

# Religion in the Black Sea Region Annual Workshop Program

28 – 30 May 2017

**Hotel Rus', Hospital'na St. 4  
Conference Hall E, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor**

## **28 May**

17:45 – Optional excursion to St. Sophia Cathedral with *Iulia Buyskykh and Lidiya Lozova*; meet in hotel lobby. This group will go directly to the restaurant.

19:15 – All others meet in the lobby to walk to the restaurant

19:30 – Dinner at Last Barricade restaurant, Maidan Nezalezhnosti Square

## **29 May**

7:00-10:00 Breakfast at Hotel Rus', 2<sup>nd</sup> floor

9:30 – 9:45 Catherine Wanner, Pennsylvania State University (USA) and Tetiana Kalenychenko, National Pedagogical Dragomanov University (Ukraine)

*Welcome and Introduction*

9:45 – 10:45 – **Joel Robbins**, Cambridge University (UK)

*Keeping God's Distance: Sacrifice, Possession and the Problem of Religious Mediation*

10:45 – 11: 00 *Coffee Break*

**11:00 – 13:00 *Desecularization or Resacrilization?: Understanding the Directions of Change***

Chair: Oleg Kyselov, National Pedagogical Dragomanov University (Ukraine)

**Jeanne Kormina**, Higher School of Economics, St. Petersburg (Russia)

*"The Church Should Know Its Place": cultural heritage, social protests and the limits of desecularisation in Russia*

**Tsypylma Darieva**, Humboldt University (Germany)

*The Saint and the City: Baku's 'Boneless Healer' and Desecularization Processes in Contemporary Azerbaijan*

Discussant: **Olga Filippova**, Karazin National University, Kharkiv (Ukraine)

13:00-14:00 Lunch at hotel restaurant (second floor)

14:00-16:00 *Pluralism and the Visibility of Minority Groups*

Chair: Lydmylla Fylypovych, National Academy of Sciences (Ukraine)

**Olena Soboleva**, National Research Institute of Ukrainian Studies (Ukraine),

*Crimean Tatar religiosity: between privacy and politics*

**Oleg Yarosh**, Ukrainian National Academy of Sciences, (Ukraine)

*Salafi communities in Ukraine: local contexts and transnational connections*

Discussant: **Viktor Yelenskyy**, National Pedagogical Dragomanov University (Ukraine)

16:15 –Optional excursion to Ar-Rakhma Islamic Center with *Denis Brylov*, Lukianivska St. 46

19:00 – dinner at Musafir restaurant, Saksagans'koho St. 57A, Crimean-Tatar cuisine

**30 May**

7:00-10:00 Breakfast at Hotel Rus', 2<sup>nd</sup> floor

9:30 -11:45 – Mobile Religiosities and the Friend/Stranger Next Store

Chair: Olena Panych, National Pedagogical Dragomanov University (Ukraine)

**Iuliia Buyskykh**, National Institute of Ukrainian Studies (Ukraine)

*In Pursuit of Healing and Memories: Ukrainian Pilgrimage to Polish Shrines*

**David Henig**, University of Kent (UK)

*Scent from the Other Shore: Relational modalities of religious lives in The Black Sea's Balkans and beyond*

**Mathijs Pelkmans**, London School of Economics (UK)

*Evangelical and Tablighi Pioneers on Post-Atheist Frontiers*

Discussant: **Bruce Grant**, New York University (USA)

11:45-12:00 Coffee Break

**12:00-14:00 *The Afterlife of the Maidan,***

Chair: Mykhailo Cherenkov, Ukrainian Catholic University (Ukraine)

**Tetiana Kalenychenko**, National Pedagogical Dragomanov University (Ukraine)

*Religion and Social-political Conflict in Ukraine*

**Catherine Wanner**, Pennsylvania State University (USA)

*Dignity and the Elusiveness of the Common Good*

Discussant: **Joel Robbins**, Cambridge University (UK)

14:00 – 15:00 – Lunch at hotel restaurant (second floor)

15:00-17:00 *Interconfessional Encounters*

Chair: Julia Korniychuk, National Pedagogical Dragomanov University

**Sergei Shtyrkov**, European University of St. Petersburg (Russia)

*Christianity as a Foreign Conspiracy: Revealing Rhetoric in the Interreligious Controversy in North Ossetia*

**Alla Marchenko**, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (Ukraine)

*The Hasidic Pilgrimage to Uman: Cross-cultural Challenges*

Discussant: **Alexander Panchenko**, European University of St. Petersburg (Russia)

17:15 – meeting in the lobby for optional excursion to Brodsky Choral Synagogue

19:00 – dinner at Mama Manana restaurant, Velyka Vasylkivska St. 44, Georgian cuisine

**Questions?** Tetiana, coordinator, (+380967717001) or [soc.injener@gmail.com](mailto:soc.injener@gmail.com)

## Participant Bios and Abstracts

**IULIIA BUYSKUKH** (*julia.buj@gmail.com*) Ph. D., graduated from the Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, BA in History (2006), MA in Ethnology (2007). She has conducted research in Poland since 2015. She worked on two research projects focused on religious issues in Ukraine and Poland, which were financed by Polish National Centre of Science (Narodowe Centrum Nauki). Since September, 2016 Iuliia Buyskykh works at the National Institute of Ukrainian Studies, under the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine. Research interests: anthropology of religion, neighborhood relationships, border studies, Ukrainian studies, folklore.

### **Abstract: In Pursuit of Healing and Memories: Ukrainian Pilgrimage to Polish Shrines**

From the Bug River area to the Subcarpathian region, Eastern Poland is a terrain of contradictory memories about multicultural tolerance and past violence. These memories induce a number of ethnic and social stereotypes that tend to be highly contested and politicized by various political and religious groups in both Poland and Ukraine. Based on research carried out in several confessionally mixed local communities on Poland's eastern border in 2015-2016, I argue that the collective memory of these inhabitants is deeply rooted in the period before the partition of Poland. Religion greatly influences the respective perceptions of history among Greek Catholic, Orthodox Christian and Roman Catholic neighbors. Polish-Ukrainian relations in the past, as well as reciprocal "postcolonial" traumas also left a mark on the strategies of communication between researcher and interlocutors. The questions to be addressed include: How do people live neighbourly in a multicultural world that proclaims tolerance outwardly? How can the negative effects of memories of conflicts be reduced in everyday life? How can a strategy of tolerant co-existence be elaborated under the burden of contested memories?

**TSYPYLMA DARIEVA** (*tsypylma25@gmail.com*) is a senior researcher and lecturer at Humboldt University Berlin, Institute for Asia and Africa Studies. Studied in St. Petersburg and Berlin, she received her PhD in anthropology at Humboldt University Berlin in 2003. Currently she is developing a new comparative research project on urban space and religious pluralism in the Caucasus and Central Asia in cooperation with Centre for Eastern European and international Studies (ZOIS, Berlin). Her research and teaching interests include anthropology of global migration, diaspora, postsocialist urbanism and sacred places in the Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan).

### **Abstract: The Saint and the City: Baku's 'Boneless Healer' and Desecularization Processes in Contemporary Azerbaijan**

Recent anthropological literature on 'urban religions' has questioned how religious networks are incorporated into urban environments and how large cities affect religious diversity, innovation and the decline and vitality of beliefs (Orsi 1999, Desplat 2012, Burchard and Becci 2013, Becker 2013). In fact, the relationship between urban secular settings and religious practices in the Caucasus has attracted little scholarly attention. This paper seeks to understand how the notions of 'miracle' and 'saint' have been maintained throughout the Soviet period in an urban context and consider how these notions have been reinforced and contested in contemporary Baku. The practice of pilgrimage to pirs (saints' tombs, graves, sacred trees or mountains) has typically been associated with the traditional lifestyles of Azerbaijan's rural population and theorized as a 'little' tradition of practicing Islam. However, it is obvious that practices of pir and beliefs in saint's miracles form a significant part of modern urban lifestyles in Azerbaijan. Based on an ethnography of place-making conducted at selected pilgrimage sites and a review of the hagiographical literature, I explore the relationships between urban secular settings and practices of 'folk' Islam in Baku.

**OLGA FILIPPOVA** ([olgafilip@gmail.com](mailto:olgafilip@gmail.com)) is Associate Professor of Sociology at V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University. She received a Candidate of Science degree in sociology from Kharkiv National University. She has published in Ukrainian, Russian and English on such topics as politics of identity, citizenship; politics of memory and social (re)construction of the past; border studies; post-socialist transformations; cyber-ethnography; and childhood issue. The geographical area of her specialization is the former Soviet Union, with a focus on Ukraine and Transnistria. Her publications appeared in *Europe-Asia Studies*; *The Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*; *Journal of American Academy of Religion*; *AB Imperio*; *The Anthropology of East Europe Review: Central Europe, East Europe and Eurasia*. Since 2001 she has participated in different international and multidisciplinary research projects, and recently as a team leader she coordinated the work of the Kharkiv University research group in an international project on border studies ‘*Migration, Borders and Regional Stability in the EU’s Eastern Neighborhood*’ (2010-2012) and ‘*EUBORDERSCAPES: Bordering, Political Landscapes and Social Arenas: Potentials and Challenges of Evolving Border Concepts in a post-Cold War World*’ (2012-2016).

**BRUCE GRANT** ([bg61@nyu.edu](mailto:bg61@nyu.edu)) is Professor of Anthropology at New York University. A specialist on cultural politics in the former Soviet Union, he has done fieldwork in Siberia and the Caucasus. He is author of *In the Soviet House of Culture: A Century of Perestroikas* (Princeton 1995), a study of the Sovietization of an indigenous people on the Russian Pacific coast, as well as *The Captive and the Gift: Cultural Histories of Sovereignty in Russia and the Caucasus* (Cornell 2009), on the making of the Caucasus in the Russian popular imagination. He was co-editor of *Caucasus Paradigms: Anthropologies, Histories, and the Making of a World Area* (LIT 2007) and *The Russia Reader: History, Culture, Politics* (Duke 2010). His current research explores rural Muslim shrines as sites of the retelling of Soviet history in Azerbaijan; the spectacular rebuilding of the Azerbaijani capital of Baku; and a historical project on the early twentieth-century, pan-Caucasus journal *Molla Nasreddin* (1905-1931) as an idiom for rethinking contemporary Eurasian space and authoritarian rule within it.

**DAVID HENIG** ([D.Henig@kent.ac.uk](mailto:D.Henig@kent.ac.uk)) is Lecturer in Social Anthropology in the School of Anthropology and Conservation at the University of Kent (UK), and Editor of the journal *History and Anthropology*. He received his PhD in anthropology at Durham University. He is the author of numerous articles on Muslim politics and post-socialism in Southeast Europe, and more recently on a dialogue between anthropology and diplomatic studies. He has co-edited (with Nicolette Makovicky) *Economies of Favour after Socialism* (Oxford University Press, 2017), and is currently completing a book manuscript on remaking Muslim lives in postwar Bosnia-Herzegovina.

**Abstract: Scent from the Other Shore: Relational modalities of religious lives in The Black Sea’s Balkans and beyond**

How do we move beyond the frames of methodological nationalism and confessionalism in researching and writing about religious lives in the Black Sea Region that would reflect the grassroots religious dynamics? I offer a view from the (Balkan) edge of the Black Sea Region to unsettle the conventional conceptual geography. I propose a more relational and historically grounded approach to the study of religious forms and practice in the past and present. The evidence of such relations is not always apparent at the level of discourse and requires us instead to search for ‘veins of data that speak to connections with other regions, data that were not seen or were ignored earlier simply because we did not understand the mobile and circulatory processes that generated them in the first place, historically’ (Ho 2014: 889). I attend to such veins of data as relational modalities of religious forms and lives, paying particular attention to:

i) a processual geography of pilgrimage and trans-regional networks of religious bodies, ii) transmigration of graphic objects, and iii) mobility of spiritual genealogies.

**TETIANA KALENYCHENKO** (*soc.injener@gmail.com*) is a Ph. D. student at National Pedagogical Dragomanov University and previously studied at Kyiv-Mohyla Academy. She is currently a junior research fellow at the Institute of Human Sciences in Vienna, Austria (2017). She also works as journalist for the Religious Information Service of Ukraine. Her main interests include the sociology of religion, conflict studies, peacebuilding, and reconciliation.

**Abstract: Religion and Social-political Conflict in Ukraine**

Religious institutions and leaders have been quite present in modern social-political conflict in Ukraine since the revolution on the Maidan in 2013-14 and continuing today during the current armed conflict in the East. But has religion transformed the public sphere and what are the modes of its publicity? In my research I focus on the current forms of relations among religion, state and society based on in-depth interviews, observations and content-analysis of the documents during the last four years.

**JEANNE KORMINA** (*kormina@eu.spb.ru*) is Associate Professor of Religious Studies and Anthropology at the Higher School of Economics, Saint Petersburg. She holds a candidate of sciences degree in Ethnology from the European University in Saint Petersburg. She has conducted research on ritual and pilgrimage in Russian society, in particular on popular forms of Russian Orthodoxy and their intersections with business and alternative religiosity. Her publications include *Sending off Army Recruits in Reform-Era Russia: An Ethnographic Analysis* (in Russian, 2005) and numerous articles and book chapters on popular and dissident Orthodoxy in English and Russian.

**Abstract: “The Church Should Know Its Place”: cultural heritage, social protests and the limits of desecularisation in Russia**

In January 2017 the news spread that the Governor of St Petersburg decided to give (peredat') St Isaac Cathedral to the Russian Orthodox Church. Until then, the Cathedral had been functioning as a museum that attracted lots of tourists. For the last decade or so the museum had been sharing the space and time within this building, one of the main symbols of the former capital of Russian Empire, with an Orthodox parish. It was allowed to conduct church services in a particular part of the Cathedral and during particular hours. For many, this combination looked ideal, even an exemplary coexistence of the sacred secular (museum) and sacred religious (religion). The parishioners were allowed to come in for free through a special entrance, used as an exit by the secular visitors. They used one of the altars (not the central one), had a nice choir and, presumably, attracted some tourists and were tolerated by museum personnel as representatives of the living past, as a part of a cultural heritage which the museum preserved. The public discussions about St Isaac Cathedral's destiny were unexpectedly heated and emotional. Mass media publications, debates in social media and public actions attracted a lot of attention in a very broad public. As one friend, an academic, explained me why she was concerned about the Cathedral, “You know, I feel that they push me, us out of the places where we were left in piece, in our culture ghetto”. One Orthodox priest who knew about my research, advised me to be careful, as “they” (those church authorities who wanted the Cathedral to be given back to the Church) “would stop at nothing”. Some commentators on social media confessed that they cannot be Christians any more, after the St Isaac affair. “The Church Should Know Its Place” was a handwritten sign on a placard of one of the protesters at St Isaac Cathedral. This paper discusses how the secular society in Russia defines the role of the church in its life.

**ALLA MARCHENKO** ([alla.marchenko82@gmail.com](mailto:alla.marchenko82@gmail.com)) earned a Ph.D. in Sociology from Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (Ukraine) and currently works as Associate Professor in the Department of Methodology and Methods of Sociological Research at the Faculty of Sociology at this University. She was a Carnegie Research Fellow in 2015-2016 at The Skirball Department of Hebrew and Judaic Studies, New York University (USA). Her main research interests include comparative research, historical sociology and cross-cultural interactions in connection with the Hasidic pilgrimages to Ukraine.

**Abstract: The Hasidic Pilgrimage to Uman: Cross-cultural Challenges**

Based on research conducted from 2011-15 among Hasidim in the US who participate in the annual Hasidic pilgrimage to Uman and local residents, as well as an analysis of media discourse of this annual pilgrimage, I argue that there are essentially four tropes that are used to characterize the cross-cultural encounters this pilgrimage creates: “Pilgrimage as a disaster,” “Pilgrimage as an unknown phenomenon,” “Pilgrimage as a challenge,” and “Pilgrimage as a source of inspiration.”

**ALEXANDER A. PANCHENKO** ([apanchenko2008@gmail.com](mailto:apanchenko2008@gmail.com)) is Director of the Research Center for Literary Theory and Interdisciplinary Studies at the Institute of Russian Literature, Russian Academy of Sciences (St. Petersburg, Russia), a Professor of Social Anthropology at St. Petersburg State University (College of Liberal Arts and Sciences), and the Director of the Center for Anthropology of Religion at the European University at St. Petersburg. His research interests include religious folklore and vernacular religion in Russia and Europe, theory and history of folklore research, contemporary folklore and popular culture, and anthropological approaches to the study of Russian literature. He has published more than 100 research works (including two books) in Russian and other European languages on vernacular religion in rural Russia; religious movements in modern Russia; the political use of folklore in the Soviet Union, and comparative studies in folklore and the anthropology of religion.

**MATHIJS PELKMANS** ([M.E.Pelkmans@lse.ac.uk](mailto:M.E.Pelkmans@lse.ac.uk)) is Associate Professor of Anthropology at the London School of Economics and Political Science. He lived in Georgia for two years and in Kyrgyzstan for three, carrying out research on the intersection of religion and politics (and a few other topics). He is the author of *Fragile Conviction: Changing Ideological Landscapes in Urban Kyrgyzstan* and *Defending the Border: Identity, Religion, and Modernity in the Republic of Georgia*, both from Cornell, and editor of *Conversion after Socialism* and *Ethnographies of Doubt*.

**Abstract: Evangelical and Tablighi Pioneers on Post-Atheist Frontiers**

Missionaries have flocked to the Kyrgyz Republic in the past two decades. Evangelical-Pentecostal and Tablighi missions have been particularly active, viewing the country as a “fertile” post-atheist frontier. This paper looks for differences and commonalities in how these missions project their vision onto the frontier, and how the frontier affects them. In exploring different forms of religious missionizing, the paper also asks more general questions about the missionary position with the aim of gaining deeper insight into the dynamics of religious conviction.

**JOEL ROBBINS** ([jr626@cam.ac.uk](mailto:jr626@cam.ac.uk)) is a professor of anthropology at Cambridge University. His research has focused on the anthropology of religion and ritual, the anthropology of Christianity, religious education, values, ethics, cultural change, material and verbal exchange, structuralism and semiotics. He is the author of *Becoming Sinners: Christianity and Moral*

*Torment in a Papua New Guinea Society* and has published a number of articles that take up issues related to the anthropology of values. He is currently working on a book focused on the anthropological study of the good and has also begun a new project focused on religious higher education. He is the editor of the journal *Anthropological Theory*.

**Abstract: Keeping God's Distance: Sacrifice, Possession and the Problem of Religious Mediation**

Some of the most important work being done in the anthropology of religion today focuses on exploring the complex ways human experience of the divine is mediated. Even as interest in this topic has grown dramatically, and a diverse literature has grown up around it, I suggest that one key question about religious mediation has not yet been asked. This is the question of why is it that people want to distance the divine from themselves in the first place, such that they then need to develop complex practices of mediation to make its presence felt. This paper seeks to answer this question by suggesting that Hubert and Mauss' essay on sacrifice should be read as a key precursor to current work on religious mediation. They interpret sacrifice as a practice of religious mediation in which key issues concerning the proper relationships of closeness and distance between people, and between people and society, are elaborated. Taking my cue from their argument, I explore how tensions between the mediating practice of sacrifice and that of possession among Pentecostal converts in Papua New Guinea can be seen to engage such fundamental social issues. I conclude by suggesting ways in which this understanding of the problem of religious mediation opens up the literature focused on this topic to broader issues in anthropology and social theory more generally.

**SERGEI SHTYRKOV** ([shtyr@eu.spb.ru](mailto:shtyr@eu.spb.ru)) is Professor of Ethnology at the European University in St. Petersburg and a research fellow at Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography of the Russian Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg, Russia. His research interests include: popular religion; historical folklore; problems of history construction.

**Abstract: Christianity as a Foreign Conspiracy: Revealing Rhetoric in the Interreligious Controversy in North Ossetia**

Arguments from conspiracy narratives are often used to explain the spread of Christianity among the Ossetes, and among the peoples of the world at large. According to the idea that Christian missionary work is conspiratorial in nature, the Christian Church is carrying out its secret plan in Ossetia, as it is in the world at large (but paying special attention to Ossetia). Allegedly, the Church does not make its real aims public: it speaks of the salvation of the soul, of a reformation of morals, the achievement of world peace and the preservation of culture, but its real aim is the greatest possible political, and perhaps economic power. This sort of understanding of Christianity is widespread among conspiracy theorists of an "ariosophic" tendency, who see the Christian religion as a specific product of Jewish social engineering which was exported to the Aryan world to enslave it through the preaching of humility, pacifism and a profane simplification of ancient wisdom.

**OLENA SOBOLEVA** ([olena.soboleva1@gmail.com](mailto:olena.soboleva1@gmail.com)) received her Ph.D. from Taras Shevchenko University. Since 2015, she is a senior researcher at National Research Institute of Ukrainian Studies. Working in the field of ethnography and mainly about Crimean Tatars.

**Abstract: Crimean Tatar religiosity: between privacy and politics**

Crimean Tatar collective prayers are called "dua." They are a form of religious practice that has a definite structure, combining religious and folk texts, and accompanying the most important



family and communal events. During the Soviet period of secularization, these types of practices became the dominant form of religious self-determination. In recent years, collective prayers have obtained political meanings in the processes of transferring symbolic capital and power.

**CATHERINE WANNER** ([cew10@psu.edu](mailto:cew10@psu.edu)) is a Professor of History and Cultural Anthropology at The Pennsylvania State University. She received her doctorate in cultural anthropology from Columbia University. She is the author of *Burden of Dreams: History and Identity in Post-Soviet Ukraine* (1998), *Communities of the Converted: Ukrainians and Global Evangelism* (2007), which won four best book prizes and was named a Choice Outstanding Academic Title, and co-editor of *Religion, Morality and Community in Post-Soviet Societies* (2008), editor of *State Secularism and Lived Religion in Soviet Russia and Ukraine* (2012) and editor of two collections of essays on resistance and renewal during the Maidan protests. She is currently writing a book on the politics of religion, faith and belonging in Ukraine while a visiting professor at the Humboldt University, Berlin.

### **Abstract: Dignity and the Elusiveness of the Common Good**

There have been three pivotal moments of uprising in Ukraine since independence, the Ukraine without Kuchma movement, the Orange Revolution and the Maidan protests. The Maidan was the only one that evolved into an uprising *for* something, and not just *against* something. The involvement of clergy and religious institutions during the Maidan represents an effort to involve the authority of established religious traditions, practices, and clergy to achieve dignity. Secular power was sacralized through the creation of affective experiences in spaces deemed sacred that reinforced an atmosphere of faith that bled through the public and private everyday lives of believers and non-believers alike. The pursuit of the common good, I will argue, is a key reason why these three transformational months of 2013-14 are referred to as the Revolution of Dignity. I consider how popular efforts to perpetuate the relevance of the Maidan have to contend with the protesters' bitter disappointment over their government's inability to deliver meaningful reform.

**OLEG YAROSH** ([o.yarosh@gmail.com](mailto:o.yarosh@gmail.com)) PhD, Associate Professor, Head of the History of Oriental Philosophy Department, Institute of Philosophy n.a. H. Skovoroda of the Ukrainian National Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, Kyiv, Ukraine. His educational background includes MA in History (Odessa State University, 1992), PhD in Philosophical Anthropology (Institute of Philosophy NASU 1992); postgraduate study in Oxford (1997 – 1998), Warsaw (1999 – 2003); post-doctoral research in Berlin (2008, 2014), Washington DC (Fulbright Scholar 2009) and Gothenburg (September 2016 – February 2017). His major research is on Islam and Muslims in Europe, with a special focus on Western Sufism.

### **Abstract: Salafi communities in Ukraine: local contexts and transnational connections**

This paper focuses on the development of Salafi communities in Ukraine in recent decades and particularly on the current resurgence of Salafism in mainland Ukraine after the annexation of Crimea. It provides historical perspectives and analysis of the current institutionalization of Salafi communities (the formation of Association of Muslims of Ukraine, and the New Crimean Muftiat based in Kyiv), their activities and relations with the other Muslim communities and institutions in Ukraine, and with international Islamic networks. I will argue that, despite the presence of converts, Salafis in Ukraine are organized to a great extent along ethnic lines, unlike in Western Europe, where ethnicity and religion in such communities is more disconnected (Olivier Roy).