

THE SETTLEMENT OF OLD BELIEVERS IN THE NORTH-WEST OF BELARUS IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE XVII — FIRST HALF OF THE XVIII CENTURIES

The article focuses on the settlement of the Russian Old Believers in the northwestern Belarusian lands in the second half of the XVII – first half of the XVIII century. We analyze the results of previous studies dealing with this issue, characterize their sources and methodology. We come to the conclusion that although a number of publications have considered the early history of the Old Believers in the northwestern region of Belarus, the question of their settlement here in the second half of the XVII – first half of the XVIII century remains unresolved. To date, the published studies have failed to provide solid facts about the Old Believers' settlement in the region during this period. Therefore, more serious questions of the early history of the Old Believers in the region still seek resolution. For example, the places of initial settlement have not been identified, no attempt has been made to analyze the intensity of migration and to count the number of newcomers.

Keywords: *Old Believers, northwestern Belarus, ethnic history, historiography, settlement, ethnic group*

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