

Spiritual Decolonization

Churches and the War-Time “Spiritual Decolonization” in Ukraine

Please join us for the online seminar (series "Postcolonial Perspectives – Postdependence Entanglements") organised along with the Centre for Research on Social Memory.



Useful information **Event website:** [online meeting \(registration\)](#) [1]

Start date: 21-01-2025

Time: 9:30

The colonial nature of the subordination of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church to the Patriarch of Moscow came to the fore in the late 2010s, prompted by the state campaign to gain official recognition of ecclesiastical independence from the Russian church administration. Unsurprisingly, with the Russian full-fledged invasion of Ukraine in 2022, the issue of coping with the legacy of Russian colonialism in church matters gained significant relevance for Ukrainian lawmakers and civil society activists. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church (UOC) faced increasing critique for spreading Russian propaganda in the form of religious practices, particularly venerating saints such as Russian emperor Nicolas II and medieval prince Alexander Nevsky or refusing to hold communal prayers in Ukrainian language in lieu of Old Slavonic. This presentation explores rank-and-file church members' responses to decolonization discourse by focusing on (un)changing saints' veneration practices and language issues at the grassroots level.

Andriy Fert holds PhD in history; he is the head of the Center for the Study of Religion at Kyiv School of Economics. Recently, he was a research fellow at the Center for East European and International Studies (ZOiS) in Berlin (2023 – 24) and principal investigator for Ukraine in the research project Postsecular Approach to Memory Processes in Central-Eastern Europe (2023–2024). Since 2017, he has been working for the Institute for International Cooperation of the Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband e.V. (DVV), coordinating projects related to history education in secondary schools in Ukraine. He teaches at Kyiv School of Economics.

Please register for the online meeting: [link](#) [2]

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Links

[1] <https://uw-edu-pl.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJllf-ypqjopE9D42hRhGxvRdx0dL1FJUSXg>

[2] <https://shorturl.at/1llwy>