

UDC: 39
DOI: 10.33876/2311-0546/2024-3/106-118
Original Article

© *Anna Mutina*

OLD BELIEVERS: A VIEW THROUGH THE MUSEUM SHOWCASE. THE PRESENTATION OF CONFESSIONAL TRADITIONS IN THE STATE MUSEUM OF THE HISTORY OF RELIGION

The article presents a study of the exposition of the State Museum of the History of Religion in St. Petersburg, dedicated to the history of Old Believers. The limited space available at the museum precludes the presentation of the topic in its entirety, given the richness of the museum's collection. Consequently, the creators of the exposition had to limit themselves to a concise overview emphasizing the most salient items that refer to significant events and personalities. The museum exposition aims to present the evolution of human spiritual life over many years, the history of ideas with the help of objects, to preserve and pass on to museum visitors the intangible spiritual heritage by material means. The museum ethics is also an important issue: the exhibition has to be delicate with the feelings of believers while preserving the dialogical nature of Old Believers' culture. One showcase demonstrates the objects belonging to different groups of Old Believers, and therefore the museum has a special responsibility. Despite the original intention of the museum staff to keep the presentation of different confessional sections on the same level, the exhibits sometimes come into contradiction with this principle. Special attention in the article is paid to the most interesting objects from the museum's collection, their role in placing semantic emphases during museum tours, and the interaction of exhibits in the semantic field of the exposition.

Keywords: *Old Believers, museology, museum collection, museum objects, historical memory*

Author Info: **Mutina, Anna S.** — Ph.D. in Philology, Textile conservator, The State Museum of the History of Religion (Saint-Petersburg, Russian Federation). E-mail: only_time@bk.ru ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0003-8517-5888>

For citation: Mutina, A. S. 2024. Old Believers: a View Through the Museum Showcase. The Presentation of Confessional Traditions in the State Museum of the History of Religion. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 3: 106–118.

References

- Basova, M. V. 2006. *Russkoe iskusstvo iz sobraniia Gosudarstvennogo muzeia istorii religii: Album* [Russian Art from the Collection of the State Museum of the History of Religion: Album]. Moscow: Belyi gorod. 303 p.
- Kalugina, T. P. 1989. Istoki kul'turno-kommunikativnoi funktsii ekspozitsii khudozhestvennogo muzeia [The Origins of the Cultural and Communicative Function of an Art Museum Exposition]. In *Problemy kul'turnoi kommunikatsii v muzeinoi deiatel'nosti* [Problems of Cultural Communication in Museum Activities], ed. by V. Yu. Dukel'skii. Moscow: NIIK. 68–83.
- Kuznetsov, V. A. 1952. *Put' khudozhnika* [The Way of the Artist]. Moscow: Iskusstvo. 75 p.
- Luchsheva, Z. A. and G. A. Chenskaia. 2009. *Golgofskii krest v pamiatnikakh melkoi plastiki*

- iz dereva: Katalog* [Golgotha's Cross in Monuments of Small Wooden Plastics: Catalogue]. Saint-Petersburg: IPC SPGUTD. 100 p.
- Luchsheva, Z. A. (ed.). 2008. *Staroobriadcheskaia kolleksiia Gosudarstvennogo muzeia istorii religii* [Old Believer collection of the State Museum of the History of Religion.]. Saint-Petersburg: GMIR. 70 p.
- Mastenitsa, E. N. 2017. Nematerial'noe nasledie kak ob"ekt muzeifikatsii: teoretiko-metodologicheskie osnovaniia [Intangible Heritage as an Object of Museification: Theoretical and Methodological Foundations]. *Kul'tura v evraziiskom prostranstve: traditsii i novatsii* 1: 79–83.
- Mel'nikov, F. E. 2007. *Chto takoe staroobriadchestvo* [What Old Believership is]. Barnaul: Fond podderzhki stroitel'stva hrama Pokrova. 404 p.
- Musijenko, L. A. (ed.). 2011. *Kul'tovyi predmet v sovremennom muzee: Khranenie, prezentatsiia, aktualizatsiia. Nauchno-metodicheskii sbornik* [The Iconic Object in the Contemporary Museum: Storage, Presentation, Actualization]. Saint-Petersburg: Gosudarstvennyi muzei istorii religii. 218 p.
- Mutina, A. S. and E. N. Nikolaeva. 2017. Zhivopis' V.A. Kuznetsova iz sobraniia Gosudarstvennogo muzeia istorii religii kak istochnik izucheniia kul'tury staroobriadchestva [Painting by V. A. Kuznetsov from the Collection of the State Museum of the History of Religion as a source for the study of Old Believers' culture]. *Trudy Gosudarstvennogo muzeia istorii religii* 17: 10–17.