

## **The phraseological stock in the Russian dialect used by the Old Believers living in Poland**

The Old Believers are members of Eastern Orthodox Church who did not accept the reforms of Patriarch Nikon in the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The Old Believers started settling on Polish territories in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. At the time of their arrival, they used the Pskov dialect. The Old Believers living in Poland are a multilingual community – they use the Russian dialect and the Polish language (the Suwałki-August region) and the Russian dialect, the Polish language and the German language (Masurian region). As a result, the influence of the Polish language on the Russian dialect is more and more often noticeably, especially in lexis and phraseology (mainly borrowings and language calques). In addition, in their speech there are also elements from the Belarusian language and local Polish dialects.

The Old Believers are a traditional community, keeping many of the original Russian customs. However, they live surrounded by Polish culture and language, on multi-ethnic and multicultural areas of the Podlaskie and Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodships. Therefore, it is interesting to find out what part of the gathered phraseological material will consist of native elements (from standard Russian language and dialectal), and what type of phraseology the Old Believers take from Polish language.

So far not much attention had been paid to the phraseology of Old Believers community in Poland. Some examples and partial conclusions appeared on the margin of the research of lexis. However, due to the lack of studies on this topic and the declining numbers of Old Believers and their Russian dialect in the phase of disappearance, the phraseological system requires urgent description.

The aim of the project is to analyse the phraseological units present in the Russian dialect used by the Old Believers who live in Poland. The project primarily focuses on the examination of the origin of registered phraseological expressions, as previous research into the dialect has shown that, apart from Russian constructions found in the dialect of the Old Believers, there are phrases which come from the Polish, German and Belarusian languages. The main objective of the project is thus to determine which linguistic elements belonging to the collected material consist of phraseological units of native Russian provenance and which elements comprise units adapted from other languages during the Old Believers' migration or following their settlement in Poland. Hence, after the completion of the project, it will be possible to answer the question whether the phraseology of the dialect used by the Old Believers in Poland is still Russian.

The inspiration for this project stems from the unique linguistic situation of the “Polish” Old Believers: the permanent coexistence of two, or, in the case of the Masurian Old Believers, three language codes (from a historical point of view) within one community. Such codes permeate one another, and there is a clear predominance of Polish influences on the Russian dialect. The current linguistic situation of the Old Believers has also been influenced by the complicated experience of this diaspora - the successive migratory waves have given rise to the emergence of foreign language elements in their native dialect: Polish, Belarusian and Lithuanian in the Suwałki-Augustów region, and Polish and German in the Masurian one (and as such they are related to the areas to which the Old Believers migrated and in which they settled).