

FORWARD

The current issue is devoted to the study in the history and today situation of the old believers. The old believers' communities developmental trends cannot be understood without participant observation, and narrative studies, both oral and written. Field research as well as desk studies provide insights in key aspects of their worldview.

What such an area of research can give to a scholar of religion? First, an insight of how closed religious community functions while surrounded by other traditions, how theology adapts corresponding to vernacular religiosity, how community's self-consciousness develops. Key conclusions can easily be transferred to any other closed group.

Under "The Theme of the Issue" you find four papers devoted to old believers' traditional culture. Nataliya Litvina's work is based on archives of old believers' communities in Moldova and Russian Far East. Following three papers are interrelated as all of them are based on the authors' field research in Kirov region. Vladimir Borganov reconstruct genealogies for four old believer families that belong to various denominations, *soglasie*, of South Vyatka. Elena Vorontsova provides certain insights on woman's place in contemporary *bespopovtsy* communities that are based on her field materials from both South Vyatka and Kuban region. Vladimir Semibratov's paper is devoted to religious views of Russians living in the South of Kirov region.

Thus, presented papers geographically cover old believers' communities from various regions of Russia: South, Vyatka, Far East. The book reviews are largely, though not exclusively, devoted to old believers.

Next issue as planned for the Fall of 2018 will be devoted to the theory and milieu related to a very vague term – New Age.

Editorial Board