

International Promethean Conference, 24-25 October, 2024

## **Imperialism and Colonialism in Soviet Studies**

Increasingly, scholars of the history of Russia and Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus, when analysing contemporary political regimes and ideological traditions, turn to important historical concepts, such as imperialism, colonialism, which they also sometimes supplement with a particle - neo. Thus, intellectuals and researchers emphasise the continuity of the Russian political tradition from the 16th century, when the idea of Moscow - the Third Rome - emerged in the Moscow Empire and up to the vision of the Russian 'osobyi put' sensu largo.

In the 20th century, the Bolsheviks who came to power with slogans of fighting Russian imperialism after winning the civil war fought to restore the power and imperial borders of the Romanov monarchy. After the admission of the newly formed states of the Caucasus, Central Asia, Ukraine and Belarus, together with a military presence in the occupied territories, the ideology about the civilising mission of Soviet Russia continued. The Stalinist period of the early 1930s saw a strengthening of imperial ideology and geopolitical ambitions.

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 was accompanied by scholarly discussions and research on totalitarianism, repression and the tools of violence used. It was not until Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022 that Western historiography was provoked to re-examine Russia's imperial legacy and its reflection in Central and Eastern Europe. It is sometimes examined through the optics of postcolonial methodology. This approach sometimes raises questions and doubts among historians, anthropologists, and culturologists from Central and Eastern Europe. We want to look into these issues through an exchange of views and discussion during the annual Promethean Conference.

The conference will focus on the historical and theoretical dimensions of imperialism and colonialism in Sovietological studies, as well as various forms of cultural imperialism, past and present attempts by Russia to (re)establish geopolitical dominance in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

Recognising the important role of discussing Russia's imperialist essence, the conference will discuss the issue of totalitarianism in Russian history and the history of anti-Soviet resistance.

We invite experts on Russia to debate the perception of tsarist, Soviet and contemporary Russia in Western historiography and in countries of the so-called Global South. We encourage historians and experts on Russia and the USSR to exchange intellectually and consider why the theme of Soviet colonialism has not been the dominant understanding of USSR history.

Taking an interdisciplinary approach, we invite speakers from history, literary studies, anthropology, cultural studies, linguistics, political science, sociology and other disciplines.

**Potential topics of interest to the Conference include:**

- *Issues of Russian imperialism in the work of Promethean activists*
- *Features and characteristics of Russian imperialism*
- *The concept of empire in Russian political thought*
- *The vision of Russian colonialism in the intellectual thought of the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe*
- *Nationality policy of the Russian Empire and the USSR*
- *History of anti-Soviet resistance*
- *Expansionist concepts in the history of Central and Eastern Europe*
- *The concept of Russkiy mir as communal imperialism*
- *Imperialism and colonialism from a comparative perspective*
- *Cultural manifestations of colonialism*
- *Borders of empire and colonial borderlands*
- *Imperialism and language*
- *Colonial domination through the lens of gender, sex and ethnic issues*

The organisers are open to any topics that fall within the framework outlined above.

**Participation in the conference is free of charge.**

Languages of the conference: **Polish and English.**

**Length of the paper up to 20 minutes.**

For participants coming from outside Poland, we can make reservations at the University of Warsaw hotel "Hera" or at the "Gromada" hotel.

Applications for the conference should be sent by e-mail to [programy.studum@uw.edu.pl](mailto:programy.studum@uw.edu.pl) no later than **31 August 2024**. The scientific and organisational committee of the conference reserves the right to make the final decision on qualifying the text of the paper and its publication.

The organisers will notify the qualification of the paper by **15 September**, reserving the right to reject submitted paper proposals without giving reasons. Selected papers will be published in the journal "Nowy Prometeusz".

#### **Scientific Committee:**

Oleksandr Avramchuk, PhD (Catholic University of Lublin)

prof. Zaur Gasimov (University of Bonn)

Jan Malicki, dr h.c. (Centre for East European Studies, University of Warsaw)

prof. Gennadii Korolov (The Mieroszewski Centre)

Katsiaryna Kryvichanina, PhD (Centre for East European Studies at the University of Warsaw)

Witold Rodkiewicz, PhD (Centre for East European Studies, University of Warsaw)

#### **Organizational Committee:**

**Shahla Kazimova, PhD (Centre for East European Studies, University of Warsaw) – Editor-in-Chief**

Hanna Kalinowska (Centre for East European Studies, University of Warsaw)

Denys Kutsenko (Centre for East European Studies, University of Warsaw)

Daria Szlezyngier (Centre for East European Studies, University of Warsaw)