

## Syllabus

<b>Title of the Course:</b>	Orthodoxy in Eastern Europe yesterday, today, tomorrow	<b>Course Breakdown:</b>	2 hours/session, 16 weeks
<b>Name of the Instructor:</b>	Andrei Desnitsky, Nikolai V., Nadezhda Beliakova, Ksenia Luchenko, Volodymyr Bureha, Natallia Vasilevich	<b>Weekly class time:</b>	12:00 – 14:00 (CET), Tuesdays
<b>Language:</b>	English		
<b>Hosted by:</b>	Humboldt University	<b>Certificate issued by:</b>	tbc
<b>min. number of participants:</b>	5	<b>max. number of participants</b>	300

### Description of the course

The term «Eastern Europe» in this course refers mainly to the three Eastern Slavonic states that were formerly part of the USSR: Belarus, Russia and Ukraine. Their inhabitants generally regard Orthodox Christianity as the traditional religion of their countries, regardless of their personal attitude towards religion. And this, for all the differences between the three countries and between the different regions within them, is indeed the case.

The Western world often looks at Orthodoxy as something in between Catholicism (long solemn services and fasts) and Protestantism (no pope and a married priesthood). Similarly, the West often sees Eastern Europe as a kind of under-Europe which is behind the "proper" Western Europe, but moving along exactly the same path.

Such a view seems to be inadequate and does not allow an understanding of the processes taking place in these countries. This understanding is particularly acute in times of crisis, especially during the war, which has already brought the world to the brink of global catastrophe. What is happening in the minds of the participants of these events, how exactly do they see and describe the world around them, what is the range of their concepts, what language can we speak to them?

The course is focused on the role of Orthodoxy in the public and political life of the three Eastern Slavic nations, which were part of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union, and which became independent at the turn of the 1990s. Since the common name of the empire of the three nations was "Russia" and the Russian Federation still plays a key role in their political history, the focus will be mainly on Russia, but much will also be made of Ukrainian and Belorussian Orthodoxy. Our task is to show what is common and what is different in the cultures and histories of these three nations and compare them to the other nations of Europe, to which they undoubtedly belong (even if not all their rulers will agree with us on this).

## Learning Aims

### To provide a general understanding about:

- History and role of the Orthodoxy in the public and political life of the three Eastern Slavic nations
- Key differences of Orthodox Christianity from Catholicism and Protestantism
- History and current situation of the Old Believers in Russia
- Current situation in Ukrainian, Belarusian, and Russian Orthodoxy in relation to the war in Ukraine

## Course requirements

- Lectures
- Readings
- Discussions

The final grade for the course will be based on the following

- Attendance and a text summary

## Outline of the Course Schedule

<b>Week 1,</b> 18.10.2022	<b>Introduction to the course</b>
<b>Week 2,</b> 25.10.2022	<b>The sacred and the profane in the east Slavic orthodox Christianity</b>  Lecturer: <i>Andrei Desnitsky</i>

<b>Week 3,</b> 01.11.2022	<b>The historical path of “Kyivan Christianity”</b>  Lecturer: <i>Volodymyr Bureha</i>
<b>Week 4,</b> 08.11.2022	<b>Old Believers as “another Orthodoxy”</b>  Lecturer: <i>Nikolay</i>
<b>Week 5,</b> 15.11.2022	<b>Eastern Orthodoxy in Cold War Configurations</b>  Lecturer: <i>Nadezhda Belyakova</i>
<b>Week 6,</b> 22.11.2022	<b>How did relations between church, state and society develop in the USSR and after its collapse?</b>  Lecturer: <i>Andrei Desnitsky</i>
<b>Week 7,</b> 29.11.2022	<b>How did dissidence and Orthodoxy correlate in the USSR and post-Soviet Russia?</b>  Lecturer: <i>Ksenia Luchenko</i>
<b>Week 8,</b> 6.12.2022	<b>Russian Orthodoxy today: religious, social and political dimensions</b>  Lecturer: <i>Andrey Shishkov</i>
<b>Week 9,</b> 13.12.2022	<b>What are the peculiarities of Orthodoxy in modern Belarus?</b>  Lecturer: <i>Natalia Vasilevich</i>
<b>Week 10,</b> 03.01.2023	<b>Ukrainian Orthodoxy facing the challenge of Russian-Ukrainian war (2022)</b>  Lecturer: <i>Volodymyr Bureha</i>
<b>Week 11,</b> 10.01.2023	<b>Old Believers in the 20th and 21st centuries</b>  Lecturer: <i>Nikolay</i>
<b>Week 12,</b> 17.01.2023	<b>Political theology and ideological projects of the ROC: a critical analysis</b>  Lecturer: <i>Andrey Shishkov</i>
<b>Week 13,</b> 24.01.2023	<b>Church and media</b>  Lecturer: <i>Ksenia Luchenko</i>

<b>Week 14,</b> 31.01.2023	<b>Can Orthodoxy be global and modern?</b>  Lecturer: <i>Natalia Vasilevich</i>
<b>Week 15,</b> 07.02.2023	<b>Gender in the history and culture of Orthodoxy in Eastern Europe</b>  Lecturer: <i>Nadezhda Belyakova</i>
<b>Week 16,</b> 14.02.2023	<b>Final round table</b>  <i>Andrei Desnitsky</i> with the participation of other speakers

## Syllabus / Reading List

### **Week 1, 18.10.2022: Introduction to the course**

### **Week 2, 25.10.2022: The sacred and the profane in the east Slavic orthodox Christianity**

**Lecturer:** Andrei Desnitsky

Causes and consequences of the adoption of Orthodox Christianity by the eastern Slavs. The key differences of Orthodox Christianity from Catholicism and Protestantism and the meaning of those differences for the history and the culture of the three East Slavic peoples. General characteristics of Orthodoxy's role in the history of Moscovia, the Russian Empire and the USSR. The understanding of the sacred and the profane in the Orthodox tradition. Missionary work, "trilingual heresy", and the role of national languages in the ecclesiastical and cultural life of Eastern Europe. Church Slavonic as a calque-language with a narrowly defined scope of application. A Brief History of Bible Translations into the Modern Literary Languages of Eastern Europe. The question of the language of worship and its role in the modern understanding of Orthodoxy.

### **Week 3, 01.11.2022: The historical path of "Kyivan Christianity"**

**Lecturer:** *Volodymyr Bureha*

*Note: lecture will be in Russian with a simultaneous translation*

The concept of "Kyiv Christianity" in modern Ukrainian historiography. Church of Ancient Russia: Kiev and Vladimir-Suzdal principalities (X-XIII centuries). Orthodox Church in the Polish-Lithuanian state (XIV-XVI centuries). Ukrainian Cossacks and Orthodoxy. Metropolitan Peter Mohyla and the "Mohyla Synthesis". Transformations of "Kyivan

Christianity" in the Russian Empire in the 18th - early 20th centuries. "Second Ukrainian influence" on ecclesiastical life in Russia in the second half of the 20th century. Orthodoxy in independent Ukraine (1990-2000s).

## **Week 4, 08.11.2022: Old Believers as “another Orthodoxy”**

**Lecturer:** *Nikolay*

*Note: lecture will be in Russian with a simultaneous translation*

Crisis of the Russian Church in the 17th century. Understanding of the need for reform. Patriarch Nikon's reforms and the reaction of the traditionalists. Conservatism and avant-gardism in the early Old Belief: Avvakum as a traditionalist theologian and avant-garde writer. Raskol (Schism). The position of the government. Radical religious opposition: eschatologism, self-immolation (“gary”).

Superficiality of analogies with the Western European Reformation. Division into Popovtsy (priestist people) and bespopovtsy (priestless); the reasons for it. The development of the priestly Old Believers in the 18th - the first half of the 19th centuries. The practice of welcoming Beglopopovtsy (runaway priests). The main regions of distribution of priestly Old Believers. Emigration. The role of the laity. Preservation of the traditions of pre-Petrine Russian culture. Relationship with the state. "Uniate project" under Paul I. History of common faith.

The development of priestlessness. Schisms and their reasons: Pomortsy, Fedoseyevtsy, Filippovtsy, Chasovenny. Main regions of distribution. Formation of Old Believer capital. The role of the Old Believers in the formation of the first Russian capitalism.

The emergence of the Belokrinitzkaya hierarchy and the division into priests and Beglopopovtsy (people with runaway priests). Old Believers and the Russian liberation movement.

## **Week 5, 15.11.2022: Eastern Orthodoxy in Cold War Configurations**

**Lecturer:** *Nadezhda Belyakova*

Transformations of the structures of the Orthodox Church of Eastern Europe during the Second World War. A change in the position of the ROC (Russian Orthodox Church) within the USSR and the attention of the Allies to the position of religion in the USSR. Relations between the ROC and ROCOR (Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia) in the context of the unfolding Cold War. Deployment of the diplomatic activity of the Moscow Patriarchate

in Eastern Europe. Pan-Orthodox meeting in 1948. The unfolding of the confrontation between the Moscow Patriarchate and the Patriarch of Constantinople. The entry of the Russian Orthodox Church into the World Council of Churches, the development of relations with the Vatican. Orthodoxy and the peace movement. International initiatives to help suffering Christians in Eastern Europe.

### **Week 6, 22.11.2022: How did relations between church, state and society develop in the USSR and after its collapse?**

**Lecturer:** Andrei Desnitsky

General characteristics of the Church policy of the Bolsheviks and the Stalinist leadership in the different periods of Soviet history. The "churching of the intelligentsia" of the 1970s and 1980s (without the account of the dissident movement, see next lecture) and the "church revival" of the late Perestroika period. From total freedom to total fusion: the transformation of church-state relations in the Russian Federation and the role of society in these processes. The "Unchurching" of the 2010s. Prospects of relations between ROC MP and society after political transformation.

### **Week 7, 29.11.2022: How did dissidence and Orthodoxy correlate in the USSR and post-Soviet Russia?**

**Lecturer:** *Ksenia Luchenko*

Among those who resisted Soviet and contemporary Russian power there were always believers and clergy. They have often been in opposition not only to the state, but also to the church hierarchy, which has created and continues to create additional risks for them. About the religious underground of the late Soviet era, the Orthodox believers in the dissident movement and resistance in recent decades, including "right-wing" resistance.

### **Week 8, 06.12.2022: Russian Orthodoxy today: religious, social and political dimensions**

**Lecturer:** *Andrey Shishkov*

Orthodoxy in Russia as a vicar religion. The real and potential weight of the church in Russian society (religious statistics and their interpretation). The problem of atomisation of

Russian society and the church. The structure of the modern ROC: the main institutions, formal and informal channels of control, decision-making mechanisms. Key personalities and main structures. The ROC and the war in Ukraine: the institutional aspect (the position of church authorities, demarches of church regions, grassroots protest, etc.).

## **Week 9, 13.12.2022: What are the peculiarities of Orthodoxy in modern Belarus?**

**Lecturer:** *Natalia Vasilevich*

The era of Metropolitan Bishop Filaret (Vakhromeev): 25 years which have framed Belarusian Orthodoxy as Russia-oriented, but open to the West, to ecumenism, with a minimum of fundamentalist tendencies, but at the same time entirely dependent on state power. The influence of the inter-confessional dynamics in Belarus on Belarusian Orthodoxy (Catholics as the main "Other"). The era of Metropolitan bishop Pavel (Ponomarev): Destruction of the legacy of the Philaret era, striving for greater autonomy from Moscow. The Orthodox Church under Metropolitan bishop Veniamin (Tupeko) - trends. Church-state relations until 2020: Unequal partnership. The Orthodox Church in the 2020-2022 political crisis.

## **Week 10, 03.01.2023: Ukrainian Orthodoxy facing the challenge of Russian-Ukrainian war (2022)**

**Lecturer:** *Volodymyr Bureha*

*Note: lecture will be in Russian with a simultaneous translation*

The position of the Orthodox Churches with regard to Russian military aggression against Ukraine. Dissatisfaction with the de facto support for the war expressed by Patriarch Kirill in Moscow. Massive refusal to commemorate Patriarch Kyrill in churches in the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. Calls for immediate severance of all church ties with Moscow. Call by Ukrainian priests for an ecclesiastical trial of Patriarch Kyrill. Significant complications in relations between the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and local authorities. Council of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church on the 27<sup>th</sup> of May 2022 and the separation with Moscow. Evaluation of the current confessional situation.

## **Week 11, 10.01.2023: Old Believers in the 20th and 21st centuries**

**Lecturer:** *Nikolay*



*Note: lecture will be in Russian with a simultaneous translation*

Old Believers and the Manifesto on Religious Tolerance. Old Believers and political struggle in the early 20th century. Old Believers after 1917. The Emergence of the Beglopopovskaya Hierarchy. Bespopovtsy (priestlessness) in the Baltic countries and popovtsy (priestly) Old Believers in Romania before the Second World War. Repression in the USSR. The Great Terror and the routes of exodus. Old Believers in 1945-1991, centres and structures. Old Believers in the post-Soviet era and its relationship with the authorities. Case: Chasovenney at home and in exile. Old Believers and the War of 2022.

### **Week 12, 17.01.2023: Political theology and ideological projects of the ROC: a critical analysis**

**Lecturer:** *Andrey Shishkov*

Apoliticality of modern Orthodox political theology. "Sergianism" as a political form. "Russian World" - the genealogy of the concept and its variants. "Russian world" as a myth. "Traditional Values" and Transnational Interreligious Conservative Alliances. The role of the ROC in the conservatives' alliances. ROC and the war in Ukraine: ideological aspect (rhetoric of Patriarch Kirill, church and military propaganda, anti-war rhetoric). Christian Democracy as an Alternative to Sergianism.

### **Week 13, 24.01.2023: Church and media**

**Lecturer:** Ksenia Lutshenko

Since 2012, church officials in Russia have claimed that an "information war" is being waged against the ROC. However, the epoch of the so-called "church revival" of the last 30 years coincided with a technological revolution associated with digitalization and the development of information technology. How the ROC mastered these technologies and how medialization influenced its relations with society and the state. The creation of a media holding company, information scandals and the digitalization of liturgical practices as a challenge to hierarchy.

### **Week 14, 31.01.2023: Can Orthodoxy be global and modern?**

**Lecturer:** *Natalia Vasilevich*



Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church (Crete, 2016): History of preparations, main topics and orientations. Documents - Fundamentals of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church, For the Life of the World (Constantinople Patriarchate), Mission of the Orthodox Church in the Modern World). Orthodox participation in the ecumenical movement. Inter-Orthodox relations: diaspora, autocephalies. "Euro-Orthodoxy" - peculiarities of the Orthodox message in the West. Inclusion and discrimination: role of women in church, issues of gender, gender identity, sexual orientation.

## **Week 14, 07.02.2023: Gender in the history and culture of Orthodoxy in Eastern Europe**

**Lecturer:** *Nadezhda Belyakova*

Introduction to the problems of genderisation of the History of Orthodoxy. Slavic legal monuments about the position of women in the family, the church, relations with the confessor. Women in the Orthodox Church of the Russian Empire in the early 20th century. The process of feminisation of religion in the context of modernisation and urbanisation. The development of female monasticism and the growth of women's social activity. Models for the restoration of the rank of deaconesses in the Russian Empire: a geographical dimension. The Discussion of the "Women's Issue" at the Local Council of the Russian Church in 1917-1918. Gender roles in the Soviet period in the History of Orthodoxy. Experience in studying the history of gender in Orthodoxy in the academic space of the second half of the 20th - early 21st centuries. The Specificity of Women's Eastern European Experience in Conditions of "Religious Revival". Practices of Women's ministry in the Orthodox churches of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus in the post-Soviet period. Cultural wars around gender in the post-Soviet space. New initiatives for the restoration of deaconesses in the Russian Orthodox Church.

## **Week 16, 14.02.23: Final round table**

*Andrei Desnitsky* with the participation of other speakers

Discussion of the remaining questions, summary of the course.