



13th VILNIUS SYMPOSIUM ON LATE SOVIET AND POSTSOVIET ISSUES

Inclusive and/or Alienating Political Power. Tsarist and Soviet Rule on the Western Peripheries

5-6 December, 2024

Venue: Lithuanian Institute of History (17 Tiltos Street, Vilnius, Lithuania)

The tsarist era of the long 19th century was replaced by Soviet rule in the short 20th century. The two empires differed significantly in their nature, as well as in their political and economic systems and their international position. Although in the Western region, the two decades of freedom and statehood represented a significant break between the two imperial governments, moments of historical memory and even institutional behaviour created links between them. Despite the efforts of communist ideology and nationality policy to distance itself from the tsarist past, societies were imbued with images of the representatives of the centre as imperialists, even as governors-generals as in case of communist party second secretaries. One might even ask how sincere, consistent and successful the Soviet regime and its representatives were in overcoming the imperial legacy of tsarism. To what extent did the newly created Soviet institutions take over and preserve memory and certain patterns of behaviour?

During the symposium we will try to answer these questions by analysing the institutional set-up of Tsarist Russia and the USSR, the centre-periphery relations, the political and administrative behaviour of the representatives of the centre, and the relations with the local societies. Whether there was a national hierarchy, how the governments were interested in and studied the local people, how national discrimination manifested itself or could be observed, how local people were (or were not) involved in governance. The symposium will discuss the nature of governance in the Russian Empire and the Soviet ethno-federation, their similarities and differences. The focus will be on the interaction of the institutes of the centre with local ethnic and confessional communities and political and cultural elites.

Program

Thursday, December 5th

10:00-10:20 Opening Remarks

10:20-11:00 Keynote speech **William Prigge**, South Dakota State University, USA
A World-Systems Analysis of the Soviet Union

11:00-11:20 Coffee break

11:20-12:50 **1st session. Governing Peripheries in Romanov's Empire**

Lukas Pocius, Lithuanian Institute of History, Vilnius

"Viceroy of the Emperor": the Might and Type of Governance of the Governor-General of Vilnius

Malgorzata Abassy, Jagiellonian University in Kraków, Poland

Reformulating the Imperial Administrative System in the Caucasus: Projects by A.S. Griboyedov and A.G. Chavchavadze

Darius Staliūnas, Lithuanian Institute of History, Vilnius

The Role of Ethnic Hierarchy in the Regulation of Regimes of Language in the Western Borderlands of the Romanov Empire after 1905

12:50-14:30 Lunch

14:30-16:00 **2nd session. Ethnography of Power and Nations in Western Periphery**

Česlovas Laurinavičius, Lithuanian Institute of History, Vilnius

The Drift of Russian Politics from Legitimist Traditions towards the Ethnographic Principle (Second Half of 19th Century – Beginning of 20th Century). Lithuanian Case

Vida Savoniakaitė, Lithuanian Institute of History, Vilnius

Political Power of the Early Ethnographer: Eduards Volters in North West Region, 1882–1941

Daina Bleiere, University of Latvia, Latvia

Making Latvian Ethnography Soviet (1940-1950)

Friday, December 6th

10:00-11:00 **3rd session. Soviet Governing, Spatial Planning and Symbols**

Michael Loader, University of Glasgow, UK

Inside the Central Committee Apparatus: Strategies and Attitudes of the Communist Party's "Imperial Guard"

Rasa Čepaitienė, Lithuanian Institute of History, Vilnius

The Soviet Symbolic Landscape: the Periphery Comes to the Centre and the Centre to the Periphery

11:00-11:20 Coffee break

11:20-12:20 **4th session. Economic and Social Trends in Soviet Baltic Republics**

Vladas Sirutavičius, Lithuanian Institute of History, Vilnius

The "Empire" of Socialist Emulation. The Case of Post-War Lithuania

Saulius Grybkauskas, Lithuanian Institute of History, Vilnius

Imperial Dormitory of Ethnic Elites. Baltic Students in Moscow and Leningrad

12:20-13:00 **Discussion**