Post-Socialist Environments: Making, un-making and contesting natures in Central and Eastern Europe

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Post-Socialist Environments: Making, un-making and contesting natures in Central and Eastern Europe
25 - 26 November 2016, Pozna? (Poland)

Co-hosted by: Adam Mickiewicz University in Pozna? (Agata Konczal, Aleksandra Lis) and KTH Environmental Humanities Laboratory (Irma Allen, ENHANCE) in association with Irina Velicu (University of Coimbra, ENTITLE).

We invite interdisciplinary researchers to explore the notion of ‘post-socialist environments’ in Central-Eastern Europe. We seek to discuss the relevance and usefulness of this concept, as well as a need for creating new research approaches and methodologies for studying current as well as historical environmental issues in the former Central-Eastern European socialist states. The purpose of the seminar will be to bring together particularly early career scholars who are engaging with the politics of the environment in the post-socialist region in order to share perspectives, experiences and challenges; to build the beginning of a regional research network on post-socialist environments; and to facilitate discussion on the specificity and situatedness of ‘post-socialist’ research and its researchers.

In the initial stages of post-socialism, ecological damage in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) was largely defined as an inherent legacy issue of communism, requiring capitalist technical, managerial and market fixes (Herrschel and Forsyth, 2001). While the legacies of communism were indeed often toxic, symbolized by the devastation of Chernobyl and the drying up of the Aral Sea, the easy dichotomy between communist ‘dirty’ / capitalist ‘clean’ has since been challenged (Feschbach 1995, Bellamy Foster 2015). Yet critical interrogation of contemporary environmental degradation and the production of nature under post-socialism, including their historical and political background, remain scant, particularly within the framework of contemporary post-socialist capitalism (Varga, Kiss and Ember 2002; Velicu 2014). At the same time, the post-socialist context is often seen less as grounds for theory, more as illustrative of particularity. Motivated to address these gaps, this seminar will ask: how does thinking through post-socialism offer alternative and differing perspectives on the constant process of making, un-making, contesting and producing the environment, landscape, nature, natural resources and the commons? In turn, how does thinking with environments build theoretical understanding of post-socialism as a condition, process or perspective? Is there something specific about ‘postsocialist environments’? Or does the plural imply an incommensurability of experiences?

Possible topics include: natural resource use, environmental conflicts (mining, agriculture, forestry, water, fossil fuels), environmental activism, social movements, the commons, energy policy, law and legal regulation, nature conservation, landscape management, natural/environmental disasters, environmental history, large scale infrastructures, etc. We invite interdisciplinary (or even undisciplinary) approaches. Contributions from across the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences (anthropology, sociology, geography, political ecology, history, eco-criticism, political science, etc.) welcome, including research that spans the environmental humanities in the broadest sense, bridging even the humanities and natural sciences.

To apply: Please submit a 200 word by 15 September 2016 to Agata A. Konczal (agata.a.konczal@gmail.com [1]), Aleksandra Lis (alis@amu.edu.pl [2]) and Irma Allen (irma.allen@abe.kth.se [3]). Please include information about your background and research interests, why you

would like to attend the event and your proposed contribution to the theme of the workshop. Consequently, selected participants will be asked to send a short paper (2-3000 words) in response to set questions which will be pre-circulated for discussion. Details will be announced post-selection.

Finances: There are five travel bursaries of up to 80 Euros available. Please indicate in your application whether you would like to be considered for the bursary and why you feel eligible. The hosts will cover one night's accommodation in Poznan (25th) for all, and there will be a seminar dinner.

Adres URL ?ród?a: https://etnologia.uw.edu.pl/wokol-etnologii/dla-etnologow/konferencje-naukowe/post-socialist-environments-making-un-making-and

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