

DESCRIPTION FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC

2017 will see the 100th anniversary of the Revolution of 1917 which permanently changed the face of Russia, and the 80th anniversary of the Great Terror (years 1937–38), a period of mass repressions. These 80–100 years is a time of *floating gap*, a period where communicative memory gets transformed into cultural memory, which bases on certain memory carriers such as texts, monuments, museums, but also some rituals or established verbal statements. The approaching anniversaries encourage reflection about the forms of memory used to commemorate the Revolution of 1917 and the Great Terror in Russia. This problem seem ever more interesting given that the memory of both those events underwent a radical change in the last thirty years. Up to now conducted by the author of this project researches show that the discourse of new martyrdom, which has been shaped since late 1980s by the Russian Orthodox Church, it has gained increasing support from the state since 2007 when Russian President Vladimir Putin appeared at the Church of New Russian Martyrs and Confessors in Butovo to remember the victims of repressions. As the Russian Orthodox Church plans together with the state a number of events related to jubilee year, this project assumes that a year 2017 will give the final shape to the official, state-endorsed interpretation of the past. The interpretation, which will draw on the Orthodox discourse of new martyrdom.

The goal of the project is to analyse anniversary ceremonies prepared together by the official authorities of the country and the Russian Orthodox Church. We are particularly interested in the content of official speeches delivered by the government officials and church officials during the ceremonies of the jubilee year which show the meaning-making of the state and the church in connection with the events occurring one hundred years ago and eighty years ago. We make also content analysis of the official websites of the Moscow Patriarchate, the President of the Russian Federation, and pro-Kremlin media to establish if they form a consistent message about the past together? We are also analysing the sites of memory created on the occasion of the jubilee, to establish if the content evoked by those sites complement the statements about the past?

The innovativeness of this project results from the fact that it looks at the impact of the Orthodox discourse on the picture of the official memory of Soviet repressions. The project casts light on the place of Revolution of 1917 and the Great Terror in the historical policy of Putin's regime. To gain a support from the authorities, the Russian Orthodox Church is increasingly emphasizes the positive elements of the Soviet era, including the role of Stalin, as if forgetting that the new martyrs were victims of the policy of this tyrant. This project will show, therefore, what kind of transformations in meaning takes place in the religious discourse of the new martyrdom to become a guideline for the official, state-endorsed interpretation of the past. To what extend it is an element of the Kremlin policy of re-Stalinisation which glorifies Stalin's role and emphasis on the exceptionality of Russia in history. In other words, to what extend the new Russian martyrdom is an element of wider ideological changes taking place in Russia.