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# Putin and the Patriarch: Appropriating Russia's National Past

Megan Swift

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5:00-6:00 p.m.

Clearihue, Room C112

Vladimir Putin has been late in initiating a state process of coming to terms with Russia's Stalinist past. But in September and October 2017, two memorials to victims of political repression were unveiled in Moscow. Both were presided over by Patriarch Kirill or a high-ranking representative of the Russian Orthodox Church. After seventy years of official atheism under the Soviet Union, the Church now enjoys a special, close relationship with the state. This project investigates how the Church is appropriating cultural memory, attempting to re-position its own role in the narrative of the national past, and overshadowing the legacies of Russia's other faiths.

**Megan Swift is an Associate Professor of Russian Studies in the Dept of Germanic and Slavic Studies. She is a specialist in Russian literature and book art of the Lenin and Stalin eras, and the memory politics of the Putin era. In 2017 she hosted the "1917 and Today: Putin, Russia and the Legacy of Revolution" conference at UVic, and is currently completing a book project based on that work.**

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