

# Jeanmarie Rouhier-Willoughby

Professor of Russian Studies and Folklore and Mythology & Professor of Linguistics

Chair, Department of Modern and Classical Languages, Literatures,  
and Cultures

University of Kentucky

## Coded Messages: Political and Religious Language about the Lozhok Holy Spring

In October 2015, a cathedral dedicated to the Russian New Martyrs and Confessors (an order of saints dedicated to victims of the Soviet official policy on atheism) was consecrated in Lozhok, a small town approximately 50 kilometers to the east of Novosibirsk. The consecration was the culmination of 9 years of construction on the cathedral, which is located on the site of a holy spring on a former GULAG. The spring, credited with healing miracles, is considered to be sacred precisely because of its connection to camp victims. The consecration was presided over by two metropolitans (one local, one from Belarus), three bishops from the Novosibirsk and Iskitim dioceses, and Nikita Buick, director of Russian American Community Services of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia as well as prominent



local politicians from the United Russia and Communist parties. This lecture will examine the intersection of the political and religious events, and the language used by the participants, to explore the symbolic roles of the officiants and the socio-cultural roles that this spring (and the cathedral on this site) play in the diocese and among the laity in this region.

Friday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>  
1:00 - 2:00 pm  
127 Gatton College