The Doctoral Thesis in Comparative History

by

Alexandra Medzibrodszky

on

“ORTHODOX POLITICAL THEOLOGIES: CLERGY, INTELLIGENTSIA AND SOCIAL CHRISTIANITY IN REVOLUTIONARY RUSSIA”

will be held on

Friday, 8 May 2020, 16:00 pm

Due to the extraordinary measures introduced by CEU in regard to the Covid-19 virus situation, the doctoral defense will take place on-line. For further information, contact Mónika Nagy, PhD coordinator (nagymo@ceu.edu).

Examination Committee

Gábor Klaniczay– Chair (Department of Medieval Studies, CEU)
Matthias Riedl – supervisor (Department of History, CEU)
Karl Hall – CEU internal member (Department of History)
Scott Kenworthy – external member (Miami University)
Simon Dixon – external reader (UCL)

The doctoral dissertation is available for inspection. Should you wish to access it, please contact Mónika Nagy (nagymo@ceu.edu)
ABSTRACT

The dissertation is the intellectual history of the Orthodox left during the revolutionary years of 1905-8 in Imperial Russia. The research reconstructs debates and dialogues between progressive clergy and radical religious intelligentsia following the massacre of Bloody Sunday on 9 January 1905. The dissertation interprets the visions that emerged in the network of the Orthodox left in the framework of ‘political theologies’. It focuses on three programs and their theo-political language: the Brotherhood of Zealots for Church Renovation; the Christian Brotherhood of Struggle; and the Union of Christian Politics. Members argued that the mutually dependent relationship between the tsar and the people, which served as a political bedrock for the Empire for centuries, was now beyond repair. The bloodshed was perceived as a fundamental break in Russian Orthodox political theory, and the horrible events inspired religious intelligentsia and progressive clergy to theorise about politics and social justice as Orthodox believers.

The dissertation identifies the concept of Christian obshchestvennost’ (sociality) as the focal point of all programs that emerged among advocates of the Orthodox left in the period. The concept had palingenetic power, it was meant to reinvigorate the Church and to re-Christianise the whole of fin de siècle Russian society. My research argues that the theo-political imagination and language of the Orthodox left was inspired both by Russian Orthodox tradition, in particular by Modern Russian Theology; and by non-Orthodox traditions of social Christianity, but it developed in opposition to the Marxist left. The analysed projects were short-lived due to internal conflicts and repressions by Church and state, but they represent a vibrant chapter in the history of Russian Orthodox social and political thought, reflecting on theo-political concepts that remain central to the Russian Orthodox world up until today.
CURRICULUM VITAE

Alexandra Medzibrodszky

EDUCATION

Central European University (CEU), Budapest, Hungary
2014- PhD in Comparative History (accredited in the U.S. and in Hungary)
2013-2014 MA in Central European History (accredited in the U.S. and in Hungary)

Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE), Budapest, Hungary
2010-2012 MA in Russian Studies
2009-2012 MA in Translation and Interpreting (Hungarian, English, German)
2006-2009 BA in English and American Studies with Russian minor

WORK EXPERIENCE

2019-20 Graduate Teaching Assistant at the London School of Economics and Political Science
2019-20 Project Coordinator at Anglia Teaching & Learning at Anglia Ruskin University
2017-19 Project Coordinator for “Narratives of Order: Rethinking Global Political Thought”
2018 Marketing Internship at Cornell University Press at the Marketing Team
2017 Samizdat Project Internship at Vera and Donald Blinken Open Society Archives
2016-17 Conference Assistant for the “5th European Congress on World and Global History – Ruptures, Empires and Revolutions”

RESEARCH PROJECTS

2017-19 “Narratives of Order: Rethinking Global Political Thought”

PUBLIC LECTURES

2018 / Narratives of Order – Rethinking Global Political Thought
   The Early Church as a Social and Political Ideal in Russian Orthodox Thought
   In Budapest, Hungary, CEU

2017 / Narratives of Order – Rethinking Non-Western Political Thought
   Translating sobornost’ to obshchestvennost’: Creating a Christian Public Sphere in Imperial Russia
   In Budapest, Hungary, CEU
CONFERENCES

2019 / 10th Annual London Graduate Conference in the History of Political Thought
‘Godmanhood’ as an Idea of Progress in Revolutionary Russia
In London, UK, University College London (UCL)

2019 / British Association for Slavonic and East European Studies (BASEES) Annual Conference
Where is the Kingdom of God? Radical Clergy and Orthodox Social Gospel in Revolutionary Russia
In Cambridge, UK, University of Cambridge

2018 / Fifth International Conference of the European Society for the History of Political Thought
The worse, the better: Crisis as Moral and Intellectual Catalyst in Late Imperial Russia
In Heidelberg, Germany, University of Heidelberg

2017 / Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES) Annual Convention
“Kant’s yoke” – Nikolai Fedorov’s polemic with Kantian ideas
In Chicago, IL, USA

2017 / Religion and Russian Revolution
“Can a Christian be a Socialist?” – Archpriest I. Vostorgov on Revolutionary Socialism
In Moscow, Russia, RANEPa

2017 / The Rethinking of Religious Belief in the Making of Modernity – ISIH
Christianity, Socialism and Just Resistance in Late Imperial Russia
In Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria, American University in Bulgaria (AUBG)

2016 / Key Concepts in Times of Crisis – 19th International Conference on Conceptual History
“Khristianskaia Obshchestvennost’: Creating a Christian Public Sphere in Late Imperial Russia
In Aarhus, Denmark, Aarhus University

2016 / The Fifth Regional Conference of the Central Eurasian Studies Society (CESS)
Friend or Foe: Christianity and Socialism in Late Imperial Russia
In Kazan, Russia, Kazan Federal University

2016 / Rethinking Europe in Intellectual History – ISIH conference
Against Secularization: ‘Godmanhood’ as an Idea of Progress in Late Imperial Russia
In Rethymnon, Greece, University of Crete

2016 / “The ethnic and the social: the forms of interplay and conflicts” Conference
Disregarding the Ethnic: Konstantin Leont’ev and Nation-building in the Russian Empire
In Saint-Petersburg, Russia, Saint-Petersburg State University
2015 / 10th International Conference on Russian Studies in History
  *Alexander Bogdanov and the Sociology of Knowledge*
  In Budapest, Hungary, Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE)

2015 / 9th Annual Graduate Conference in European History (GRACEH)
  *Christian Brotherhood for Struggle and the 1905 crisis in Russia*
  In Vienna, Austria, University of Vienna

2014 / International Conference for Young Scholars of Russian Studies
  *Ideas of Progress at Turn-of-the-Century Russia: S. N. Bulgakov*
  In Budapest, Hungary, Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE)

**GRANTS AND AWARDS**

- 2019: CEU Award for Advanced Doctoral Students
- 2019: CEU Write-up grant (6 months)
- 2018-2019: IEG - Institute of European History in Mainz / Doctoral Fellowship (6 months)
- 2017-2018: Provost's International Research Internship Program (PIRIP) / Cornell University
- 2017-2018: Reese Miller International Exchange Scholarship by Telluride Association
- 2015-2016: Scholarship for study abroad by Hungarian Scholarship Board Office and Russia
- 2016: CEU Academic Achievement Award for First-Year Doctoral Students
- 2014: CEU Outstanding Academic Achievement Award
- 2014-2017: CEU Full Doctoral Fellowship (36 months)
- 2013-2014: CEU Partial MA Fellowship (10 months)
- 2012: The Year's Best Russian Thesis Award / Foundation for Russian Language and Culture
- 2012: Scholarship for study abroad by Hungarian Scholarship Board Office and Russia

**LANGUAGES**

Fluent in Hungarian (native), English, Russian
Independent Reading: German, Polish, Ukrainian
Beginner: Arabic

**LIST OF PUBLICATIONS**

**Journal articles**
- (RUS) Medzibrodszky, Alexandra. “Mozhet-li khristianin stat’ sotsialistom? (Ne)primirimost’ khristianstva i sotsializma v revoliutsionnoi Rossii.” [Can a


**Book chapters**

- forthcoming (ENG) Medzibrodszky, Alexandra. “Can a Christian be a Socialist?” the (Ir)reconcilability of Christianity and Socialism in Revolutionary Russia” In Religion and Russian Revolution, Indiana University Press, expected in 2020


**Conference papers**


**Book reviews**


