns with the foreign suffix -6yr/-бэпр to take the ending -е with consequent palatalisation of r to z e.g. у Пецарбúрзе, Арэнбúрзе. This directly contravenes the norm for all loan-words with a stem ending in r, x: whether they be abstract or concrete nouns they take the ending -y e.g. ката́лóг — ката́лóги, крах — кра́ху etc.\footnote{V. P. Lemciuhova, ‘Уласныя хиеарафічныя назвы (скланіе́нне)’}, Сучаснаja біеларуская могу́, Мінск, 1973, p. 91.}

Violations of the literary norm where the endings -ы and -i are concerned are also encountered in modern Byelorussian, both in the press and in works of literature, and once again illustrate the increasing trend towards the use of the ending -у(-ю) at the expense of all other endings in the prepositional singular of masculine nouns of the second declension (e.g. прóдажу, пла́чы for lit. прóдажы, плачы and кра́о, це́нö for lit. кра́й, це́нë). They are, however, noticeably less frequent than the violations outlined above, since morphological analogy does not have such a strong role to play in this instance; it is even conceivable that they represent a continuation of an earlier norm rather than an innovation.\footnote{Bieleruski pravapis (праект), 1930, p. 25 allowed variants -ы/-у and -i/-и for masculine nouns with a stem ending in a formerly soft consonant and a soft consonant respectively, but this cannot be considered a norm of modern Byelorussian.}

In the case of the noun двор the Academy Grammar considers the semantic distinction between the endings -ы (e.g. на двáръ завóда) and -о (e.g. на двáръ хóлáдá) to be no longer valid and maintains that двáры now serves for both meanings (i.e. in the yard — outside), but in recent works on Byelorussian there is little support for this view.\footnote{See, among others, Kavalova, Ščiacko, op. cit., p. 81; Арашонкава, op cit., p. 68. Qualified support for the Academy Grammar’s point of view comes from Наркіевіч (op. cit., p. 82) who says that although the distinction between на двáръ завóда and на двáръ хóлáдá is still valid, there has been an increasing tendency in recent years towards the generalisation of the ending -ы.} Арашонкава categorically rejects the replacement of на двáръ by на двáры as contrary to the literary norm, classing
двор with por and кур as nouns which have dual prepositional singular endings reflecting semantic differences, while the entry in Łoban and Sudnik’s *Арфахрацны слоўнік* (third edition, 1971, p. 107) also observes the semantic distinction.

**Dative, instrumental, prepositional singular of masculine nouns (first declension)**

Although the first declension consists mainly of feminine nouns, it includes also a number denoting animate beings which are masculine in gender (e.g. ста́рара, бáцька, сувддай and in particular proper names such as Кузьма, Міша, Ілья etc.) and these exhibit certain peculiarities of declension. In the nominative, accusative and genitive singular all such nouns take the same endings as feminine nouns of the first declension, but in the dative, instrumental and prepositional singular the gender of these nouns now has some influence on their declension. Historically speaking, this is a relatively recent development: Тара́шкевіч, for example, notes only the occasional use of such forms as ста́рата́м, з саба́хам, with the characteristic second declension masculine instrumental singular ending (unstressed) replacing the first declension ending -а́й(-ао).50

The Academy Grammar shows an awareness of the spread of these second declension endings to masculine nouns of the first declension but is unable to formulate precise rules for their use, simply stating that masculine nouns in -а(-я) decline like masculine nouns of the second declension. Among the examples quoted are: датив — ста́рата́, Мішу, старышнюю; инструментал — ста́ратьм, дзя́дзям, Вало́дзяме; пропозицый — ба́цьку, Кіры́лю. At the same time in the dative and prepositional singular the characteristic first declension feminine endings may be found (ста́рата́це, старышні), while in the instrumental singular the normal first declension ending -э́й(-эйо) is more common for the nouns сувддай, старышні; proper names in -а with a hard stem and stress on the ending take the characteristic (feminine) first declension endings in all three cases (e.g. Кузьма́, Кузьмо́й, Кузьме́).51

Recent years, however, have seen further developments in this group of nouns and although a few scholars still allow variants for specific nouns,52 the majority favour stress as the determining factor in the endings of the dative, instrumental and prepositional singular.53

Masculine nouns of the first declension which are stressed on the ending take the same endings as feminine nouns of this declension: -е́, -о́й(э́йо), -э́ for nouns with a stem ending in a hard consonant; -е́, -э́й(э́йо), -э́ for those with a stem ending in a soft consonant e.g.:

50. Тара́шкевіч, op. cit., p. 81.
52. Наркевіч, for example, (op. cit., pp. 92-3) gives alternatives ста́рата́ц/ста́рата́, мужчы́ну/мужчы́на, старышні/старышні (датив/пропозицый сувддай/старышні; сувддём/старышнём/старышнём (инструментал singular).
53. See, for example, Яўніевіч, Андрэйенка, op. cit., p. 64; Кавалова, Сця́чко, op. cit., p. 82; Сяма́роўскі, op. cit., pp. 80-1.
RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN BYELORUSSIAN

Dative Кузьмё старшынё суддзі старшыні
Instrumental Кузьмоў старшынёй суддзёй старшынёй
Prepositional Кузьмё старшынё суддзі старшыні

while those stressed on the stem take the endings characteristic of masculine nouns of the second declension: -у, -ам, -у (hard stem); -ю, -ем, -ю (soft stem) e.g.:  
Dative ста́расту бацьку прамо́ўцу дзяду́лю
Instrumental ста́раста́м бацькам прамо́ўцам дзяду́лем
Prepositional ста́расту бацьку прамо́ўцу дзяду́лю

This view is supported by the relevant entries in Łoban and Sudnik’s Arfahrafičny sloŭnik.54

Nouns of common gender follow the same pattern if they denote masculine beings, but decline like first declension feminine nouns if they denote females, regardless of stress position.

Genitive plural

(a) Masculine nouns (second declension)

For the vast majority of nouns in this category the endings are: -оў (hard stem, final stress), e.g. сталоў, братоў, нажоў, купцоў, ва́троў, юна́кожоў; -аў (hard stem, non-final stress), e.g. на́ро́даў, па́ладаў, поздзвігаў; -ёў (soft stem, final stress), e.g. агнеў, краеў, вара́бёў, цына́лёў; -яў (soft stem, non-final stress), e.g. вуччяў, трамва́йў. Nouns with the suffix -анин(-яни́н), -ин(-ы́н) in the singular have a zero ending, e.g. грамадзянин — грамадзян, мінчанін — мінча́н, балгары́н — балґар, as do the nouns чалавёк and дзень (чалавёк, дзён) and a group of nouns denoting electrical and magnetic units of measurement, e.g. вольт, ампер, ом, мікрон etc. These norms are long-established and show no sign of undergoing change in modern Byelorussian.

A small number of second declension masculine nouns have alternative endings in the genitive plural and here there is some degree of fluctuation in usage and disagreement among scholars as to precisely which nouns are included in this group. The Academy Grammar gives the following nouns with a stem ending in a hard consonant as having alternative -оў(-аў) or zero: партыза́н, салдаты́ — салдат, гадоў — гад, разоў — раз, кло́патаў клапот, аршы́н — аршы́н, кіла́грамаў — кіла́рам, бацінкаў — бацін, чарвя́каў — чарвя́к.55 Not all scholars accept these variants as having equal status in the literary language. Some admit the zero ending only for the nouns чалавёк and дзень (where it is oblig­atory),56 others place contextual and semantic restrictions on the use

54. An isolated exception is вая́вда (p. 91) for which the dative and prepositional singular is given as вая́вожа.
55. HRamatyka bielaruskaj movy, I, p. 56.
of one ending or the other. Thus, Arasonkava suggests that for the
noun род the zero ending in the genitive plural is used when the
noun is dependent on a cardinal numeral (e.g. 12 год прапаўнічай),
in titles (e.g. у калгасах Сарак год Кастрычніка і 'Прамага') and
in some set expressions e.g. з малаўных год, мужчына свяцджых год);
the genitive plural form гадоў is to be used in conjunction with
ordinal numerals (e.g. у канцы трьщатых гадоў). Word order may
also influence the choice of form — гадоў predominates in contexts
where the numeral follows the noun (e.g. мужчына гадоў трьщції пяцці),
although this is not an inviolable rule.57

All sources are agreed that the ending -ей is standard for the two
nouns грузь (гасцёй) and лапаць (лапцей) and most support the
Academy Grammar's distinction between канёў (after cardinal
numerals, viewed as individual units) and коней (after collective
numerals, seen as an indivisible group). Laksucina, however, disagrees
and contends that this separation is not a rigid one, quoting examples
of both endings used in both types of context and commenting that
the ending -ей occurs far more frequently.58 and althoughLOBAN and
Sudnik (Artahraficki stounik, p. 150) still insist on the distinction as
the literary norm, it is questionable whether in practice this is con-
sistently observed.

(b) Neuter nouns (second declension)

The norms prescribed by the Academy Grammar still hold good
and little violation occurs, although the fact that nouns with a stem
ending in a single consonant may take either the original zero ending
or the ending -аў (which has developed by analogy with the genitive
plural ending of masculine nouns of the second declension) is regres-
ted by, for example, Arasonkava who feels that in the literary langu-
age it is 'desirable' that such nouns should have a zero ending in the
genitive plural.59

(c) Feminine nouns (first declension)

The use of the ending -аў(аў) in the genitive plural of first declen-
sion feminine nouns, either instead of or as a variant to the original
zero ending, is the subject of much discussion and division of opinion
among scholars of Byelorussian.

There is general agreement that the ending -аў(-аў) is the norm
for nouns with a stem ending in the consonant groups зв (адзкваў),
тв (бітваў), кв (цэркваў), шв (падэшваў), др (выдвараў), ул' (будова-
ляў), дн’ (студняў), зн’ (лённяў), ун’ (харчэўняў), лян’ (чытальняў),
жн’ (заможніяў), лл’ (эскарэлляў), сц’ (госцяў); that the zero
ending is the norm for all nouns with a stem ending in a consonant
group of which the last consonant is к, the fill-vowel o/a being inserted
before the к (e.g. дачок, булаў, стрэлак, устаўвак, хмараў, бяро-
зак etc.); and that either ending may be used (а) without the insertion

57. Arasonkava, op. cit., pp. 70–1.
58. Laksucina, op. cit., p. 159.
59. Arasonkava, op. cit., p. 73.
of a fill-vowel if the zero ending is used after the consonant groups ρβ (verb — вёрбаў), mb (бомб — бёмбаў), мп (ламп — лямпаў), ρт (сёрт — сёртаў), хт (шахт — шахтаў), фм (рыфм — рыфмаў), ын (тайн — тайнаў), шч (пушч — пушчаў), зг (розг — роцгаў), нг (штанг — штангаў) or мх (чаромх — чаромхаў), and (b) with the insertion of a fill-vowel if the zero ending is used when the stem ends in the consonant groups сн (сосен — соснаў), стр (сясіёр — сёстраў), бл' (грэ́бель — грэ́бляў), пл' (кропель — кропляў) or шн' (сужа́нь — сужняў).60

With certain other consonant groups, however, the norm proposed by the Academy Grammar is questioned in more recent works, at least by implication. Thus, the Academy Grammar admits only the ending -аў(-яў) in the genitive plural for nouns with a stem ending in чо (личбаў), ρг (качэ́раў) or йн' (бойняў) but Narkievič is of the opinion that the zero ending is also acceptable,61 while Łoban and Sudnik recommend only the zero ending for бойня — бёнъ;62 and whereas the Academy Grammar, supported in most instances by Narkievič, allows alternative zero ending or -аў for nouns with a stem ending in лья (вольъ — вольхаў), ρн (цыстэрн — цыстэ́рнаў), ρм (форм — формаў) or чт (матч — мацтаў) Łoban and Sudnik propose вольхау, цыстэрнау, формау, мацтаў as the sole normative forms in the literary language.63 With the consonant groups зн, мл', хн', тн', сн' and ρн' Łoban and Sudnik are again more restrictive than the Academy Grammar, allowing only the zero ending (with a fill-vowel inserted between the consonants): баразён, зымель, кухань, сцень, песень and майстэрань are their recommended genitive plural forms,64 while the Academy Grammar allows the variants баразён — баро́знау, зымель — зэмляу, кухань — кухняу, сцень — сё́тяу, песень — пё́ннау and майстэрань — майстёрнау. In fact, Łoban and Sudnik accept extremely few variants in the ending of the genitive plural not only of first declension feminine nouns, but also of neuter nouns of the second declension.65

For first declension feminine nouns with a stem ending in a single consonant (including [j]) the Academy Grammar, while acknowledging the frequent occurrence in works of literature of the ending -аў(-яў) in the genitive plural, regards this as a violation of the literary norm and recognises no exceptions to the zero ending e.g. баро́з, шко́л, мо́ў, веж, нор, даро́г, строх, фабрьк, змей, све́ні́й etc.66 However, there is evidence to suggest that such a categorical rejection of the ending -аў(-яў) does not reflect the reality of usage in modern literary Byelorussian. There has long been a tendency for

60. Hramatyka bielaruskaj movy, I, pp. 73-4; Narkievič, op. cit., p. 90; Łoban, Sudnik, op. cit., passim.
62. Łoban, Sudnik, op. cit., p. 86.
63. Ibid., pp. 73, 259, 254, 167.
64. Ibid., pp. 83, 133, 153, 231, 202, 162.
65. Thus, for example, only акон, азёр, вё́дзер are given as the genitive plural forms of акно, возера, and ядра́о respectively (ibid., pp. 72, 93, 98).
this (originally second declension masculine) ending to spread to other declensions, a fact which was observed in his time by Ţaraşkievič. Although he noted that the zero ending was predominant he he also pointed out that the ending -aţi(-aţi) was widespread and gave only two nouns as having the zero ending at all times: ру́кá (рук) and няrá (ног). Furthermore, in his ‘patterns of declension’ for feminine nouns he gave only the -aţi(-aţi) ending in the genitive plural for the nouns калі́на (калі́на́) and за́ра́ (зóра́)\(^67\).

By comparison with the 1920s and 1930s the use of the ending -aţi(-aţi) in the genitive plural of feminine nouns of the first declension has increased considerably, although the zero ending still predominates.\(^68\) A major contributory factor in this development has been the widespread use of the ending -aţi(-aţi) in Byelorussian dialects, whence it has penetrated the literary language and become established, so much so that for some nouns it has become not just an alternative, but the norm, ousting the original zero ending in the process. Thus, Arašonkava while in general supporting the Academy Grammar — she feels it is ‘more correct’ to use the zero ending for nouns with a stem ending in a single consonant — accepts the ending -aţi(-aţi) as the norm for a few bisyllabic nouns, among them зáла — зáла́, рóля — рóля́, пáдзя — пáдзя́, дзя́дзя — дзё́жэ́я, шáфа — шáфáфá,\(^69\) and even Лобан and Судник, who show a marked resistance to the spread of this ending (of 169 nouns in this category for which they give the genitive plural form, the zero ending is recommended in 157 cases and alternative zero/-aţi(-aţi) in only 3 — абляр/абляра́й, вóдальча́вbetáйн/вóдальча́вbetáйнца́, імшáр/імшáра́й), recommend the ending -aţi(-aţi) in the following 9 instances: браня́вэ́жа́й, дзё́жэ́я, зáла́, змя́ля, ідзьýма́й, кары́ятды́а́й, кіназáла́й, мё́жэ́я, рóля́я.\(^70\)

As far as the use of the ending -aţi(-aţi) as an alternative to the zero ending is concerned, most recent grammars and text-books acknowledge its literary status in such examples as галó́й/гáлó́ва́й, нор/нóра́й, зі́м/зі́ма́й, шко́л/шкóла́й, хат/хáта́й etc., but emphasise that the zero ending is still dominant (and for some, preferable) in the majority of nouns with a stem ending in a single consonant.\(^71\) Clearly the spread of the ending -aţi(-aţi) is very much a live feature of contemporary Byelorussian and one which appears to be gaining ground all the time, although it is as yet premature to predict a single flexion for all nouns in the genitive plural.\(^72\)

First declension masculine nouns and nouns of common gender follow the same pattern and are subject to the same influences in the ending of the genitive plural as feminine nouns of this declension.

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\(^{67}\) Ţaraşkievič, op. cit., pp. 79-81.

\(^{68}\) Laksucina, op. cit., p. 161.

\(^{69}\) Arašonkava, op. cit., p. 75.

\(^{70}\) Лобан, Судник, op. cit., pp. 87, 109, 121, 131, 134, 146, 148, 174, 220.

\(^{71}\) Jańńievič, Andrcjenka, op. cit., p. 76; M. I. Hurski, Паракалнайа krama-

\(^{72}\) Laksucina, op. cit., p. 163.
(d) Feminine nouns (third declension)

If the spread of the ending -aў(-яў) to feminine nouns of the first declension is the subject of discussion among linguists and scholars of modern Byelorussian, then its use in the genitive plural of feminine nouns of the third declension is a matter of controversy. That it is widely used is not denied; what is questioned is its status in the literary language, and in this connection it is worth tracing the history of the occurrence of this ending in third declension nouns over the past fifty years.

For Taraškievič the two endings -eў(-эў) and aў(-яў) appear to have had equal status as literary variants, though admittedly he only quoted examples with the ending -aў in which the final stem consonant is a chuintante: касьцеў, санэй, грудзеў, пёчаў, рэ'чаў, ножаў (sometimes пачэй, начэй etc.).73 However, other sources are agreed that in the early part of the twentieth century the ending -aў(-яў) was widespread (probably under the influence of dialect usage) both for nouns with a stem ending in a chuintante and also for those with a stem ending in a soft consonant or a labial. Indeed, the reality of this situation was recognised by the 1933 spelling reform which sanctioned the use of either -eў(-эў) or -aў(-яў) in the literary language.74 This in turn conditioned extensive parallelism of such forms in literature.

Later, however, there seems to have been a reaction on the part of those concerned with the standardisation of the literary language to the use of the ending -aў(-яў). Thus the Kurs сукасная белярускай мовы (1941) characterised it as a dialecticism which should be regarded as a violation of the literary norm, and this was echoed by the Projekt zmien i удакладnieńniaў белярускай прывапису published in 1951. Булачаў, in his article on the normalisation of the Byelorussian literary language published in 1954, argues that only the ending -eў is acceptable in the literary language on the grounds that all words which are grammatically homogeneous are subject to a single grammatical law, which he appears to regard as immutable, and claims that this is supported by 'the whole course of historical development of the language'.75 In effect what he is saying is that what is the norm at one stage in the history of a particular grammatical form or category must always remain so. Such a premise is demonstrably untrue, ignoring as it does the forces of morphological analogy which in any language are capable of modifying or indeed radically altering established norms, and represents the worst kind of purism — imposing restrictions on the language from outside which are not justified by actual usage, rather than examining normal usage and attempting a classification on the basis of it. From the general tenor of this article one is inclined to suspect nothing more nor less than a tacit attempt at Russianisation.

These calls for the unification of the genitive plural ending of

73. Taraškievič, op. cit., p. 83.
75. Булачаў, Аб нейкарычых пытаñніач ..., pp. 7-8.
third declension nouns were not heeded by the 1957 spelling reform; it made no recommendation on this point, thereby implicitly accepting the literary status of both variants which had been established by the 1933 spelling reform. However, the controversy was not yet resolved. The Academy Grammar, which in general implemented the recommendations of the 1957 pastanovä, made an exception in this case, proposing only a very limited use of the ending -aľ: after a chuintante unstressed, e.g. ʃəčaľ. Otherwise the ending -eń(-ėį) was to be regarded as the norm (e.g. vósėj, senaľáčėj, dáľeį, nacęį, piačęį).76

Since the publication of the Academy Grammar in 1962 the debate has continued. Support for the view that only the ending -eń(-ėį) is correct in the literary language is given by, among others, Narkievič, who, while acknowledging that the ending -aľ(-aľ) had literary status 'in the first half of the twentieth century', quite definitely regards its use in modern times as a violation of the literary norm (with the sole exception of ʃəč — ʃəčaľ).77 Qualified support comes from Laksucina who regards -eń as normative but recognises that -aľ(-aľ) is spreading 'by analogy with feminine nouns of the first declension' (e.g. ʃęŭľałąľ, dáľałųj, pęćaľ instead of ʃęŭľałęj, dáľeį, piačęį; apó- versesčįj, ulasćiębasčįj alongside apóvesčėj, ulasćiębasčėj)78 and from Kramko, Jurevič and Janovič who regard the ending -aľ(-aľ) as a dialecticism and as such a deviation from the norm, but concede that it is acquiring a 'more or less regular character' in examples such as ulasćiębasčįj, ʃəčaľ, ʃęŭľałąľ, plęńaľęj, kisţeňaľ, vósęj, dáľałųj, pęćaľ.79 A recent grammar textbook rejects the ending -aľ(-aľ) by simply ignoring it, stating only that third declension nouns in the genitive plural have the ending -eń(-ėį).80

Other scholars take a different view. Hurski points out that while the ending -eń is common to all three East Slavonic languages, in Byelorussian there is a parallel ending -aľ(-aľ).81 Kavalova and Ściałkó state that in addition to the ending -eń(-ėį) third declension nouns in the genitive plural 'often' have the ending -aľ(-aľ),82 and in Belorusskij jazyk dlja nebelorusov the authors illustrate the genitive plural of third declension nouns as follows:83

| ʃəčaľ | piačęį | pęćaľ | kasćėj |
| ʃęŭľałąľ | ganeį | gónaľy | gusėį |
| ʃęŭľałųj | abłęscięj | abłasćėj | myşoľy |
| plęńaľęj | rădasćėj | răąasćėj | ʃęŭľałąľ |
| plęńaľęj | senaľáčėj | senaľáčąľy | kryńeį |
| skrōńaľy | sūvįaseį | sūvįasyęj | nacęį |

76. Hramatyka bieloruskaj movy, I, p. 84.
77. Narkievič, op. cit., p. 96.
78. Laksucina, op. cit., p. 162.
82. Kavalova, Ściałkó, op. cit., p. 85.
In the introductory section to the third edition of their *Árfahra-
jicny sloijnik* Łoban and Sudnik also recognise the ending -a’y(-yna) as a permissible alternative to -eǐ(-en), but of 14 third declension nouns for which they give the genitive plural form in the vocabulary section, -yna is recommended in only one instance (капитэль — капи-

тыкна) and included among the 13 for which the ending -eǐ(-en) is recommended is печа (печақи), which is used in the introduction to illustrate the possibility of variants (печақи/печақы)\(^8^4\)

None of the above makes any attempt to define the criteria which govern the choice of ending or the admissibility of variants. The question of whether there is a pattern to the usage of the ending -a’y(-yna) was first raised by A. Кaurus in an article in the journal *Polyomia* entitled *Hraniuak ci hraniiej?* In this article Кaurus rejects the rule given by the Academy Grammar as being too simple and demonstrates that the ending -a’y(-yna) is used regularly where the stress falls on the final syllable of the stem (e.g. далонау, ступеау, гратау) and suggests that the rule be amended to reflect this.\(^8^5\) A more comprehensive categorisation is given by Андрененка and Яшиневич, who (echoing Кaurus) suggest that the ending -a’y(-yna) is used if the stress falls on the last syllable of the stem, e.g. арпелуа, далонуа, плюнау, пэчау; and further, that -eǐ(-en) is used if the noun is stressed on the ending, e.g. мышой, гусеа; and that either ending is admissible if the stress falls on any syllable of the stem other than the last, e.g. дробяеа/дробяэу, аповаеа/аповеау, уласиаеа/уласиаеау. Some nouns have alternative genitive plural forms with the stress in different positions and accordingly different endings, e.g. начаа/ночау, абласеа/эбласеау.\(^8^6\)

This formulation represents the first serious attempt to define the respective spheres of usage of the two endings -eǐ(-en) and -a’y(-yna). It proceeds from the fact of the extensive use of the latter ending in contemporary Byelorussian (something which even its most ardent opponents do not deny) and provides normative rules on this basis, whereas most other writers on this subject have taken the opposite approach and proposed rejection of the ending -a’y(-yna) on the basis of such linguistically suspect criteria as desirability or tradition, in spite of the evidence of modern usage.

Андрененка and Яшиневич are not without their critics. Арашон-
kava, for example, feels that their rules leave some questions un-
answered: which ending is used by such monosyllabic nouns as даль,
грань, гаць, соль etc.? Are there nouns other than those listed (мыш, 
ноч, косца, гусь) which take the stressed ending -eǐ(-en)? Is ноч the 
only noun in this group with an alternative ending -a’y? It soon 
becomes clear, however, that these questions are something of a red 
herring, for instead of attempting to answer them Арашонкавa simply 
uses them as a pretext to expound her own rules based on ‘the written 
practice of many years and the traditions of the Byelorussian langu-

\(^8^4\) Łoban, Sudnik, op. cit., p. 37 and passim.
\(^8^6\) U. K. Андрененка, M. S. Яшиневич, *Беларускае мова*, Minsk, 1972, p. 82.
age, and also the lexical composition of the nouns concerned, their semantics and origin. All this leads her to the rather unoriginal conclusion that -ёй is the basic ending for the genitive plural of third declension feminine nouns; in only four words does she regard -аў(-аў) as normative (даль — далёў, реч — реч'аж, флеш — фле- ш'аж, шч'олач — шч'олач'аж).

What is more, if one examines the questions raised (but not answered) by Arašonkava, one quickly realises that they do not constitute any real objection to Andrejenka and Jašnievic’s formulation. To take the points seriatim: firstly, дал, грань, гац, соль and other nouns with a monosyllabic stem are covered by the rule governing nouns with the stress on the final syllable of the stem and accordingly take the ending -аў (далёў, гранёў, гац'аж, соль'аж); secondly, a school textbook is not normally expected to have an exhaustive list of nouns taking a particular ending, unless they constitute a small and easily definable group (Arašonkava herself does not attempt this in her own classification); and thirdly, alternative endings — with different stress — are given only for нож (наж'аж/нож'аж) for the simple reason that of the examples quoted in that particular group it is the only one to have this characteristic.

Nevertheless, although Andrejenka and Jašnievic appear to have found a formula which gives an accurate picture of the situation with regard to the endings of the genitive plural of third declension nouns, it will be evident from the above that the problem is still far from being resolved in the eyes of some scholars.

Instrumental plural (all declensions)

In modern Byelorussian, as in the other East Slavonic languages, the original a-stem or first declension instrumental plural ending -амі(-амі) has become generalised for all declensions. Notwithstanding this, other endings (mainly -(ы)мі, rarely -ыма) are still used by individual nouns belonging to various declensions.

The nouns involved are:

| First declension | галава́, сві́нья, сляза́ |
| Second declension | (masculine) го́сць, ко́нь, цень |
| | (neuter) калёна, калясо́, брыво́ |
| Third declension | абро́ць, вось, дало́нь, кіш'ёнь, ко́сць |
| Heteroclitic | вóка, ву́ха, плячó |
| Pluralia tantum | варóты, гро́шы, гру́дэ, дзвéры, дзе́ці, дро́вы, лю́дэ, сáні, сёны |

Not only in the first half of the twentieth century (as recognised by the Academy Grammar) but also in more recent times the ending -(ы)мі has been widely used in the instrumental plural of the above nouns, particularly in works of literature and, to a somewhat lesser extent, in the language of newspapers and periodicals. 88 Few of these

forms, however, are regarded as acceptable literary forms and only one — людзьмі — is generally considered to be the sole norm. In addition to людзьмі the Academy Grammar gives literary status to the ending -(ь)мі for one other noun — даэцьмі (as a variant for даэцямі); the use of this ending in other nouns is labelled colloquial.Łoñan and Sudnik, on the other hand, consider даэцьмі (like людзьмі) the sole normative form, and recognise literary variants in three instances: гру́дзі — гру́дзямі/гру́дзьмі, дзвёры — дзвярёмі/дзвярмі, конь — кénямі/кóньмі.

In an article in Žviazda (4 June 1965) entitled Patrebná unifikacyja, A. Narkievič sought an ‘improvement’ in modern Byelorussian by means of the elimination of the instrumental plural endings -(ь)мі, -(ь)ма, -(ь)мі and the establishment of a single ending -амі (-ами) for all nouns, regardless of their gender or grammatical characteristics. He seems, however, to have found his own proposal too rigid, since he made exceptions for three nouns: людзьмі, даэцьмі, каньмі. The last two were to be used only in a collective sense, with даэцьмі, каньмі as the instrumental forms where the meaning suggested individual forms or horses.

Repeating to Narkievič in an article published in Žviazda some months later, Kaļūrus rejected Narkievič’s proposal on the grounds that a system of rules should take into account actual usage and not be based on the desires of individual linguists, thus showing himself to be a proponent of the descriptive rather than the prescriptive approach to language. Rather surprisingly in view of her generally normative attitude, Kaļūrus is supported in this instance by Arašonka, albeit to a limited extent. She feels that, taking into account the extensive use of the ending -(ь)мі, it should be regarded as an acceptable literary variant for the nouns гру́дзі, câні and слэзâ.

The instrumental plural ending -ьмá, deriving from the old dual number, occurs with even less frequency than -(ь)мі and seems to be restricted to the nouns вóка, вуха, пляцо, грошы and дзвёры (ва-чы́ма, вушы́ма, плячы́ма, грачы́ма, дзвярь́ма). It is generally regarded as a dialecticism, although frequently encountered in works of literature. Bułachâi, writing in 1954, was uncertain of its status but considered that it was rapidly being ousted by the generalised ending -амі, which should therefore be regarded as the literary norm, and this opinion is confirmed both by the Academy Grammar and

89. Hramatyka bielaruskaj movy, I, pp. 58, 66, 74, 84-5, 87, 89, 90, 92-3.
91. There is a certain inconsistency between various sources as to the stress position in the instrumental plural of даэці and кэні: даэцямі — даэцямі, даэцьмі — даэцьмі, кёнямі — кёнямі. Loban and Sudnik, in common with the Academy Grammar, recommend stem stress in all instances.
92. A. Kaļūrus, Нармалізация, але не збіднівця, Žviazda, 1 Sept. 1965.
93. Aраšonka, op. cit., pp. 82-3. Other scholars also accept the instrumental plural ending -(ь)мі in the case of individual nouns: гру́дзьмі, слэзмі, калямьмі, сёньмі, câньмі, людзьмі (Kamarouski, Micielskaja, op. cit., p. 105); кёньмі, слэзмі, касцьмі (Jažnievič, Andrejenka, op. cit., p. 75); слэзмі, свёньмі, кёньмі, гасьмі, калямьмі, аўшмі, гру́дзьмі, касцьмі (Hurski, op. cit., pp. 102, 113, 116).
by the relevant entries in Łoban and Sudnik’s *Arfahrafičny stolnik.*

More recent evidence, however, suggests that this may not in fact be the case. Far from becoming obsolete or being confined to the language of works of literature, the ending -яма appears to be spreading to all styles of language, and in the case of the nouns гра́ма and дэ́ры оccurs with rather greater frequency than the ending -ами.


95. Ара́шкава, op. cit., pp. 82-3.