



Enormous legacy of famous Belarusian first printer Frantsisk Skorina

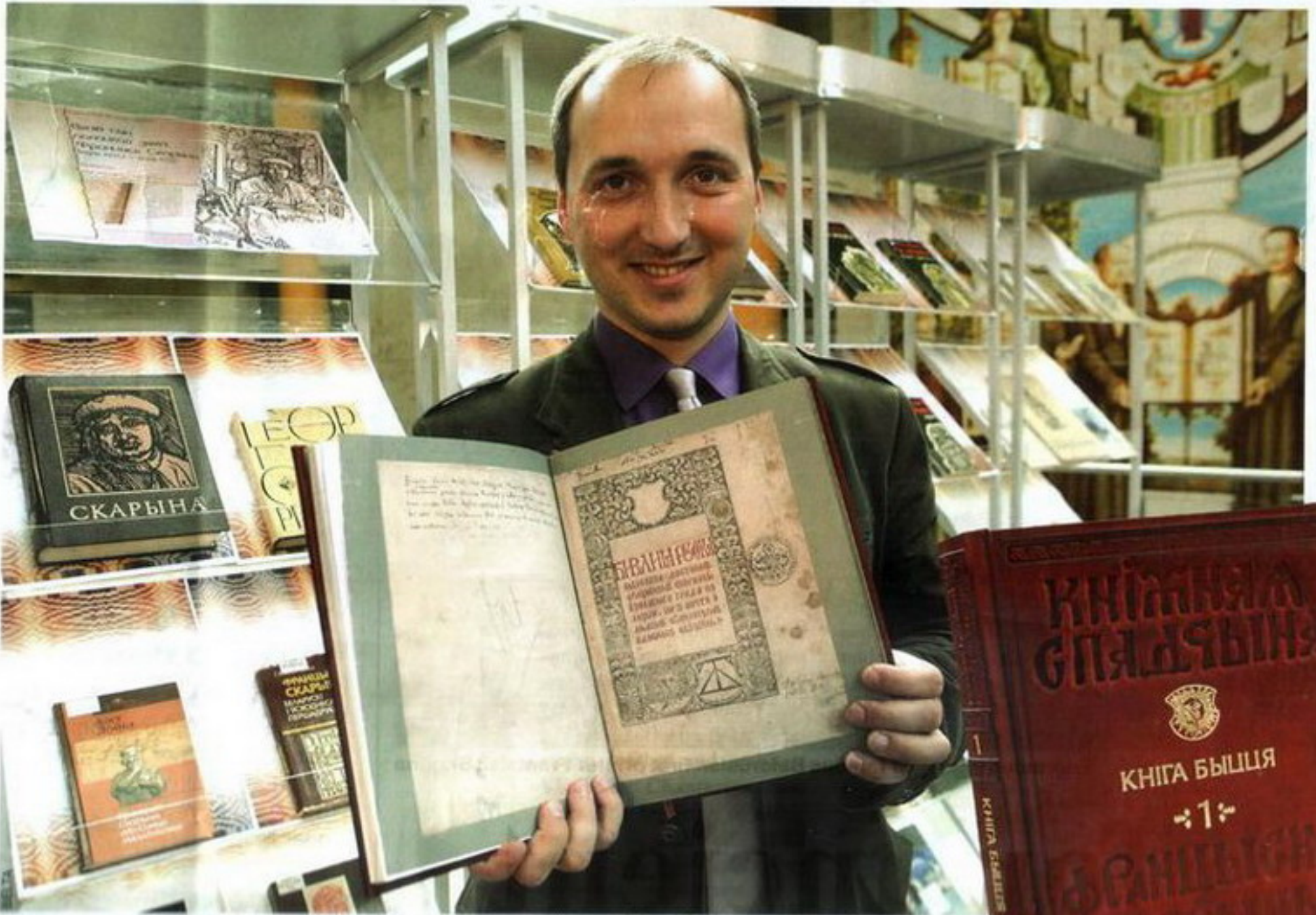
# Rebirth for ancient books, released by Frantsisk Skorina

First five reproduction volumes of complete set of works by Belarus' outstanding first printer, presented in Minsk



# New birth for Frantsisk Skorina's ancient books

First five reproduction volumes of complete set of works by Belarus' outstanding first printer, presented in Minsk



Presentation of first volumes of reproduction edition at National Library of Belarus

By Mikhail Vetrov

The National Library of Belarus and Bank BelVEB have presented the first five editions from a reproduction complete set of Skorina's works. Copies of his printing of *Genesis*, *Exodus*, *Leviticus*, *Numbers* and *Deuteronomy* have been presented to representatives of the diplomatic missions of Russia, Ukraine, Poland, the Czech Republic, Germany and Italy. In addition, the books have been given to libraries in each district of the capital. In all, a thousand copies of each book have been published, with a hundred being leather-bound.

"Frantsisk Skorina belongs

not only to Belarusian culture, having influenced various countries. The first printer made a significant contribution to the development of pan-European culture. He gave everyone access to the ultimate treasure: printed books," noted Belarus' Culture Minister, Boris Svetlov, at the ceremony.

The Director of the National Library, Roman Motulsky, notes that no original book printed by Skorina has survived in its complete state. He explains, "We're assembling an ideal edition from surviving copies. Moreover, for the first time, Skorina's texts have been translated into modern Belarusian language: including prefaces for the whole

publication and each volume."

Frantsisk Skorina printed 25 books in Prague (1517-1519) and Vilnius (1522-1525), which are being assembled in a 20-volume facsimile edition, based on electronic copies of the best surviving works. Editions by Belarus' first printer are held at libraries and museums across Belarus, Russia, Ukraine, Germany and other countries. The new facsimile editions are the most accurate recreation of Frantsisk Skorina's books to date, accompanied by scholarly commentary, as well as translations of prefaces and afterwards by Frantsisk Skorina into modern Belarusian, Russian and English.

The project has been initiated and implemented by BelVEB Bank JSC and the National Library of Belarus, restoring Frantsisk Skorina's heritage as part of the *Culture of Belarus* state programme for 2011-2015. The project is to run from 2013-2017 and is dedicated to the 500th anniversary of our national book printing. The Frantsisk Skorina book collection is to be donated to libraries, museums and archives across Belarus, Russia, Ukraine, Poland and Germany, as well as to the United Nations and UNESCO.