genuine accession to Byelorussian song. So too with Harun and Biadula: their technical skill is rooted in a tradition where the people itself, as Harun claims in *Ludziam* (To People), is naturally poetic: 'Dzie sam narod — piaśniar'.

Poetry addressed to an audience with its own rural culture does not go easily into English today. Since Hardy such forms as the ballad (still sung in his youth) no longer seem natural. A poet at ease in Lowland Scots would probably have less trouble in catching the tone of Byelorussian, though his vocabulary might need more explication than Byelorussian does. Vera Rich is highly regarded for her service to Byelorussian poetry. Without her anthology *Like Water, Like Fire* ignorance of its wealth would be almost insuperable in this country. She breaks new ground with the present volume. Harun had not been represented at all in the former collection; only five of the poems here by Bahdanovič and two of those by Biadula were included. Her method is to preserve as closely as possible metrical form and rhyme-scheme. This procedure has some familiar drawbacks, but a good case can be made for adopting it in a selection where the element of song so much prevails. Only a poet with Pound's infallible ear could find an equivalent for these poems in his style of translation, which works out from the dynamic tension and the weight of each individual phrase.

Vera Rich's conspicuous merit is fidelity to the sense, even though considerations of form have to be overriding. She is uncon-

monly dependable. Sometimes, however, it becomes difficult to avoid wordiness — the metre must be filled out. We have to accept for 'jak laty' the cumbrous 'like old rags, dull and frowsty'; 'šaptańnie/I zvon ručaja' spreads out into 'the soft murmured calling/Of the stream running clear'; 'Ty pieśnia, nie maŭčy' becomes 'O you song, sink not to voiceless quiet', the last word in uneasy assonance with 'night'. Verisimilitude can be damaged by the exactions of rhyme. 'Bo moj pryhon hityaje čas' rings oddly as 'time eats my impetus', and what peasant girl would speak of 'a heifer as my dot'? Now and again uncertainty of tone seems to result from the difficulty of imitating form. Bahdanovič's *Hutarka z panienkami* is a slight piece, but it combines grace with colloquial vigour; 'Conversation with Young Ladies' relegates it to a Victorian keepsake. And finally there are lines in *Letapisiec* which have a straggling movement such as 'Copying the whole from an ancient parchment, from first word to the last, of Mahiloŭ and what passed there'. Bahdanovič uses Alexandrines for this poem.

I should not wish to end in a carping tone. *The Images Swarm Free* is a well-constructed anthology presenting three poets of high and varied accomplishment. Their translator has not failed them: much of the force and colour of the original comes through. The versions lead to a surer recognition of what their language could give these poets, and what they gave in return.

Henry Gifford

Jankova, T.S., comp. *Dyialektny sloŭnik Łojeŭščyny*. 'Navuka i technika', Minsk, 1982. 432 pp.

Further evidence of the revival in the fortunes of Byelorussian lexicography over the last two decades is provided by the

publication (in an edition of 1200) of this dictionary of the dialect spoken by the rural population living on both sides of the

Dnieper in the Łojeŭ area of the Homiel district. Genetically a member of the Palešsie group of dialects, the Łojeŭ dialect occupies a transitional position: to the north it borders with various Homiel dialects, to the east with those of the Černihiv district of the Ukraine. Its geographical location at the junction of several dialect groups gives it a considerable degree of variety, and the dictionary includes lexis not only of the Łojeŭ dialect proper but also of contiguous dialects. Indeed the Łojeŭ dialect itself is not uniform and may be subdivided into the speech of three different groups: native inhabitants of the area, immigrants from the Minsk and Mahiloŭ districts, and immigrants from the Černihiv district.

Among the most characteristic phonetic features of the Łojeŭ dialect are: the presence (in addition to the standard monophthongs of Byelorussian) of a number of diphthongs e.g. вyoл for standard BR вол, кyoнь for конь; the absence in certain instances of the change of e to ě under stress e.g. авес, yce for standard авћс, yцћ; etymological ы becomes y after labial consonants and the labiodental в e.g. бук, муш, вы- (prefix) for standard бык, мыш, вы-; assimilative *okańnie* in the immediate pretonic syllable, thus столoм alongside сталa, нoгoй alongside нaгa; the absence of *dziekańnie* (though *ciekańnie* is present) e.g. дeткa, дeўкa, пpыдцe for standard дeткa, дзeўкa, пpыдцe.

In the morphology the Łojeŭ dialect, in

common with other southern Byelorussian dialects, retains relics of the dual number in feminine and neuter nouns after the numeral 2. It also preserves, under stress, the original dative and prepositional plural endings of o-stem nouns (e.g. к пастpухoм, на двopox) and shows a more widespread use of the vocative case than standard Byelorussian, with such forms as Тaнe, Kaцe, чaлaвeчa. Łojeŭ's position on the border with the Ukrainian SSR is responsible for certain features which it shares with standard Ukrainian, among them the accusative plural = nominative plural for nouns denoting animals as well as inanimate nouns, and the attributive use of the short form of the adjective.

The lexical content of the dictionary is based on material gathered by the compiler over the period 1960-80. It is contrasted in each instance with the standard Byelorussian form, such differentiation being of a phonematic (e.g. вicoкi for выcoкi), accentological (e.g. xoлoсты for xoлacты), morphological (e.g. пa-нacькi for пa-нaшaмy), semantic (e.g. цiкaвы in the sense of акуpатны) or stylistic (e.g. бaбкa with the meaning of пaвiтyxa) nature. Apart from a short introduction the dictionary consists entirely of around 7,000 entries ordered alphabetically and each containing (in addition to the standard Byelorussian equivalent) examples of usage with an indication of the particular village(s) of the Łojeŭ area in which the given form was recorded.

Peter Mayo

Jařko, D., ed. *Himny chryścijan. Christian Hymns in Byelorussian*. Byelorussian Evangelical Baptist Fraternity in the USA and Canada, Cranesville Pa., 1979. xii + 336 pp. Notes.

The Evangelical tradition in the field of Church music has been a part of Byelorussian cultural life since the 16th century. In-

deed, the first collection of music ever to be printed in Byelorussia, albeit in the Polish language, was a Protestant hymnal: