

The Conservative Turn and "Traditional Values": The Appropriation of Human Rights in Contemporary Russia

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Abstract

Over the past two decades, the Russian Orthodox Church has played a significant role in undermining gender human rights in Russia, which regulate the protection of women from domestic violence, and the protection of LGBT rights, arbitrarily interpreting basic norms of international human rights law to suit the established conservative institution of “traditional values” that undermines these rights. Russian state and church leaders have appropriated and assimilated the language of human rights to promote an illiberal and nationalist agenda. This article analyzes and shows how the Russian Orthodox Church, as the main protagonist of anti-gender norms, has managed to integrate international norms protecting the rights of women and LGBT people into national legislation, completely distorting them and thereby depriving women and LGBT people of protection. The article analyzes the mechanisms of assimilation of anti-gender norms into national legislation, based on constructivist human rights theory.

Keywords: Russian Orthodox Church, traditional values, domestic violence, LGBT, international institutions, norms

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