Twitter Thread by Halley



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There are some topics that continue to fascinate me as a serious reading interest. The treatment meted out to indigenous people by the then communist Russia is one such.

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Today I was reading this paper:

"The Representation of the Evenkis and the Evenki Culture by a Local Community Museum - Svetlana Huusko"

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These lines left a strong imprint. This is the story of so many cultures.

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"According to the official Soviet view, the Siberian indigenous
populations were culturally, socially, and economically primitive
(Bashkuev 2013; Kozlov et al. 2007; Slezkine 1994)..."

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"It was crucial to overcome such primitiveness and lift the Evenkis and their indigenous neighbors from timelessness and being “traditional” and bring them into history, or Marx’s historical scale so that they would develop (Grant 1993)..."

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"Such a passage from “tradition” to “modernity” required “modernization and industrialization within the Marxist-Leninist norms of social, economic, and political behavior” (Bartels and Bartels 1995: 5)"

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"Shamanism was also considered “primitive and savage” in its character of expression (Hamayon 2002). The Soviet state considered
shamans to be charlatans that exploited Siberian peoples and encouraged them to resist economic, medical, and educational reforms (Leete 2005)"

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"Consequently, shamans were prohibited from practicing healing, perform religious rituals, and receive payments for their activities; they were also divested of voting rights and taxed for “unearned wealth” (Ssorin-Chaikov 2001: 11)..."

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" In the 1930s, many of the shamans faced radical repressions. By the 1940s, almost all Evenki shamans had been purged, and religious rites and ceremonies prohibited (Fondahl 1998; Leete 2005; Ssorin-Chaikov 2001)."

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"Thus, the Soviet civilizing mission was based on a rigid ethnic hierarchy that portrayed the Russians far above the indigenous peoples on the evolutionary ladder..."

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"The former had an obligation to guide the indigenous populations toward a socialist civilization, the pinnacle of human evolution..."

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"Accordingly, the decreasing influence and eradication of shamans and wealthy reindeer herders, the loss of subsistence activities, social disorganization, and ruptured family ties went hand-in-hand with the forced collectivization, industrialization..."

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"...the formation of new professional structure, and the introduction of new compulsory residential schooling (Fondahl 1998)."

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Today Marxist scholars do a lot of virtue signalling as if capitalism alone is an evil system that is destroying indigenous freedoms, cultures, lifestyles etc. They also portray colonialism as if it is an exclusive feature of capitalism.

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However, all evidence of what happened in Soviet Russia w.r.t indigenous peoples of Siberia and other such lands point otherwise. They were just as bad if not worse.

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The Dharmic model offers a great contrast. Even to this day so many diversities thrive on this land. Although it is evident that our best days are behind us w.r.t nurturing these diversities. Ofcourse one can always hope for a better tomorrow!

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