

Issue # 5 2011 of the magazine ARCHE is already a third issue dedicated to Polatsak. And this is not by chance because the Polatsak topic is a key one in the Belarusian cultural and historical identity.

The issue opens with a rubric «History». The first text here is «The Origin of Polatsak Land» by **Henryk Łowmiansky**, originally published in *Z polskich studiów slawistycznych. Seria 3, Historia : prace na VI Międzynarodowy kongres slawistów w Pradze 1968. S. 7—24*. The author concludes that in the times of Uladzimir, Rahvalod's successor, Polatsak land, as well as the whole of Rus, was already formed from the point of view of territory. It included, apart from six small kryvichy tribes, four inflanty tribes, as well as the Lithuania of the Viliya region.

Alies Zhlutka in «Usievalad from Jersika in a Latin Document of 1209» publishes the first known Latin document referring to Polatsak possessions. It is a statement of establishing vassal relations between prince Usievalad, the owner of the independent principality Jersika, and a Riga Catholic bishop Albert. The document factually fixes the beginning of legal relations, affirmed in the written form and fixed by the corresponding rites, between the first Belarusian state — Polatsak Principality — and the West.

A professor from Bialystok university **Alieh Latyshonak** in his article «Joachim of Fiore, Gogmagog and White Ruś» tackles the first record about White Ruś (Lat. Alba Ruscia), which is found in a geographical treatise, known under the heading «Descriptiones terrarum» — «The Description of Lands» (1260—1261). The personality of the author and the time at which the work was written presuppose considering the name of White Ruś in the context of religious symbolic. White colour definitely suited the country, in which Christian missionary scored its triumph. White is the colour of neophytes and the newly baptized, as well as of the fair and the saved.

Professor **Jan Powierski** in his article «A Pomeranian Princess in Polatsak» expresses a view that Sviatokhna, a daughter of Kazimir I — the prince of the West Pomerania, married a Polatsak prince Barys Davydavich in 1198. The bridegroom was descended from the Drutsk line of the Polatsak Rurik dynasty. Later a conflict between Sviatokhna and her stepson led to a final decline in the rule of the Drutsk line of Polatsak princes and to prince Uladzimir's return to the Polatsak throne.

Professor **Alies Krautsevich** in his article «“And We Are in the Power of God and That of Vaišvilkas (Voyshalk)”. Lithuania and Polatsak in Historical Relations» retraces the beginning of the confrontation and cooperation between Polatsak Principality and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

Sergei Bogatyrev in his article «Battle for Divine Wisdom. The Rhetoric of Ivan IV's Campaign against Polatsak», originally published in «The Military and

Society in Russia. 1450—1917. Leiden; Boston; Köln, 2002», researches Ivan IV's military operation against Polatsak. The operation required not only large human and material recourses, but also an ideology that would express the goals of the campaign in a convincing and accessible language. Since the Muscovite view of the state and policy was almost exclusively religious, the only source for such an ideology could be the rhetorical works of ecclesiastical writers, who interpreted Ivan's wars as fighting for the true faith and for his patrimony. The ecclesiastical writers presented the tsar's attack on Polatsak as part of his duty to protect the true faith from heretics and renegades. The rise of Protestantism in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania led to numerous parallels between the seizure of Polatsak, seen as the town's purification from heretics and iconoclasts, and the defeat of the infidels during the victorious Kazan campaign of 1552. The Polatsak campaign thereby ranks with the seizure of Kazan from the point of view of reinforcing Ivan IV's image as that of an Orthodox tsar and defender of the true faith.

Professor **Stefan Rohdewald** in his article «Magistrate as an Interconfessional Actor: the Orthodox, Uniats, Catholics, Jews, and the Polatsak Town Council in the 17th Century» describes the Polatsak of the 17—18th centuries as a town in which different cultures, legal systems, and ethnic groups existed alongside.

A professor of Jagiellonian university in Cracow **Yury Hardzieyeu** in his preface «Ideas and Concerns of the «Citizen of Polatsak Province» Dziamyian Sluzhka» explains the circumstances of Dziamyian Sluzhka's writing and publishing an essay «A Description of the Town of Polatsak, Which Remained on This Side of Poland, or a Picture of Its Disastrous State». The essay was first published in a Warsaw magazine «Dziennik Handlowy» in 1788. (Służka D., Opisanie miasta Połocka na tej stronie Polski pozostałego, czyli bardziej obraz nieszczęśliwego stanu jego // Dziennik Handlowy. 1788. R. III, № 1. S. 49—62.)

The rubric «Critique» presents a critical review by **Yuras Lauryk** «Gogol as an Elder Brother. Yan Barshcheuski and a Colonial Myth of Our Literary Criticism» as well as an essay by Yunelia Salnikava «Irresponsible Patriots and Landowners.»

The rubric Lyric poetry presents verses by **Uladzimier Arlou** «To Come to Polatsak at Dawn».

The following publications in the issue have a historical orientation: a research by professor **Vasil Varonin** «The Onomastic and the Toponymic Card Index of Rositsa Parish from Yan Karlovich's Collection», and by Natallia Siarhieyenka «A Struggle for Relics. 114 Years of St. Andrey Babolia in Polatsak».

Liavon Vashko publishes Vosip Arlouski's «Belarusian Folk Stories» — a little-known monument of Belarusian literature printed in Polatsak in 1908.

Viktar Zhybul in his article «Yanka Zhurba — a Poet of Socialist Realism» reconstructs on the basis of archive sources little-known chapters of the life and creative work of Nasha Niva's poet, one of the fathers of new Belarusian literature.

Dzmitry Vinakhodau in «How Nieshcharda Became a Legend. A Historical Basis of the Legend about an Epical Hero Kniazha in «Nobleman Zavalnia, or Belarus in Fantastic Stories» by Yan Barshcheuski» narrates about an important story in the book by the Belarusian classic writer of the 19th century.

The rubric «Essays» presents memoirs by **Siarhiey Tarasau** «An Archeologist's Diary», and those by Vadzim Barshcheuski «Sweet Polatsak Childhood», an outline «Polatsak Underground: a Trip in Space and Time» by **Andrey Bukhavietski**, an essay «A Tragedy of Rositsa. A Tragedy of My Land» by **Iryna Zharnasiek**, as well as «How Polatsak's Coat of Arms was Created» by **Zmitrok Kunitski**.

The issue closes with a rubric «Short Reviews», which presents a review by **Guido Hausmann** «Polatsak: from Varangians' Princely Throne to a District Centre in Vitsiebsk Province» (Rohdewald, S. «Vom Polocker Venedig». Kollektives Handeln sozialer Gruppen einer Stadt zwischen Ost- und Mitteleuropa (Mittelalter, frühe Neuzeit, 19. Jh. bis 1914). Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des östlichen Europa. Bd. 70. — Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2005. — 588 S. 115 Abb. ISBN: 978-3-515-08696-7.), and a critical review by **Thomas Wunsch** «Lithuanian Rus Is not Russia» (Von Werdt, C. Stadt und Gemeindebildung in Ruthenien. Okzidentalisation der Ukraine und Weißrusslands im Spätmittelalter und in der frühen Neuzeit. Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte. Bd. 66. — Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006. — 326 S. ISBN 978-3-447-05363-1.)