

**Bessarabia in the Beginning of the 20th Century Seen by  
Russian Clergy and Church Missionaries**  
(on the Materials from the Correspondence of Metropolitan Arsenius Stored in the  
State Archive of the Russian Federation in Moscow)  
(Abstract)

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*Keywords:* the Russian Empire, Bessarabia, the Russian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Arsenius, The Russian Old Believers.

Metropolitan Arsenius (A. Stadnitcky) (1862-1936), born in Bessarabia, was one of the prominent figures in the history of the Russian Orthodox Church of the beginning of the 20th century. He is known also as Church historian, the author of some important papers on the history of the Orthodox Church in Moldova and the Russian-Romanian church relations. The rich epistolary heritage of Metropolitan Arsenius stored in the State Archive of the Russian Federation includes his correspondence with the priests both in Romania and in the Russian Bessarabia, which reflects not only some aspects of the Russian-Romanian church relations, but also the situation in Bessarabia of the beginning of the 20th century, in particular national and inter-confessional relations in this region. The article is based on the correspondence of Arsenius with some Orthodox clergymen of Bessarabia and the missionaries sent to Bessarabia for propagating the Old Believers to join the Russian Orthodox Church. The public mood in Bessarabia in the beginning of the 20th century, the relations between the Old Believers and the official Church are reflected in the letters addressed from Bessarabia to Metropolitan Arsenius as well as some important events in the history of the region (including much talked about anti-Jewish pogrom in Chişinău in 1903).

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