

## SUMMARY. №7-8 (106-107). 2011

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Issue # 7—8 of 2011 is totally dedicated to festive culture in Belarus both at present and in the past.

The issue opens with a preface by a co-editor, a historian from Minsk **Zmicier Kryvašej**.

An article by **Alaksandra Vieraščahina** «Formation of Christian Festive Traditions in Medieval Belarus (16<sup>th</sup>—17<sup>th</sup> cent.)» considers the formation of common canons of behaviour on festive days and on Sundays, as well as during fasting in the traditions of the main Christian confessions in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

A historian from Harodnia (Hrodna) **Natalla Śliž** («Celebrating a Wedding in the Noble Style») made an attempt to reconstruct the main elements of a noble wedding, widespread on the territory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the 16<sup>th</sup>—17<sup>th</sup> cent.

Another researcher from Harodnia (Hrodna) **Hanna Paŭloŭskaja** («Accompanied by Loud Gunfire») analyses the festive culture of Harodnia (Hrodna) in the other half of the 18<sup>th</sup> cent., as presented in monastic chronicles, newspaper articles, memoirs, and itineraries.

**Volha Sabaleŭskaja** in her article «Jewish Festive Culture in the Belarusian Part of the Pale of Settlement in the 19<sup>th</sup> and at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> cent.» considers the peculiarities of celebrating festive occasions by Belarusian Jews in the last period of the traditional Jewish community's existence before its significant modernisation.

**Ina Sorkina** in her article «Festive Culture of Belarusian Towns» writes about a unique culture, which united representatives of different ethnoses, confessions, and social groups.

A historian **Ludmila Rohač** in her article «People were Born and Got Married in the Inn...» reflects upon the role played in the social life of Belarusians by inns, which, in fact, served as village, town or city clubs.

An article by a historian from Brest **Volha Papko** («Balls and Receptions in the Culture of the Belarusian Nobility in the 19<sup>th</sup> and at the Beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> cent.») is concentrated on the high life of the local aristocracy during the annexation of Belarusian territories to the Russian Empire.

A historian **Alexander Friedman** showed in his article «Miensk at the Beginning of October 1942: “the First Free Harvest Festival”» how, during the German occupation of Belarus in 1941—1944, Nazi propaganda used traditional Belarusian festivals for the demonstration of the «significant results» of the German agricultural policy on the occupied territories. It also meant to have proved the pro-German state of public opinion.

A historian from Warsaw **Jan Szumski** in his article «Religious Festivals in the West of Belarus during the Postwar Period» considers the given problem in the context of complex interrelations between Christian confessions and

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peripheral Soviet powers, which pursued a consequent policy of supplanting church festivals by celebrating Soviet memorable events.

An article by a historian of Belarusian origin and a Bielastok citizen **Aleh Łatyšonak** «The Holidays of the Belarusian People's Republic Yesterday and Today» is dedicated to the analysis of the tradition of Belarusians' celebrating the declaration of the Belarusian People's Republic on the 25th of March, 1918 (Freedom Day), as well as an anniversary of the Slutsk uprising on the 27th of November, 1920 (Heroes' Day), during the 20th and at the beginning of the 21st cent.

An article by a philosopher from Minsk **Arsienij Sivicki** «Belarusian Festival Calendar — Official and Unofficial One» gives an explanation of the reasons for there being an official and an unofficial version of the festival calendar in today's Belarus. The article describes the semiotic mechanisms of their functioning and reveals a connection between the calendar, political ideologies, and power relations. It also deals with the methodology of identifying a festive nature of an event in history.

Texts by Belarusian ethnologists **Tacciana Kucharonak** («A Holiday in the Context of Traditional Belarusian Culture»), **Tacciana Vałodzina** («Healing Magic in the Context of Festival Calendar»), **Iryna Machoŭskaja** («Ritual Feasts in Traditional Belarusian Culture») deal with different aspects of celebrating festive occasions, typical of the historical traditions of the Belarusian village.