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Physical Violence and State Legitimacy in Late Socialism

Mimetic Loyalties: Support and Betrayal of the Soviet rule

Within the Soviet studies, the colonial aspects are underestimated for varying reasons. Conventionally, colonial experience is related to the West and its classical oversea colonies, based on the narratives of (Western) European supremacy over the colonized subject, and the expansion of the rising capitalist economies, which leaves the Soviet system as such outside.

With the growing interests to apply the colonial and postcolonial studies on the former Soviet Union, aim of my research is to illuminate how the Soviet regime sustained itself through the mimetic class, or the class of interpreters, the native elites trained and employed to support the legacy of the Soviet (colonial) regime. It is, to paraphrase H.Bhabha, the mimic men, the interpreter, who's life is an art of compromise – to suppress the local traditions and cultural habits and sustaining the superiority of the colonizer.

While the postcolonial theorists focus on culture and education, the focus on my research is on political transmission of power. It will focus on the groups authorized to use, legitimately, power in defense of the legitimacy of political regime – Soviet militia and high school teachers. The aim of the research is to illuminate how the self governance of the colonized are assured by local (national) militia and local (national) school system, how do people employed in these structures perceive their own compromised identities; how they perform the surveillance function and punitive raids upon the practices they are partially sustaining themselves, how they compromise between the shifting loyalties towards the political regime and loyalties towards local community and how community deals with the betrayal.