

The Collapse of the Soviet Union as a Partition

The Collapse of the Soviet Union as a Partition: Toward a Critique of the Decolonization Paradigm

We kindly invite you to a seminar with Anton Liavitski "The Collapse of the Soviet Union as a Partition: Toward a Critique of the Decolonization Paradigm". The meeting will be chaired by Zuzanna Bogumi?.

Posted on: 03-03-2026

Kategorie: Seminarium



Useful information **Event website:** [Facebook](#) [1]

Place: online

Start date: 17-03-2026

Time: 9:30

The seminar will take place online, 17 March 2026, at 9:30 am CET.

[Please register in order to participate >>](#) [2]

Abstract:

The nature of the Soviet Union as a multiethnic state remains a central question in contemporary historical scholarship. Some scholars view the USSR as a system that simultaneously fostered national difference and repressed non-Russian groups, while others describe it as a colonial empire. This talk contributes to this debate by asking how we can best understand the collapse of the Soviet Union. Drawing on debates in national and regional newspapers in Belarus, it reconstructs how the public perceived Soviet federalism and its violent dissolution. Belarusian interpretations of the Soviet collapse—shaped by entangled regional dynamics—were grounded in an anti-nationalist critique: a defense of Soviet federalism as a framework for peaceful coexistence among ethnic groups and a rejection of anti-Soviet nationalism as the primary cause of ethnic violence. In this light, the collapse of the USSR appears not as the liberation of preexisting nations but as a partition—an attempt to resolve tensions within a multiethnic polity that instead produced new hierarchies and conflicts within emerging nation-states.

Bio:

Dr. Anton Liavitski is a historian specializing in the intellectual and political history of Belarus and the Soviet Union, with a focus on post-socialist transformation. Currently, he is a junior fellow at the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich. He earned his PhD from Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich in 2022. He has since held research fellowships at the Institute for Contemporary History in Munich, Central European University, and the University of St. Gallen. His research, published in journals such as *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* and *Kritika*, examines political transformation and nation-building in post-socialist Eastern Europe.

About the seminar series:

Series „Postcolonial perspectives–postdependance entanglements” is organized in frames of two research projects sponsored by the National Science Centre, Poland “Remembering Soviet repressions in the post-multiple colonial Russian Far East”, no. 2020/39/B/HS6/02809 and SocialMemory and the Post-Imperial Russian Heritage in Poland no. 2021/41/B/HS3/00852.

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Links

[1] <https://fb.me/e/5shzCpOc9>

[2] https://uw-edu-pl.zoom.us/meeting/register/SR7-culFR3qJCtkncmiNaQ?fbclid=IwY2xjawQTV_ZleHRuA2FbQIxMABicmkETBpdzIxd2lpZmtrUjRXZmM3c3J0YwZhcHBfaWQQMjlyMDM5MTc4ODlwMDg5MgABHpNom06aKNgVG6yY2Ry6SiFnzassE70rP1AUkpddk0WJ4lu-2wUj8vrndMdJ_aem_uXVHQe2y_9zD8ltMjeKb8g#/registration