



CfP: **The Problem of Religious Art in Modernity  
Uses and Abuses of the Icon in Russia**

Eighth Graduate Workshop  
of the Russian Art and Culture Group  
Internationales Kolleg Morphomata, Cologne University,  
**September 23-25, 2020** (exact dates tbd)

Guest Speaker: Prof. George Pattison,  
Prof. of Theology and Modern European Thought at Glasgow

Language: English

Deadline for submission: **May 15, 2020**

In *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche wrote: "that species of art can never flourish again which—like the *Divine Comedy*, the paintings by Raphael, the frescoes of Michelangelo, Gothic cathedrals—presupposes not only a cosmic but a metaphysical significance in the objects of art." In his usual provocative manner, Nietzsche attracted attention to the problem of religious art in a secular modernity. This issue was already implicit in Kant's notion of the viewer of the work of art as "indifferent to the real existence of the object of representation."

The eighth graduate workshop of the Russian Art and Culture Group will consider the deep implications posed by the problem of religious art by examining the various ways in which the icon was adapted in modern Russia to serve different artistic, philosophical, and political agendas.

Suggested topics might include:

- the role of the medieval image in nineteenth-century Russian literature
- the role of the icon in the project of nation-building in late imperial Russia
- the avant-garde's relation to religious art
- the Bolsheviks' cultural policy on religious images

Other, related topics are also welcome.

We invite doctoral students, postgraduate researchers, and established academics to submit proposals for 20-minute presentations. Interdisciplinary approaches are particularly welcome. Please send an abstract of no more than 250 words along with a short biographical note of 100 words by May 15, 2020 to [workshop@russian-art.net](mailto:workshop@russian-art.net).

For further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the organizers using the email address above. You will receive notification on the acceptance of paper proposals by the end of May 2020.

Participants will have to organize and cover their own travel and accommodation, but we offer a limited number of small travel subsidies for speakers from Russia or overseas.

Initial idea and organization: Prof. Dr. Isabel Wünsche, Jacobs University Bremen, Clemena Antonova, Institute for Human Sciences, Vienna, and Ludmila Piters-Hofmann, Jacobs University Bremen.