

Shifting Grounds

Changing Models of Nature in the Soviet Sphere

Keynote Lecture by Pey-Yi Chu Associate Professor of History at Pomona College

Slavic Graduate Student Conference
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
April 15-16, 2022
On Zoom

Zoom Registration:

Day 1: <https://illinois.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZloce-grT4rGdz2Hk9wOJGVqpWY673JsLTj>

Day 2: <https://illinois.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0rc--qpz8qEtAiUWg6Q-if3LpEHbRy7Ckl>

Program

Friday, April 15

10:00-10:15

Welcome Address

10:15-11:30

Nature as Politics in the Former Soviet Union

Chair/Discussant: Peter Wright (UIUC)

Communicating Air Pollution Health Risk in Ukraine on a Shoestring Budget— **Motria Caudill (University of Illinois at Chicago)**

From Productive to Charismatic Nature: Walnuts, Snow Leopards, and the Soviet and post-Soviet Ecosystems in Kyrgyzstan— **Aleksandar Kostić (Princeton University)**

Conserving an Aboriginal Honeybee Breed in Ukraine's Transcarpathian Region— **Tanya Richardson (Wilfred Laurier University)**

11:45-1:00

Keynote Lecture

What can Permafrost Teach us about Environmental Studies of Eurasia?— **Pey-Yi Chu (Pomona College)**

Saturday, April 16

10:00-11:30

State(s) of Nature

Chair/Discussant: Lilya Kaganovsky (UIUC)

Vegetal Histories of Donbas, Ukraine— **Darya Tsymbalyuk (University of St. Andrews)**

The Porous Borders of Donbas: A Natural and Political History— **Colleen McQuillen (USC)**

The Rise and Fall of Socialist Green Industry: Industrial Ecology and Wood Use in the Late Soviet Union— **Elena Kochetkova (HSE University)**

Everything Flows(?): Fluvial Time, National History and the Poetics of Siberian Hydroelectricity, 1960-1976— **Maria Whittle (UC Berkeley)**

12:30-2:00

Eco-Aesthetics on the Vanguard

Chair/Discussant: Alex Karsavin (UIUC)

The 4th Block: Chernobyl in the History of Ukraine Eco-Activism and Graphic Design— **Victoriia Grivina (University of St. Andrews)**

A Fruitful Pairing: Olga Sedakova and Ecopoetry— **Sarah Matthews (USC)**

Ecopoetry and Ecocriticism in Polish Contemporary and Award Winning Literature— **Agnieszka Budnik (Adam Mickiewicz University)**

Rubber Plants and Exiles: *Fikensy* in Alexander Solzhenitsyn's "Matryona's Home" and David Makish's *The Beginning*— **Benjamin Arenstein (University of Chicago)**

2:15-3:45

Indigenous Eco-Critique

Chair/Discussant: Jenny Davis (UIUC)

A Traditional Turn?: Soviet Hunting Science, Tradition, and Indigeneity— **Kamal Kariem (Princeton University)**

Soviet Modernization Mirage in the Steppes: The Aral Sea Crisis in Nurpeisov's *Last Respects*— **Verena Zabel (University of Freiburg)**

Indigenous Literature of the Russian Far East: Representations
of Nature and Society in the Works of Soviet Udege Writer
Dzhansi Kimonko— **Kenneth Yin (CUNY)**

Co-Sponsored by

The Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, the Russian, East European, and Eurasian Center, and the Department of History

Acknowledgements

The SGSA would, firstly, like to thank and acknowledge the land, on which the SGSA operates. The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is a land-grant institution that benefited from the violent dispossession of the Peoria, Kaskaskia, Piankashaw, Wea, Miami, Mascoutin, Odawa, Sauk, Mesquaki, Kickapoo, Potawatomi, Ojibwe, and Chickasaw Nations from their traditional territories. We pay our respects to Indigenous Elders past and present, and extend that respect to all Indigenous people in Urbana-Champaign. As this conference is being held virtually, we recognize that people may be on different territory, so we encourage participants to acknowledge the importance of the lands on which they work and call home. Even though this conference does not involve these Indigenous nations directly, through discussions of our current climate crisis, which disproportionately affects indigenous peoples globally, we hope to illuminate a path forward that can bring justice to them.

We would also like to thank and acknowledge Valeria Sobol and Lilya Kaganovsky for guiding us through the process of organizing this conference. We are also grateful to Peter Wright, Jenny Davis, and Lilya Kaganovsky for being our chairs/discussants. And we want to extend a very special thank you to Pey-Yi Chu for accepting our invitation to deliver the keynote lecture.