Rahojša, V. P. *Paetyčny sloŭnik*. 'Vyšejšaja škola', Minsk, 1979. 320 pp. Index.

V. P. Rahojša's *Poetic Dictionary* is an ambitious and original project well realized. The author's previous works include *Paetyka Maksima Tank* (1968), *Pieraklaŭ Jakub Kołas* (1972) and a popularizing book on versification intended for schoolteachers *Hutarki pra vierš. Mietryka. Rytmyka. Fonika* (1979), but the Dictionary is undoubtedly a work of more lasting value and significance than any of these, and fills a need long felt by all with a close interest in the history and theory of verse.

Byelorussian lexicography has made great albeit belated strides in recent years with the five-volume defining dictionary near completion, and the dictionary of Skaryna's language, the long-awaited etymological dictionary, and a major dictionary of north-west Byelorussian dialects all well under way. Rahojša's *Poetic Dictionary* differs from these, as, indeed, it does from such 'predecessors' as Makarevič's *Karotki litaraturaznaŭčy sloŭnik* (1963, 2nd ed. 1969) or A. Kvjatkovskij's *Poëtičeskij slovar'* (Moscow, 1966), in both concept and execution, for one of the author's aims has been to show the achievements to date of Byelorussian poetry, and to open some new vistas, as well as providing reference definitions of words relating to poetics and prosody. To this end he has taken the bold step of abandoning alphabetical arrangement in favour of thematic ordering, dividing the book into seven chapters, each introduced by the major topics which give the chapters their titles, followed by shorter articles on more detailed subjects, the latter arranged alphabetically.

The titles of the chapters give an overall picture of the Dictionary's contents: 1. General questions (literary type, lyrics, poetry, poet, content and form, poetic image, poetics, prosody); 2. Poetic vocabulary, Tropes; 3. Metrics, Rhythm; 4. Intonation, Poetic

syntax; 5. Sound (*fonika*), Rhyme; 6. Composition, Strophics; and 7. Poetic genres, Verse types. Problems of classification are inevitable and insoluble, but a subject index at the end facilitates access to particular items. In view of the richness of the illustrative material an index of names and, still more luxurious, of titles would have further enhanced the Dictionary's already great value as a reference tool.

Rahojša's work, is, in fact, far more than a simple work of reference, for the articles are comprehensively illustrated with examples from Byelorussian poetry, occasionally supplemented from Russian and other sources, and it is good to see (compared, for instance, with Kvjatkovskij) so much use made of the work of Byelorussia's talented younger poets. This, combined with the author's lightly worn erudition and customary fluency of style, make the *Poetic Dictionary* a fascinating book in its own right. Not surprisingly, perhaps, some of the statements and choices of example are, to say the least, debatable: for instance, under 'Paezija' we are told that 'Contemporary Byelorussian poets (P. Broŭka, P. Pančanka, M. Tank and others) are making an important contribution to the development of all Soviet and European poetry' (p. 11). None the less the lexicographer, anthologizer and compiler can never aspire to accommodate all tastes, and on the whole Rahojša's *Poetic Dictionary* gives a very full and impressive picture of the high achievements and richness of Byelorussian verse, itself contributing to the welcome accompanying growth in the study of Byelorussian poetics and prosody inaugurated by the late I. D. Ralko and M. M. Hrynčyk. No serious student of Byelorussian verse will want to be without a copy.

Arnold McMillin

Žmuidzinās, J. *Commonwealth polono-lithuanien ou l'Union de Lublin (1569)*. Mouton, 1978. 272 pages.

When the terms 'Athens of the North', 'Florence of the North', 'Venice'

and 'Mecca' are used to refer to the same city, Vilnius is not among the

first cities which would leap to the mind of the average layman. This is but one of the surprises in this provocative, Lithuanocentric book. Others include the statements that Mickiewicz, Skaryna and Ivan Fedorov were Lithuanians, that the revolts of 1830-1 and 1863 were Lithuanian revolts, that Hrodna is really called Gardinas, and that the partitions of Poland were partitions of Lithuania. There is, of course, some justification for these claims, but the author, throughout the book, is inclined to blur the distinction between ethnic, Lithuanian-speaking Lithuania and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania as a whole. The antiquity of the texts, grammar and morphology of the Lithuanian language is well known, but the emphasis given to it in this book seems less than wholly relevant given that, almost without exception, the documents quoted are in Latin or Byelorussian (which the author insists on calling Lithuano-Ruthenian). We are told that every effort was made to ensure the use of Lithuanian in churches, and that a condition of Casimir's election to Grand Duke in 1440 was that he learn Lithuanian. The layman may wonder whether he bothered to learn any more Lithuanian than the Prince of Wales has Welsh.

As Professor Joad might have said, it all depends what you mean by Lithuania. For that matter it all depends, in this book, what you mean by 'Union'. 'Commonwealth', 'Privilege', 'Charter', 'Act', 'Prince', 'Duke' and 'Grand Duke', to name but a few. The author picks his way gingerly and somewhat unconvincingly through this terminological maze, relying heavily on and quoting copiously from a mass of secondary sources, not to mention secondary sources quoting other secondary sources.

The book is divided into three parts. The first traces, with admirable clarity, the course of Lithuano-Polish relations between 1325 and 1569, but also includes a sixty-page section claiming primacy for Lithuania in such varied fields as opera, printing and jurisprudence. The second part is devoted to a phase by phase survey of the negotiations of 1569 and contains the best writing in the book. Not only are the short chapters easy to digest, but the locations and people come, all too briefly, to life. The third part of the book examines how the Union worked, or failed to work in practice.

The author's intention is clear from the outset. It is to refute the Polish-inspired view which claims that 1569 marked the end of Lithuanian independence. He maintains that the Lithuanians outmanoeuvred the Poles and, unlike the Hungarians between 1867 and 1918, succeeded in remaining a fully independent, internationally recognised nation-state.

The book contains a number of irritating misprints, particularly of dates: 1978 for 1878 (p. 148), 1773 and 1775 for 1793 and 1795 (p. 169). Foreign (in this context non-French) words are also rendered inaccurately. For example 'Old Church Slavonic' is misspelled in both English and German. The book does contain a useful list of Lithuanian rulers, although the reader may have trouble recognizing the patently Polish Sigismund Augustus in spurious Franco-Lithuanian disguise as Zygmantas Auguste.

Perhaps the map which ends the book is an apt comment on the work as a whole: on it both Poland and Lithuania are coloured the same shade of grey.

Michael Pursglove