

## In this number

**VIRPI MÄKINEN**

### Continuity and Change: The Poor and Poor Relief in Catholic Reform from the Late Middle Ages to the Early Modern Era

Many scholars have argued that the Protestant Reformation changed the structures of poor relief and charity in various ways which were important to the subsequent development of the welfare state in northern Europe. These changes were based, for instance, on the expansion of state (or lay) engagement in poor relief, the centralization of resources and the rationalization of functions. The scholars also maintained that the development was due to differences between Catholic and Protestant religious motivation. This article aims to demonstrate that none of these changes had much to do with the Reformation, since the processes had begun much earlier.

**TUIJA LAINE**

### The Poor, the Hungry and the Infirm in Agricola's *Prayer Book* of 1544

The article explores the terms for describing poverty, hunger and infirmity in the *Rucousciria* (*Prayer Book*, 1544) of Agricola and how they are used. In the context of

prayers with a scriptural origin, Agricola was dependent on the meanings of texts in the Bible, and here the terms 'poor', 'hungry' and 'infirm' are used in their concrete meaning. By contrast, in prayers for private devotions and in liturgical prayers Agricola often uses these concepts more freely and in some cases allegorically.

**ESKO M. LAINE**

### The Blind Beggar on the Road to Jericho (Luke 18:31–43) as Interpreted by Ericus Erci Sorolainen and His Sources

At the beginning of the modern era, poverty was a growing problem particularly in towns and cities. However, it is difficult to find reliable estimates on how many beggars there actually were. This article, related to the "Books in transition" project of the Academy of Finland, discusses how Ericus Erci Sorolainen, Bishop of Turku, viewed poverty. The basis for this discussion is the sermon on the Gospel story of the blind beggar at the gates of Jericho (Luke 18:31–43) published by Sorolainen in his *Postilla* of 1621–1625, compared with his sources — 16th-century and early 17th-century German postillas, particularly the extensive Gospel postillas of Nathanael Tilesius of Silesia, Johannes Avenarius (Habermann) of Bohemia and Siegfried Saccus, a preacher at Magdeburg Cathedral; and

the apocryphal books of Sirach and Tobit quoted by Sorolainen. These sources reflected and supported the movement prompted by the Reformation in Germany aimed at eradicating poverty through communal responsibility and community chests to help the poor, and by declaring that begging in public was improper. It was emphasized in this movement that paupers who were genuinely unable to survive on their own were to be helped by the community, but that these had to be distinguished from "false paupers" whose misery was considered self-inflicted. In some postillas, poverty was reduced to a spiritual metaphor. Differences of emphasis between postillas may be detected. Sorolainen, like some of his sources, considered the blind man in the Gospel story a "true pauper" who could not make a living without his eyesight. Therefore he would have been entitled to poor relief from the citizens of Jericho. Sorolainen's interpretation relies heavily on the theological message of the Gospel story (trust in the potential of God), but poverty also retains its concrete meaning. Sorolainen's sermon is thus both a theological and a concrete statement in social ethics focusing on the dilemma of poverty in early Lutheranism.

## PÄIVI RÄISÄNEN

### Current Challenges and Perspectives in Baptist Research: From Irrelevant Marginalia to the Importance of Marginalia

Studies of the Baptist movement and radical Reformation have not been particularly fashionable in recent years. In Finland, there is practically no tradition of Baptist research. This article discusses the present state of Baptist research worldwide and opens up perspectives for future research. New approaches are provided by micro-history, gender studies and forensic history relying on court records. Expanding the source base, hitherto consisting of a rather narrow range of printed sources, also broadens horizons, as certain recent studies demonstrate. This can serve to help Baptist research, often regarded as marginalia, enrich the mainstream research on the early modern era.

## JOUKO TALONEN

### Liisa Eerontytär or Juho Uusikartano? The Dispute over the Birth of the Prayers Movement 1976–1978

In the study of Finnish ecclesiastical history, the birth of the Prayers religious movement was until 1976 traced back to an ecstatic religious revival that emerged in Kalanti in 1756, centred around a herds girl named Liisa Eerontytär. In 1976, however, Harri Heino published a dissertation where he claimed that the Prayers movement in its modern form emerged from the "jumping revival" (hyppyherätys) of the early 19th century. The key figure in this movement was Juho Uusikartano, a blacksmith who was active at Honkilahti Chapel in Eura. Heino's findings prompted public debate. Certain authorities in the Prayers movement, unwilling to accept this new view, continued to argue that the movement could trace a continuous history back to the 18th century. In 1978, a surprising endorsement of the traditional view within the Prayers movement was published in the *Historiallinen Aikakauskirja* journal by Mikko Juva, a distinguished Church historian and newly appointed to the Archdiocese of Turku from the post of Chancellor of the University of Helsinki. Heino's claim thus remained disputed. The various strands of the Prayers movement continue to date their history from the folk revival in Kalanti in 1756. Professor Irma Sulkunen highlighted the importance of Liisa Eerontytär in her brief monograph of 1999. Historical gender research has thus reinstated Liisa as an important figure in Finnish ecclesiastical history.

Translation: Jaakko Mäntyjärvi