



# РЕЛИГИЯ В ИСТОРИЧЕСКИХ ПРОЦЕССАХ И СОВРЕМЕННОМ ОБЩЕСТВЕ

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## THE OLD BELIEVERS' "SCHISM" IN THE DON COSSACK HOST REGION IN THE EARLY 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY ACCORDING TO THE CLERGY RECORDS OF THE DON AND NOVOCHERKASSK DIOCESE<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract. Introduction.** This article represents an analysis of the state of the Old Believers' "schism" in the Don Cossack Host Region (Province or *Oblast*) in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century: determining the Old Believers' concords existing in the region, as well as their numbers and localization. *Methods and materials.* The empirical base of this article consists of a complex of archival documents, the clergy records, which represent the clerical documentation of the churches of the Don and Novocherkassk Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church. The member churches, as well as the numbers of the Old Believers and their belonging to different concords, were recorded in those documents on an annual basis. This is the first time that the statistical component of the complex of those sources is introduced into the scientific operation. The methodological base of this article is represented by the principles of scientific objectivism and systematicity, which are traditional for historical science. Based on those principles, we could reveal and correctly determine the complex of historical sources, while their systematic study provided the opportunity to make conclusions on the state of the Old Believers' community of the Don Region in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, to reveal the Old Believers' concords (persuasions), which were popular in the Don Cossack Host Region in the period under examination, and to determine their localization peculiarities). *Analysis and results.* As a result of the analysis, it was found out that in the territory of the Don Cossack Host Region there lived representatives of both concords: those who recognized the hierarchy ("Popovtsy", i.e. priesthood followers) and those who did not ("Bespopovtsy", i.e. not following priesthood). The former were represented by "Beglopopovtsy", i.e. fugitive priesthood followers, and the Austrian (Belaya Krinitza) concord, with the latter divided into "Okruzhniki", i.e. followers of the 1862 Epistle, and "Neokruzhniki", i.e. those who did not recognize it. The "Bespopovtsy", along with a large group whose membership was not provided, were divided into "Pomortsy" (coastal church followers), "Pomortsy-Brachniki" (coastal church followers recognizing the marriage), and "Sredniki" (Wednesday tradition followers). As compared to the results of the First General Census of the Russian Empire, the Old Believers' population had decreased in the region, still comprising more than 5% of the total number of the local residents. The major part of the Old Believers was localized in the First and the Second Don Okrugs (districts). Most representatives of all concords lived in the Cossack *yurt* (small settlement) in the stanitsa (Cossack village) of Nizhny Chir. The characteristic feature of the Old Believers of the Don Region was their conflict-free living side by side with representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church, with co-believers, and with those following different concords.

**Key words:** Don Cossack Host Region, Old Believers' "schism", localization of the Old Believers' population, Beglopopovtsy, Belokrinitskaya Hierarchy, Bespopovtsy, Pomortsy.

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## СТАРООБРЯДЧЕСТВО В ОБЛАСТИ ВОЙСКА ДОНСКОГО В НАЧАЛЕ XX в. ПО ДАННЫМ КЛИРОВЫХ ВЕДОМОСТЕЙ ДОНСКОЙ И НОВОЧЕРКАССКОЙ ЕПАРХИИ<sup>1</sup>

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**Аннотация.** Статья посвящена анализу состояния старообрядческого раскола в Области войска Донского в начале XX в.: определению старообрядческих согласий, существовавших в регионе, их численности и локализации. Эмпирическую базу настоящей статьи составляет комплекс архивных документов – клировых ведомостей, представляющий собой делопроизводственную документацию церковей Донской и Новочеркасской епархии Православной российской церкви, в которой ежегодно фиксировался состав приходов, в том числе численность старообрядческого населения и его принадлежность к различным согласиям (толкам). Статистическая составляющая комплекса данных источников вводится в научный оборот впервые. Методологическая основа статьи – традиционные для исторической науки принципы научной объективности и системности. Опора на данные принципы позволила выявить и корректно сформировать комплекс исторических источников, системное изучение которых позволило сделать выводы о состоянии старообрядческого сообщества донского региона в начале XX в., выявить старообрядческие согласия, распространенные в Области войска Донского в исследуемый период и особенности их локализации. В результате проведенного исследования было выяснено, что на территории Области войска Донского проживали представители согласий, признающих иерархию (поповцы) и не признающих (беспоповцы). Первые были представлены беглопоповцами и Австрийским (Белокриницким) согласием, делившимся на окружников и неокружников. Беспоповцы, помимо большой группы, принадлежность которых не была указана, делились на поморцев, поморцев-брачников и средников. По сравнению с результатами Первой всеобщей переписи населения Российской империи численность старообрядческого населения в регионе уменьшилась, но продолжала составлять более 5 % от общего числа жителей региона. Основная часть старообрядческого населения локализовалась во 2-м Донском и 1-м Донском округах. Наибольшее количество представителей всех согласий проживало в юрте станицы Нижне-Чирской.

**Ключевые слова:** Область войска Донского, старообрядчество, локализация старообрядческого населения, беглопоповцы, Австрийское (Белокриницкое) согласие, беспоповцы, поморцы.

**Цитирование.** Шадрина А. В. Старообрядчество в Области войска Донского в начале XX в. по данным клировых ведомостей Донской и Новочеркасской епархии // *Вестник Волгоградского государственного университета. Серия 4, История. Регионоведение. Международные отношения.* – 2022. – Т. 27, № 5. – С. 120–135. – (На англ. яз.). – DOI: <https://doi.org/10.15688/jvolsu4.2022.5.9>

**Introduction.** Overcoming the Old Believers' "schism" had been one of the priorities of the Russian Empire domestic policy during the late third of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The measures implemented by the Russian government during this period did not produce the desired results, and by the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the number of Old Believers

remained significant. Before the 1890s the majority of the Old Belief practitioners lived in the Don Cossack Host Region (more in text DCHR). According to the results of the First General Census of 1897, the Don Region was the second most populated after the Perm Governorate (Province). Despite the considerable number of the Old Believers, it is still unclear what

concorde were common in the Don Region at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, what their total population was, and what okrugs (districts) had the largest number of the Old Belief practitioners. The absence of the published statistical data, which could help determine the state of the Old Believers "schism" in the DCHR at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, makes it relevant to address the problem.

The purpose of the present article is to analyze the state of the Old Believers' "schism" in the DCHR, basing on the statistical data introduced into scholarly discourse for the first time. The data are contained in clergy records of the churches of the Don and Novocheerkassk Diocese, which are kept in the State Archive of the Rostov Region. The purpose of the article is to determine which groups (concorde, persuasions) represented the Old Belief creed in the Don Region; to identify the numerical strength of each one of the groups; determine the location features of the Old Believers in 1908–1916.

The study is chronologically limited to 1908–1916 which is explained by the state of the source base. The spatial framework is the DCHR boundaries before 1887. The Old Believers population in the Rostov Okrug, where churches remained part of the Yekaterinoslavl and Taganrog Diocese up to 1919 after becoming part of the DCHR, cannot be examined due to the loss of the Yekaterinoslavl Spiritual Consistory archives during the Civil War. The clergy records fragments of individual churches of Rostov-on-Don and Taganrog, preserved in the State Archive of the Rostov Region, fail to indicate the number and location of the Old Believers population in Rostov Okrug of the DCHR as these records do not constitute a complete source base.

**Methods and materials.** The study is based on the methodological base traditional for historical science, i.e. principles of scientific objectivism and systematicity. The principle of scientific objectivity helped to identify and form properly a complex of historical sources, which having been systematically studied, helped us make conclusions about the state of the Old Belief community in the Don Region at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The systematicity principle had revealed the Old Believers' concorde (persuasions), which were widespread in the

DCHR at the period under the investigation, as well as their location features.

The study is based on the archives examination. However, the previously conducted studies focused on the issue are also an integral part of this research. The legislative acts that aimed at addressing the status of the Old Believers in the Russian Empire are of the utmost importance for the Old Belief studies. "Compilations of church and civil and church regulations of the Orthodox Confession Department" edited by T.B. Barsov [1] and a compilation of decrees issued by the Minister of Internal Affairs "on the schism issue" [65] are significant. The publications by S.A. Zenkovski [4], A.S. Prugavin [59], and N.I. Subbotin [68] are of particular importance among the pre-revolutionary publications devoted to the analysis of the causes of the Old Belief spreading in the Russian Empire and its specific features. The works of N.I. Ivanovskiy [5], K.N. Nikolaev [54], and N.I. Subbotin [67] are devoted to the history of individual concorde and persuasions of the Old Belief. Research studies of St. Petersburg historian V.G. Druzinin [2] and representatives of pedagogical association of the Don Theological Seminary N.P. Snesarev [63] and Ye.P. Ovsyannikov [55] fully cover the emergence and development of the Old Believers' "schism" in the Don Region, where the majority of the Old Belief practitioners lived during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. However, the imperfections of the 19<sup>th</sup> century statistical system prevented the scholars from systematizing the data on the concorde and persuasions spread in the DCHR and on their number. The works of M.K. Konstantinova [46] and K.A. Kuzoro [50] cover this issue. Studies conducted by V.V. Mashkovtsev [52] and O.P. Yershova [3] are devoted to the relationship development between Old Believers and the Imperial authority. The regional studies devoted to the Old Belief in the Don Region are the most relevant to the present study. The early period of the Old Believers' "schism" development in the Don Region was studied by N.A. Mininkov [53] and D.V. Sen' [62]. The Old Belief creed development in the 18<sup>th</sup> century is covered in the works of O.Yu. Redkina [61] and O.C. Krotov [49]. The study by D.M. Lunochkin devoted to the Old Belief among the Cossacks in the context of historiography of the Old Belief in Russia [51] and "The Old Believers of the Lower

Volga and Don in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and the early 20<sup>th</sup> cc." is of particular interest as well [60].

A complex of annual internal clerical documentation, i.e. the clergy records of the churches of the Don and Novochoerkassk Dioceses in 1908–1916, forms a source base for this study. Every record was to contain information about the strength of a congregation. After 1906 the recording of the number of the Old Believers of different persuasions and cult followers of various groups became obligatory. The source appears to be a representative one as the clergy records underwent annual checks by the Don Spiritual Consistory, and in case of any inaccuracies, administrative penalties were implemented. The completion of missing (lost) clergy records during the period explains the eight years' scope of the sources. The complex includes: 2 clergy records for 1908 (the later sources concerning the region had been lost), 4 records for 1909, 6 for 1910, 4 for 1911, 9 for 1912, 3 for 1913, 2 for 1914, 4 for 1915, 2 for 1916. The eight years' scope does not imply an absolute accuracy of the statistical data. However, considering the little changes in the Old Believer population dynamics in the region, which had mostly been due to natural processes, such as birth and mortality rates, the data allow determining the most populated Old Believers groups (concord, persuasions), as well as their location features.

**Analysis.** Since the Old Believers are insignificant in number nowadays and are not a noticeable part of the Russian society, we need to clarify some terms concerning the names of the Old Believers concord and persuasions of the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, as well as their characteristics.

The Old Belief as a whole is considered a movement developed within the Russian Orthodox Church as a protest against the newly acquired rites, which were focused on the Constantinopolitan Patriarchy and did not have a creedal character. According to the "*Khristianstvo*" (Christianity) Dictionary, edited by S.S. Averintsev, "the Old Belief is following the old rites, when these rites concern not the essence of the faith, but the formal part of the church life" [66].

The term *Beglopovtsy* ("beglo" – fugitive, "pop" – priest) means the Old Rites

practitioners who accepted the priests turned from the official (State) church to the Old Belief [57, p. 416].

The Austrian (Belaya Krinitza) concord consisted of the Old Believers, who recognized the hierarchy that had been reintroduced by Greek Metropolitan Ambrosios and his ordinands in the city of Belaya Krinitza (Austria-Hungary in the 19<sup>th</sup> century). Metropolitan Ambrosios had joined the Old Belief in 1846 via the confirmation and denial of "heresy" [47, p. 543]. After the 1862 Epistle had been published on 24 February by the Austrian (Belaya Krinitza) hierarchs, the concord split into *Okruzhniki*, i.e. followers of the 1862 Epistle, and *Neokruzhniki* or *Protivookruzhniki*, i.e. those who did not recognize it. The Epistle condemned the *Bespopovtsy* and the "fallacies" of the Russian Orthodox Church, who caused the "schism". The Epistle attempted to unify the Belaya Krinitza concord doctrine [47, p. 542, 547]. The most controversial part of the Epistle, which caused debates between the *Okruzhniki* and the *Neokruzhniki*, was the statement that "the dominant church of Russia, as well as the church of Greece, believes not in other God, but the God we believe in" [47, p. 547].

The term *Bespopovtsy* means the Old Believers who did not recognize the hierarchy. The main feature of their doctrine was "the idea that Antichrist had taken the throne and that the grace of priesthood had been lost, what led to the church hierarchy termination" [70, p. 702]. As a result, the *Bespopovtsy* refused to accept any priests [70, p. 702].

One of the most significant groups in terms of concord number was the *Pomortsy*. The name is derived from *Pomorje* (coastland; the territory beside the White Sea) where they had originated [58]. They are characterized by a denial of hierarchy and believed that some Sacraments can be administered by laypeople (their reasons were based on Avvakum's approval) [58, p. 365]. Moreover, they demanded a complete break with the State Church and re-baptizing of the ones who joined the *Pomortsy* and denied marriages. In 1762 half of the *Pomortsy* began to recognize marriages. The part who recognized marriages included the *Novozhony* (novo – newly, zhony – weds) i.e. those who married in the church according to the old rites with the help of the Russian Orthodox Church priests, the

*Polubrachniki* (*polu* – half, *brak* – marriage), i.e. the Pomortsy who married outside the Church by mutual agreement of a couple [58, p. 366], and the *Brachniki*, i.e. the Pomortsy who recognized marriages without any participation of priests.

*Sredniki* (“sreda” – Wednesday) were the Bespopovtsy pertained to the self-baptized concord. They celebrated Easter and Sundays on Wednesdays as they followed the Alexandrian Chronology System [70, p. 715].

The DCHR had to keep annual records of the Old Belief population, just as the other regions of the Russian Empire. However, nowadays we have only fragments of the data on the number of the Old Believers in the Don Region over the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The reason is that the institutes concerning statistical data collection began to form only in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century [45, p. 125].

According to O.S. Krotov’s calculations, in 1801 there lived approximately 18,924 Old Rites practitioners in the Don Cossack Host Zemlya (the DCHR after 1870) [48, p. 36]. The annual Don Army status reports to the Emperor by the appointed hetman during the Crimean War of 1853–1856 stated that in 1854 of the total population of 831,665 [6, p. 47], 66,396 (or 7.9%) were the Old Believers, including 61,006 of those who recognized the hierarchy and 5,390 of the ones who did not (the Bespopovtsy) [6, p. 49]. In 1855, there were 66,608 (7.8%) Old Believers of the total DCHR population of 848,405 [6, p. 76], including 61,378 of those who recognized hierarchy and 5,221 of those who did not [6, p. 79]. In 1856, there were 67,127 (7.8 %) Old Believers of the total Don Cossack Host Region population of 860,300 [6, p. 98], including 61,918 of those who recognized hierarchy and 5,209 of those who did not [6, p. 101].

In 1870, N.P. Snesarev writing about the launch of the Orthodox Missionary Society in the Don Region mentioned that “The Don diocese has more than 80,000 of Old Believers. All of them pertain to different persuasions and parties” [64, p. 401].

The First General Census of the Russian Empire in 1897 played an instrumental role in determining the number of the Old Belief population in the DCHR. According to the Census data, 2,564,238 people were living in the DCHR

[56, p. III]; of 2,314,222 Orthodox Christians (including the Yedinovertsy) [56, p. 82] there were 130,450 Old Believers [56, p. 82], which is 5% of the Don Region population.

According to the Don periodicals, at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there were about 130,000 Old Believers in 1903, from 129,000 to 140,000 in 1909 in the DCHR [60, p. 16]. Even the rough statistics published in periodicals suggests that the Old Belief population in the Don Region in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century remained relatively stable. Even if there was any population growth, it was insignificant and mostly due to the natural increase connected with childbirth. At the same time, the proportion of the Old Belief population to the total population of the DCHR did not exceed 5.6%.

The statistical data collected by the Russian Orthodox clergy of the Don and Novochoerkassk Dioceses and documented in clergy records allow characterizing the state of the Old Believers’ “schism” in the DCHR in 1908–1916. It should be stated that considering the particularities of the source, the statistical data will be examined in groups (concord, persuasions) widespread in the Don Region. The first group will consider the Old Believers, who cannot be identified as members of any persuasion or concord as there is no correspondent data in the records. This is most likely due to omissions made by psalmists responsible for keeping the church records [69, p. 11]. The group also includes an insignificant in number category which the sources refer to as the “*Popovtsy*”, as both the Beglopopovtsy and Austrian concord representatives could be referred to as the Popovtsy. The rest of the groups will be analyzed according to the con cords (persuasions) their representatives pertained to.

The study of the statistical data from the clergy records showed that only an insignificant amount of con cords represented the Old Believers in the DCHR. Among those who recognized the hierarchy were the Beglopopovtsy (traditionally widespread in the region). They accepted the priests who left the Russian Church and joined the Old Belief Church of their own will. Since the clergy of the Don and Novochoerkassk Diocese (before 1842 Novochoerkassk and Georgievsk Diocese) was under strict control, after the “Regulations on the Administration of the Don Host” had been implemented in 1836 and the

clergy records of the Don Spiritual Consistory did not contain any data on "fugitive" priests, it may be assumed that the Beglopovttsy in the Don Region were the ones from other regions. Besides the Beglopovttsy, the Old Believers of the Austrian (Belaya Krinitza) concord were also widespread in the DCHR in the 1860s. It was important for the Don Cossacks, whose worldview was defined by a military discipline, to have a priest formally entitled to administer some common Sacraments, such as the Sacrament of Baptism, the Sacrament of Marriage, as well as perform a requiem.

Among the *Bespopovttsy* who lived in the Don Region and did not recognize the hierarchy were the ones who were not classified in a particular persuasion in the clergy records. Besides the *Bespopovttsy*, the sources comprise the information about the *Pomortsy*, who came from Saratov, Saratov Governorate or Astrakhan [70, p. 709], where they lived in large communities. The *Pomortsy* from Saratov Governorate and Astrakhan had preserved their traditions of the Vygovskoye Obshchezhitel'stvo (shared household), prayed for the Tsar, and denied marriages [70, p. 709]. The opportunity to pray for the Tsar recognized by the *Pomortsy* concord was of the utmost importance for the Don Cossacks as their ideology was based on military service and a motto "For Faith, Tzar, and Country".

Apart from the *Pomortsy*, there were the *Pomortsy-Brachniki* and *Sredniki* concords which were not widespread in the Don Region.

The analysis of the statistical data contained in the clergy records concerning the Old Believers who were not classified to any concord (persuasion) showed (see Table 1) the following results: the Old Belief practitioners lived in all okrugs of the DCHR. The majority of the Old Believers of an unspecified concord were located in the Donetsk Okrug and the Second Don Okrug. At the same time, the Nizhniy Chir Blagochinie in the Second Don Okrug was inhabited by the "Raskolniks" ever since the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The First Don Okrug was a "traditional" place for the Old Belief creed in the Lower Don Region. The total number of the Old Believers of unspecified concord (persuasion) was 39,602.

The *Beglopovttsy* was the most extensive concord among the Old Believers' concords

identified in the clergy records. Their total number reached 21,753 in 1908–1916. The majority of the *Beglopovttsy* were in the Second Don Okrug, 7,496 of them lived in the Nizhniy Chir Blagochinie [26, sht. 11 rev., 20 rev., 28 rev., 54 rev., 56, 202 rev., 217 rev., 227 rev., 240 rev.] and 664 in Chernyshevskaya Blagochinie [44, sht. 77, 147, 197, 249, 251]. Interestingly, there are no records on the *Beglopovttsy* in Oblivskaya and Potemkinskaya blagochinies of the Second Don Okrug. 22 people were referred to the Kachalinskaya Blagochinie [21, sht. 243]. A considerable amount of the *Beglopovttsy* (7,322) was located in Ust-Medveditsk Okrug of the DCHR. At the same time, 5079 Old Believers lived in Glazunskaya Blagochinie [15, sht. 22, 64, 99, 112, 233, 320, 335], 1 573 in the Ust-Medveditskaya Blagochinie [41, sht. 56, 77, 140, 187] and 670 in Berezovskaya Blagochinie. The First Don Okrug was the third most populated with the beglopovttsy, where the Old Believers thrived since the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Thus there were 5,880 representatives of the beglopovttsy in the Lower Don Region in 1908–1916; 2,311 of them were classified to the Semikarakorskaya Blagochinie [38, sht. 18 rev., 43 rev., 54 rev., 96 rev., 131 rev., 175 rev., 183 rev., 206 rev.] and 3,111 to the Tsimlyanskaya Blagochinie [43, sht. 66 rev., 147 rev., 159 rev., 224 rev., 233 rev., 240 rev.] (hereinafter the names of settlements and the names of blagochinies derived from them are given in accordance with their historical names). There are no records on the *Bespopovttsy* in Yermakovskaya Blagochinie [16], Konstantinovskaya Blagochinie [22, sht. 6 rev.–208] and Razdorskaya Blagochinie [35, sht. 13–203]. An insignificant amount of the *Beglopovttsy* lived in Cherkassk Okrug (50 people in Aksayskaya Blagochinie [7, sht. 29 rev., 95 rev., 118 rev.]), Donetsk Okrug (293 people in Milyutinskaya Blagochinie [24, sht. 39, 226]) and 26 people in Salsk Blagochinie of the Salsk Okrug [37, sht. 51]. There are no records on the *Beglopovttsy* in Taganrog Okrug and Koper Okrug, where there traditionally was the smallest amount of the Old Believers.

In the 1860s the Austrian (Belaya Krinitza) Diocese has become widespread in the Don Region, what is seen from Table 2. The "schism" that began in 1862 with the issue of the Epistle by the hierarchs of the Austrian (Belaya Krinitza)

concord also affected the Old Believers in the Don Region. The data from the clergy records revealed only an insignificant amount of the Encyclical followers and adversaries. The data is incomplete either due to the unawareness of the priests and clergymen of the parish churches of the Don and Novocherkassk Dioceses, or reluctance to register the number of followers of different movements within one concord. Nevertheless, the data shows that in the DCHR there were more *okruzhniki*, i.e. supporters of the Epistle, than *neokruzhniki*, i.e. those who were against it. Thus, according to the sources, the majority of *Okruzhniki* (5,892 [26, sht. 28 rev., 54 rev., 56, 202–202 rev., 217 rev.]) lived in Nizhniy Chir Blagochinie of the Second Don Okrug. There were 691 people in Salsk Blagochinie of the Salsk Okrug [37, sht. 167]. In the Cherkassk Okrug there were 137 representatives of the *Okruzhniki* [7, sht. 75 rev., 106 rev., 120 rev.]. All of them located in Aksayskaya Blagochinie. 39 supporters of the Epistle were registered in Novonikolaevskaya Blagochinie in the Taganrog Okrug [27, sht. 257]. There are no records concerning the *Okruzhniki* in the Donetsk, First Don, Ust-Medveditsk, and Khoper okrugs. They were most likely to be registered as either representatives of the Austrian Diocese, or “the Old Believers” or “Raskolniki”. Nevertheless, there were 6,759 representatives of the *Okruzhniki* mentioned in the clergy records.

There were significantly fewer *Neokruzhniki* (904). The adversaries of the Epistle located in the Cherkassk Okrug; 26 of them lived in Aksayskaya Blagochinie [8, sht. 170 rev.] and 4 in Aleksandrovska-Grushevskiy Blagochinie [9, sht. 170 rev.]. 843 *Neokruzhniks* lived in the Second Don Okrug in Nizhniy Chir Blagochinie [26, sht. 55, 202–202 rev., 217 rev.] and 31 of them lived in Salsk Blagochinie of the Salsk Okrug [37, sht. 167]. There are no records on the *Neokruzhniki* in the Taganrog, Donetsk, First Don, Ust-Medveditsk, and Khoper okrugs. Despite the approximate data most likely caused by the characteristic features of the record-keeping, one can assume with great probability that there were more Epistle followers in the Don Region than its adversaries.

The *Bespopovtsy*, who did not recognize the hierarchy, were a significant in number group of the Old Believers in the DCHR. Their abundance is indicated in Table 3.

As one can see, there were 15,798 representatives of the *Bespopovtsy* registered in the DCHR in 1908–1916. The majority of them (10,299) lived in the Second Don Okrug. They mainly occupied the hamlets (*khutor*) of Verkhne-Chirskaya [26, sht. 20 rev.], Yesaulovskaya [26, sht. 54 rev., 175 rev.], Kobylyanskaya [26, sht. 11 rev.] and Pyatiizbyanskaya stanitsas [26, sht. 167 rev.]. The First Don Okrug was the second most populated with the *Bespopovtsy*, where lived 3,399 representatives of the *Bespopovtsy*. They were mostly located in hamlets of Bolshe-Mechetnoi [38, sht. 35 rev.] and Zadonsko-Kagalnitskiy [38, sht. 43 rev.] of Bogoyavlenskaya Stanitsa, Bolshoi of Mariinskaya Stanitsa [38, sht. 70 rev.] and Morozov of Nikolaevskaya Stanitsa [38, sht. 191 rev.]. In Manychkaya Stanitsa and its hamlets in the Cherkassk Okrug [7, sht. 61 rev.] there lived 896 representatives of the *Bespopovtsy*. In the Ust-Medveditsk Okrug, the main part of the *Bespopovtsy* (822) lived in the hamlets of Manoilin [41, sht. 140] and Krasnyi of Novoaleksandrovskaya Stanitsa [41, sht. 187], and near the Station of Rakovka of the South-Eastern Railway [15, sht. 320]. An insignificant amount of the *Bespopovtsy* lived in the Taganrog Okrug (66 people) and Salsk Okrug (28 people). In the Khoper Okrug there were no the *Bespopovtsy* as well as any other Old Belief concords and persuasions.

The *Pomortsy* and the *Pomortsy-Brachniki* concords were the most prominent among the *Bespopovtsy* in the DCHR. The *Pomortsy* (1,726 people) lived in small communities in the Donetsk Okrug and the First Don Okrug. In the Donetsk Okrug the *Pomortsy* occupied Karpovo-Obryvskaya Sloboda [16, sht. 91 rev.]. In the First Don Okrug they lived in small groups in Tsymlyanskaya Blagochinie in Nagavskaya Stanitsa [43, sht. 147 rev.], Chertkovskaya Stanitsa [43, sht. 240 rev.], in the hamlets of Lozniy of Kargalskaya Stanitsa [43, sht. 224 rev.] and Velikanov and Sevastianov of Chertkovskaya Stanitsa [43, sht. 240 rev.]. The *Pomortsy-Brachniki* (666 people) lived in Skasyrskaya Sloboda [16, sht. 40 rev.] in the Donetsk Okrug. The total number of the *Pomortsy* and *Pomortsy-Brachniki* was 2 392 people.

The *Sredniki* were the most insignificant in number of followers among the *Bespopovtsy* in

the DCHR. There were only 37 of them. 23 representatives of the *Sredniki* lived in the hamlet of Nizhne-Kibiryovskiy and 10 people lived in the hamlet of Gadichev of Kobylanskaya Stanitsa, 4 lived in the hamlet of Sevastianov of Chertkovskaya Stanitsa [43, sht. 240 rev.].

The analysis provided an approximate number of the Old Believers in the DCHR in 1908–1916, that is 122,022 people. 64,193 of them recognized the hierarchy (the *Popovtsy*) and 18,227 did not (the *Bespopovtsy*).

Though the number of the Old Believers was significant, they were not evenly distributed in the DCHR. Thus, there were few Old Believers in large church and administrative districts such as in Degtevsкая Blagochinie (the Donetsk Okrug), Razdorskaya Blagochinie (the First Don Okrug), and in all blagochinies of the Khoper Okrug (Pravotorovskaya, Preobrazhenskaya, Uryupinskaya, and Filonovskaya). This information was reflected in the clergy records of the Don and Novocherkassk Diocese.

One of the characteristic features of the Old Believers location was their reluctance to live in stanitsas due to the attitude of the DCHR and stanitsas' authorities up to 1905. Thus, there were no Old Believers in Alexandrovskaya, Vladimirskaya, Grushevskaya, Yegorlykская, Krivyanskaya, and Zaplavskaya stanitsas in the Cherkassk Okrug. The exceptions were Manychskaya Stanitsa [7, sht. 61 rev.] where the Old Believers had lived since the 18<sup>th</sup> century and Yelizavetinskaya Stanitsa [8, sht. 219 rev.]; in the Donetsk Okrug they lived in Vyoshenskaya, Gundorovskaya, Kazanskaya, Kalitvenskaya, Kremenskaya, Migulinskaya, Ust-Belokalitvenskaya, Kamenskaya, Luganskaya stanitsas. In the First Don Okrug which was traditionally highly populated with the Old Believers, there were none of them in Kostantinovskaya, Zolotovskaya, Kochetovskaya, Mariinskaya, Nikolaevskaya, Romanovskaya, Semikarakorskaya, Ternovskaya, Filippovskaya, Tsymlyanskaya, and Chertkovskaya stanitsas. Though in the Second Don Okrug there were the majority of the Old Believers of all concords and persuasions registered in the Don Region, there were no Old Believers in Novogrigoryevskaya, Sirotinskaya, Starogrigoryevskaya, Tryokh-Ostrovnyanskaya stanitsas. In Ust-Medvedetskiy Okrug none of them lived in Berezovskaya,

Kepinskaya, Kremenskaya, Perekopskaya, Razdorskaya-na-Medveditse and in Ust-Medveditskaya stanitsas. There were no Old Believers in stanitsas of the Khoper and Salsk okrugs as the latter was founded only in 1884.

Besides the Cossacks stanitsas, there were no Old Believers in the coal mines areas in the Don Cossack Host Region. There are no records on the Old Believers' presence in the city of Aleksandrovsk-Grushevskiy, in the areas of Ivan Koshkin and Markov mines, Rykov Mines of the Catherine Society, Berestovo-Bogodukhovskie Mines and in the mine of the Catherine Mining Society.

The conflict-free coexistence both with the Orthodox Christians and members of the *Yedinoverie* and with representatives of other concords and persuasions was the specific feature that distinguished the Old Believers of the DCHR from those living in the other regions of the Russian Empire. There are some facts to prove the statement: 20 representatives of the *Beglopopovtsy*, 89 of the Austrian (Belaya Krinita) concord, and 73 of the *Bespopovtsy* lived conflict-free in the Peter and Paul Church Parish in Starocherkasskaya Stanitsa, where the orthodox population dominated [7, sht. 29 rev.]. 142 representatives of the *Beglopopovtsy*, 1,199 of the Austrian concord, and 106 of the *Bespopovtsy* lived in the hamlet of Zimnyatskiy of Glazunovskaya Stanitsa on a conflict-free basis as well [15, sht. 112]. There lived 5 150 Old Believers of the Austrian concord and 303 representatives of the *Bespopovtsy* in the St. Nicholas Church Parish in Golubinskaya Stanitsa, where the orthodox population dominated. In the Pokrovskaya (Intercession of the Theotokos) Church Parish in Verkhne-Chirskaya Stanitsa there lived 4,735 representatives of the *Beglopopovtsy*, 3,331 of the Austrian concord, and 472 of the *Bespopovtsy* [26, sht. 20 rev.]. The Osievskaya *Yedinoverie* Church Parish in the hamlet of Shebalin was particularly diverse and rich in the "raskolniks"; there lived 78 representatives of the *Beglopopovtsy*, 1,838 of the *Okruzhniki* from the Austrian concord, 71 of the *Neokruzhniki* from the Austrian concord, 937 of the *Bespopovtsy*, and 33 *Sredniks* [26, sht. 202 rev.]. The given examples were not isolated cases. The conflict-free coexistence of representatives of different Old Belief concords and Russian



Orthodox Christians within the same settlement can be explained primarily by the specific features of the region, where military discipline was crucial for the majority of the population. Besides, the absence of leaders in the Old Belief community to lead protests or express demands was an important factor as well.

**Results.** Thus, compared to the data of the First General Census of 1897, the Old Believers' strength in the DCHR reduced in 1908–1916. While in 1897 there were 130 450 people in the Don Region (according to the Census data), only 122,022 people were recorded in 1908–1916. There were few concords (persuasions) presented in the DCHR. The most common concords recognizing hierarchy were the *Beglopovtsy* and the Austrian (Belaya Krinita) concord, which split into the *Okruzhniki* and *Neokruzhniki*. *Bespopovtsy*, *Pomortsy*, *Pomortsy-Brachniki*, and *Sredniki* constituted the persuasions of the Don Region that did not recognize hierarchy.

The Austrian (Belaya Krinita) concord prevailed in the DCHR in 1908–1916. The second-largest were the *Beglopovtsy*. The Don Cossacks preference for the hierarchy-recognizing concords was explained by their affiliation with the Don Host. This was a military organization, where the procedures included the idea that the Cossacks needed to have a priest to

administer the most common Sacraments, such as the Sacrament of Baptism, the Sacrament of Marriage, and perform funeral church services. The number of the *Pomortsy* and *Pomortsy-Brachniki* was relatively small, compared to the more populated ones. The *Sredniki* constituted a small local group, which did not affect the DCHR population.

The Old Belief centers were the First and the Second Don okrugs. The absence of overt organization and centralization within the concords was the main feature of the location of the Old Believers.

Despite its abundance, the Old Believers were considered part of the Host, which did not have conflicts with the rest of the population. The distinctive feature of the Old Believers in the Don Region was the absence of an extensive proselytic activity. This was explained by the control by the Host authorities and the Russian Orthodox clergy of the Don and Novocherkassk Diocese, which were involved in the process as far back as the 1830s.

#### NOTE

<sup>1</sup> The reported study was carried out within the State Task of the Southern Scientific Centre of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Project Number 01201354248.

## APPENDIX

Table 1. The strength of the Old Believers of an unspecified concord in the DCHR in 1908–1916

Okrug (District)	Blagochinie (a group of parishes)	Number of People
Cherkassk Okrug	Aksaiaya Blagochinie	1681 [7, sht. 18 rev., 61 rev., 209 rev.]
	Aleksandrovsk-Grushevskiy Blagochinie	825 [9, sht. 20 rev. 21, 31 rev., 83 rev., 94 rev., 108 rev., 115 rev., 181 rev., 187 rev., 195 rev., 202 rev., 209 rev., 223 rev.; 11, sht. 16 rev.; 10, sht. 122 rev.]
	Kagalnitskaya Blagochinie	636 [18, sht. 43, 71, 124, 139, 204]
	Novocherkassk Blagochinie	86 [29, sht. 25 rev., 80 rev., 130 rev.]
<b>Total:</b>		<b>3228</b>
Taganrog Okrug	Amvrosievskaya Blagochinie	95 [10, sht. 16, 115, 213; 28, sht. 16 rev., 27 rev., 51 rev., 71 rev., 91 rev., 97 rev., 105 rev., 109 rev.; 36, sht. 68]
	Kirsanovskaya Blagochinie	9 [21, sht. 81 rev., 100 rev.]
	Novonikolaevskaya Blagochinie	37 [27, sht. 110, 163, 400]
	Rovenetskaya Blagochinie	26 [36, sht. 80, 280]
	Makeevka Blagochinie	71 [23, sht. 101 rev., 124 rev., 134 rev., 144 rev., 156 rev.]
<b>Total:</b>		<b>238</b>
Donetsk Okrug	Bogdano-Kievskaya Blagochinie	56 [14, sht. 104 rev.]
	Degtevskaaya Blagochinie	1538 [16, sht. 6 rev., 18 rev., 74 rev., 113 rev., 137 rev., 205 rev.]
	Kazanskaya Blagochinie	232 [19, sht. 142 rev., 180–181]
	Kamienskaya Blagochinie	7215 [20, sht. 21, 91 rev., 249 rev., 255 rev., 261 rev., 269 rev.]
	Milyutinskaya Blagochinie	1324 [24, sht. 68, 156, 238]
	Mityakinskaya Blagochinie	17 [25, sht. 21, 61]
	Tarasovskaya Blagochinie	54 [39, sht. 10 rev., 25 rev., 100 rev.]
<b>Total:</b>		<b>10 436</b>
First Don Okrug	Konstantinovskaya Blagochinie	4938 [22, sht. 86 rev., 136 rev., 152 rev., 170 rev., 190 rev., 198 rev., 207 rev., 214 rev.]
	Razdorskaya Blagochinie	zero [35, sht. 13–203]
	Semikarakorskaya Blagochinie	583 [38, sht. 123 rev.]
	Tsimlyanskaya Blagochinie	all agreements taken into account
<b>Total:</b>		<b>5521</b>
Salsk Okrug	Salsk Blagochinie	4410 [37, sht. 110, 144, 151]
<b>Total:</b>		<b>4410</b>
Second Don Okrug	Kachalinskaya Blagochinie	82 [21, sht. 44, 263]
	Nizhniy Chir Blagochinie	10 140 [26, sht. rev.–79, 93 rev., 140 rev.–141, 150 rev., 151, 157 rev., 167 rev., 175 rev., 185 rev., 209 rev.]
	Oblivskaya Blagochinie	1023 [31, sht. 25, 67, 109, 177]
	Potemkinskaya Blagochinie	578 [32, sht. 19, 43, 57]
	Chernyshevskaya Blagochinie	679 [44, sht. 65, 101, 272]
<b>Total:</b>		<b>12 502</b>
Khooper Okrug	Pravotorovskaya Blagochinie	zero [33]
	Preobrazhenskaya Blagochinie	zero [34, sht. 15–237]
	Uryupinskaya Blagochinie	zero [40, sht. 23–241]
	Filonovskaya Blagochinie	zero [42, sht. 24–215]
	Zotovskaya Blagochinie	31 [17, sht. 78 rev., 128 rev., 198 rev.]
<b>Total:</b>		<b>31</b>
Ust-Medveditsk Okrug	Berezovskaya Blagochinie	3233 [13, sht. 5 rev., 57 rev., 63 rev., 101 rev.; 12, sht. 6 rev., 16 rev.]
	Glazunovskaya Blagochinie	all agreements taken into account
	Ust-Medveditskaya Blagochinie	3 [41, sht. 101]
<b>Total:</b>		<b>3236</b>
<b>In Total:</b>		<b>39 602</b>

Table 2. The strength of the Old Believers of the Austrian (Belaya Krinitsa) concord in the DCHR in 1908–1916

Okrug	Blagochinie (a group of parishes)	Number of People
Cherkassk Okrug	Aksaiaya Blagochinie	1434 [7, sht. 29 rev., 75 rev., 95 rev., 106 rev., 120 rev.; 8, sht. 170 rev., 197 rev., 219 rev., 234 rev., 243 rev., 249 rev., 265 rev., 274 rev.]
	Aleksandrovsk-Grushevskiy Blagochinie	24 [9, sht. 43 rev., 51 rev., 170 rev.]
	Kagalnitskaya Blagochinie	968 [18, sht. 11, 105, 174]
	Novocherkassk	12 [30, sht. 61]
	Novocherkassk Blagochinie	zero
<b>Total:</b>		<b>2438</b>
Taganrog Okrug	Amvrosievskaya Blagochinie	28
	Kirsanovskaya Blagochinie	zero
	Novonikolaevskaya Blagochinie	155 [27, sht. 98, 163, 257, 314, 333]
	Rovenetskaya Blagochinie	4 [36, sht. 46]
	Makeevka Blagochinie	zero
<b>Total:</b>		<b>178</b>
Donetsk Okrug	Bogdano-Kievskaya Blagochinie	59 [14, sht. 104 rev., 128 rev.]
	Degtevskaaya Blagochinie	zero
	Kazanskaya Blagochinie	zero
	Kamienskaya Blagochinie	4 [19, sht. 283 rev.]
	Milyutinskaya Blagochinie	587 [24, sht. 39]
	Mityakinskaya Blagochinie	25 [25, sht. 92]
	Tarasovskaya Blagochinie	zero
<b>Total:</b>		<b>675</b>
First Don Okrug	Konstantinovskaya Blagochinie	587 [22, sht.39]
	Razdorskaya Blagochinie	zero [35, sht. 13–203]
	Semikarakorskaya Blagochinie	2120 [38, sht. 18 rev., 28 rev., 35 rev., 43 rev., 131 rev.]
	Tsimlyanskaya Blagochinie	3913 [43, sht. 14 rev., 147 rev., 159 rev., 233 rev., 240 rev.]
<b>Total:</b>		<b>6620</b>
Salsk Okrug	Salsk Blagochinie	603 [37, sht. 82, 167, 224, 237, 254, 278]
<b>Total:</b>		<b>603</b>
Second Don Okrug	Kachalinskaya Blagochinie	5308 [21, sht. 26, 315]
	Nizhniy Chir Blagochinie	8228 [26, sht. 6 rev., 20 rev., 28 rev., 54 rev., 55, 56, 175 rev., 201 rev., 202–202 rev., 217 rev., 227 rev., 240 rev.]
	Oblivskaya Blagochinie	2383 [31, sht. 37, 89, 131, 141, 153]
	Potemkinskaya Blagochinie	2351 [32, sht. 89, 106, 165, 196]
	Chernyshevskaya Blagochinie	1161 [44, sht. 55 rev., 175, 187, 197, 249, 251]
<b>Total:</b>		<b>19 431</b>
Hoper Okrug	Pravotorovskaya Blagochinie	zero [33]
	Preobrazhenskaya Blagochinie	zero [34, sht. 15–237]
	Uryupinskaya Blagochinie	zero [40, sht. 23–241]
	Filonovskaya Blagochinie	zero
	Zotovskaya Blagochinie	zero [42, sht. 24–215]
<b>Total:</b>		zero
Ust-Medveditsk Okrug	Berezovskaya Blagochinie	zero
	Glazunovskaya Blagochinie	3450 [15, sht. 22, 49 rev., 99, 112, 200, 233, 296, 320, 335]
	Ust-Medveditskaya Blagochinie	1382 [41, sht. 56, 74, 77, 101, 116, 140, 167, 187]
<b>Total:</b>		<b>4832</b>
<b>In Total:</b>		<b>34 777</b>

Таблица 3. Численность старообрядцев беспоповцев Области войска. 1908–1916 гг.

Table 3. The strength of the *Bespopovtsy* in the DCHR in 1908–1916

Okrug	Diocese	Number of People
Cherkassk Okrug	Aksaiaya Blagochinie	868 [7, sht. 29 rev., 61 rev., 75 rev., 95 rev, 8, sht. 156 rev.]
	Aleksandrovsk-Grushevskiy Blagochinie	10 [9, sht. 63 rev.]
	Kagalnitskaya Blagochinie	18 [18, sht. 105]
	NovoCherkassk	zero
	NovoCherkassk Blagochinie	868 [7, sht. 29 rev., 61 rev., 75 rev., 95 rev.; 8, sht. 156 rev.]
<b>Total:</b>		<b>896</b>
Taganrog Okrug	Amvrosievskaya Blagochinie	5 [10, sht. 41a]
	Kirsanovskaya Blagochinie	zero
	Novonikolaevskaya Blagochinie	45 [27, sht. 227 rev., 344, 369; 28, sht. 34 rev.]
	Rovenetskaya Blagochinie	16 [36, sht. 22, 148]
	Makeevka Blagochinie	zero
<b>Total:</b>		<b>66</b>
Donetsk Okrug	Bogdano-Kievskaya Blagochinie	69 [14, sht. 128 rev.]
	Degtevsckaya Blagochinie	zero
	Kazanskaya Blagochinie	zero
	Kamienskaya Blagochinie	zero
	Milyutinskaya Blagochinie	219 [24, sht. 39]
	Mityakinskaya Blagochinie	zero
	Tarasovskaya Blagochinie	zero
<b>Total:</b>		<b>288</b>
First Don Okrug	Konstantinovskaya Blagochinie	zero
	Razdorskaya Blagochinie	zero
	Semikarakorskaya Blagochinie	2887 [38, sht. 35 rev., 43 rev., 70 rev., 78 rev., 191 rev., 206 rev.]
	Tsimlyanskaya Blagochinie	512 [43, sht. 159 rev., 147 rev., 233 rev.]
<b>Total:</b>		<b>3399</b>
Salsk Okrug	Salsk Blagochinie	28 [37, sht. 167, 254]
<b>Total:</b>		<b>28</b>
Second Don Okrug	Kachalinskaya Blagochinie	331 [21, sht. 9, 315]
	Nizhniy Chir Blagochinie	4141 [26, sht. 20 rev., 28 rev., 54 rev., 55, 56, 194, 201 rev., 202–202 rev., 217 rev.]
	Oblivskaya Blagochinie	755 [31, sht. 37, 89, 131, 141, 153, 167]
	Potemkinskaya Blagochinie	390 [32, sht. 106, 165, 196, 197]
	Chernyshevskaya Blagochinie	4682 [44, sht. 251]
<b>Total:</b>		<b>10 299</b>
Koper Okrug	Pravotorovskaya Blagochinie	zero
	Preobrazhenskaya Blagochinie	zero
	Uryupinskaya Blagochinie	zero
	Filonovskaya Blagochinie	zero
	Zotovskaya Blagochinie	zero
<b>Total:</b>		<b>zero</b>
Ust-Medveditsk Okrug	Berezovskaya Blagochinie	zero
	Glazunovskaya Blagochinie	368 [15, sht. 22, 99, 112, 158, 233, 320]
	Ust-Medveditskaya Blagochinie	454 [41, sht. 77, 140, 187]
<b>Total:</b>		<b>822</b>
<b>In Total:</b>		<b>15 798</b>

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