

**“AND HERE WE HAVE THE MOTHER SWA”:
THE TRANSMISSION OF (QUASI-) ETHNOGRAPHIC
KNOWLEDGE IN MODERN MUSEUMS
OF “RUSSIAN SUPERSTITIONS”**

The paper examines the current ethnographic knowledge and its distortions around old and new local history and ethnographic museums, both public and private. The current development of the concept of “museum” is discussed together with its semantic content, thanks to which commercial craft and other practices receive legitimation in the form of conventional museum activities. The paper analyzes the self-presentations of a special category of new Russian ethnic museums — museums of Russian superstitions, which aim to present the spiritual life of our ancestors, sometimes demonstrating an uncritical attitude towards the sources of information available in modern culture, subject to the obvious influence of uncertainty. Using the example of a museum-workshop in the village of Vladimirskoye, Nizhny Novgorod region, the author shows the ways by which quasi-ethnographic knowledge is transmitted and disseminated, and discusses the current position of ethnographic knowledge as perceived by the wide audience.

Keywords: *ethnography, scientific knowledge, ethnic museums, folk culture, new paganism, popular culture*

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