

SUMMARY. №1-2 (112-113). 2012

Issue # 1—2 of 2012 is totally dedicated to the history and contemporary life of the Protestant Church in Belarus.

The issue opens with an editorial.

An article «Reformation and the Golden Age of Belarus, or How Consciousness Determined Being» by **Antoni Bokun**, a pastor of St. John the Baptist's Protestant church in Minsk, evaluates the influence of Reformation on cultural, economic, and sociopolitical life of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the 16th century. The author also reflects on why that century was the Golden Age of the country and why it was followed by an evident later decline.

An article «The Political Theology of John Calvin in His Dedications to Sigismund II Augustus and Mikołaj «the Black» Radziwiłł» by an American historian Bruce Anderson presents an analysis of John Calvin's dedicatory letters to King and Grand Duke Sigismund II Augustus as well as to a magnate Mikołaj «the Black» Radziwiłł. The analyses allowed the author to clarify the connection between Calvin and his ideas and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania together with Poland.

A historian of philosophy from Polatsk **Ihar Bortnik** in his article «There Is a Lot of Diversity in Christian Faith in Rzeczpospolita» examines the problem of tolerance in religious, philosophical, and sociopolitical thought of the Polish Commonwealth of the second half of the 16th and the first half of the 17th centuries.

A professor of Södertörn University (Stockholm, Sweden) **Andrej Katlarčuk** in his article «Ruthenian Protestants of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Their Relationship with Orthodoxy, 1569—1767» offers a review of a relationship between the early modern Protestant and the Orthodox party of Ruthenian elite as well as a correlation of their identities.

An article by a historian and archivist **Ludmila Ivanova** «Protestants in Slutsk in the 17th — 19th Centuries» is dedicated to various aspects of the history of Protestant churches in one of the greatest centres of Protestantism on the territory of contemporary Belarus in the modern era.

An article by a historian **Anatol Sidarevič** «To the History of the First Publication of the New Testament and Psalms in Modern Belarusian (1931)» summarises knowledge on the aforementioned problem, gained within the last decades by Belarusian and foreign historians, and adds some new documentary data, found in Vilnius archives.

Articles «Evangelic Baptist Christians in the BSSR from 1944 to the Beginning of the 1950s» (by a Hrodna historian **Tacciana Kasataja**) and «The Main Lines and Forms of Protestants' Activities in Post-War Belarus (1944—1985)» (by a Vitebsk historian **Natalla Bałtruševič**) consider the problem of the survival of Protestant churches in the BSSR. The period defined

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(from the liberation of Belarus from the Nazi occupation to the beginning of Gorbachev's Perestroika) was the most difficult time for the Protestant Church.

An article «If You don't Get Scared...» the history of today's biggest Protestant church in Belarus, which is Minsk Evangelical Church «Grace», is examined, starting from the actual beginning of the functioning of Evangelical groups in post-war Minsk in the mid 1950s up to the present day.

An article «To the History of Protest Fasting in Defense of the New Life Church (October 2006)» by **Antoni Bokun** analyses the most wide-scale protest action undertaken by the Protestant churches of Belarus in recent years against the discriminatory policies of Belarusian state authorities.

The issue ends with translations into Belarusian of three medieval sources on the history of Reformation in Belarus. They are as follows: 1) a letter from the nuncio of Poland Aloisius Lipomanus to Mikołaj «the Black» Radziwiłł and a detailed response by the latter, «from which every Christian can understand what the right way of pious living is»; 2) an introduction to the Bierastsie Bible of 1563 and Mikołaj «the Black» Radziwiłł's address to King Sigismund II Augustus, published in the same edition; 3) an anonymous Latin language work «Vindiciae Contra Tyrannos» («A Defense of Liberty Against Tyrants»), first published in 1579.