

WEDNESDAY, MAY 17TH

11:30-13:30 3RD SESSION (second part)

Marc Elie (CERCEC / CNRS-EHESS, Paris): The End of the Virgin Lands or Their Return? The Environmental Impact of the Fall of the Soviet Union on Steppe Agriculture in Russia and Kazakhstan.

Comments: Paul Josephson (Colby College, Waterville), Julia Lajus (Higher School of Economics, St. Petersburg)

13:30-15:00 LUNCH

15:00-16:00 4TH SESSION

Chair: Ulf Brunnbauer (IOS Regensburg)

Alexander Ananyev (Eberhard Karls University, Tübingen): Russian Polar Politics and Environmental Problems in the 1990s.

Comments: Jacob Hamblin (Oregon State University, Corvallis), Michel Dupuy (Institut d'histoire moderne et contemporaine, Paris)

16:00-16:30 COFFEE & TEA

16:30-18:00 CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

Chair: Klaus Gestwa (Eberhard Karls University Tübingen)

19:00 DINNER

The workshop is the concluding event of the French-German research project "Contemporary environmental history of the Soviet Union and the successor states, 1970-2000. Ecological globalization and regional dynamics" funded by the French Agence nationale de la recherche (ANR) and the German Research Foundation (DFG). The workshop is organized in co-operation with the Leibniz Institute for East and Southeast European Studies (IOS Regensburg), the Graduate School for East and Southeast European Research, the Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen and Le Centre d'études des mondes russe, caucasien et centre-européen (CERCEC) / Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS) / Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS), Paris.



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Cover: Abandoned rubber factory in Armenia. Photo credit: Thomas Hallier. Graphic design: Fabrice Demarthon, CERCEC

EAST SIDE STORY OF ECOLOGICAL GLOBALIZATION

May 16-17, 2017 | Regensburg

PROGRAM

EAST SIDE STORY OF ECOLOGICAL GLOBALIZATION

Many historians, social scientists, and others have explored the extensive environmental degradation and the rapacious exploitation of natural resources under the Soviet command economy and their justification under socialist ideology. A number of them referred to ecocide or eco-nationalism, and many others wrote as if the capitalist system was without similar features of resource use, pollution, and the like. More recently, researchers of Eastern European environmental history have moved beyond these simplistic explanations of the causes and effects of the human and environmental costs under socialism to consider the broader international, transboundary and other features of human economic development. Several scholars have seemingly attempted to “greenwash” Soviet history, while others sought to place it in comparative perspective with the experience of other nations as a way to avoid sensationalism. Still, the place of Soviet environmental history in global ecological and environmental processes has yet to be thoroughly analyzed. The complex Soviet and East European socialist experience still lacks in grand narratives of the “age of ecology” (Worster).

The aim of this workshop is to integrate the ‘Eastern’ story into explanations of global environmental processes. Participants will explore the role that the Soviet Union played in an “ecological turn” of the 1970s, and what impact this had, in turn, on the Soviet Union. By the mid- to late-1980s, in the context of perestroika and glasnost, socialist nations experienced a rapid and extensive rise in ecological consciousness. Public activities took hundreds of thousands of people to the streets and contributed decisively to the de-legitimation of the rule of the Soviet Party state. Only a few years later, however, ecology had lost its mobilizing effect almost completely. The workshop will look at both the rise of this phenomenon and its decline in the 1990s after the breakup of the USSR.

Special attention will be paid to circulation of knowledge, practices, and policy choices. How were environmental degradation and the need for protection measures negotiated by state and non-state actors, and what triggered and changed conflicts? The workshop will ask for ecological contact zones that made comparison, exchange and interaction with the non-socialist world possible. Participants will also discuss the existence of distinct Soviet or Eastern European paths and specific socialist contributions to ecological globalization. What role did local, regional, national and international institutions play as facilitators or obstructionists and how did they interact with each other? What were the trajectories, dynamics and temporalities of these processes? Finally, the conference aims at disclosing blind spots both in terms of Soviet and global environmental history.

ORGANIZER: Melanie Arndt (IOS), EcoGlobReg (ecoglobreg.org)

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CONFERENCE VENUE: Leibniz Institute for East and Southeast European Studies / Leibniz-Institut für Ost- und Südosteuropaforschung, Room 319 (3rd floor), Landshuter Str. 4, 93047 Regensburg

TUESDAY, MAY 16TH

14:00 – 14:30 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION by Ulf Brunnbauer (IOS Regensburg), Bernard Ludwig (ANR, Paris), Marc Elie (CERCEC / CNRS-EHESS, Paris) and Melanie Arndt (IOS Regensburg)

14:30 – 16:30 1ST SESSION

Chair: Guido Hausmann (IOS Regensburg)

Laurent Coumel (CERCEC / CNRS-EHESS Paris): Upper Volga River Goes Global. Water Quality Controversies in the Late Soviet Times (1970s-1990s).

Comments: Katja Bruisch (Trinity College Dublin), Zsuzsa Gille (University of Illinois, Urbana)

Katja Doose (Eberhard Karls University, Tübingen): Eco-nationalism or Environmental Legitimacy? The Ecological Transition of the Armenian Communist Party 1956-1991.

Comments: Kate Brown (The American Academy in Berlin / University of Maryland, Baltimore), Michel Dupuy (Institut d'histoire moderne et contemporaine, Paris)

16:30 -17:00 COFFEE & TEA

17:00-19:00 KEYNOTE

Chair: Melanie Arndt (IOS Regensburg)

Donald Worster (University of Kansas / Renmin University, Beijing): Shrinking the Earth: The Rise and Decline of Abundance.

19:30 BAVARIAN DINNER

WEDNESDAY, MAY 17TH

9:00-11:00 2ND SESSION

Chair: Irina Morozova (IOS Regensburg)

Melanie Arndt (IOS Regensburg): Nostalgic Bonfires and Nuclear Burnups: West Meets East in the Post-Soviet Garden, 1986-1996.

Comments: Kate Brown (The American Academy in Berlin / University of Maryland, Baltimore), Zsuzsa Gille (University of Illinois, Urbana)

Isabelle Ohayon (CERCEC / CNRS-EHESS, Paris): Facing Desertification: Herdsmen, Scientists, and the Social and Environmental Impacts of Pasture Degradation in Kazakhstan, 1960s-1990s.

Comments: Julia Obertreis (Friedrich-Alexander University Erlangen-Nürnberg), Katja Bruisch (Trinity College Dublin)

11:00-11:30 COFFEE & TEA

11:30-13:30 3RD SESSION (first part)

Chair: Christof Mauch (Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society, Munich)

Raphael Schulte-Kellinghaus (Eberhard-Karls University, Tübingen): Negotiating Nature. The Baltic Sea Invades the Iron Curtain.

Comments: Jacob Hamblin (Oregon State University, Corvallis), Julia Lajus (Higher School of Economics, St. Petersburg)

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