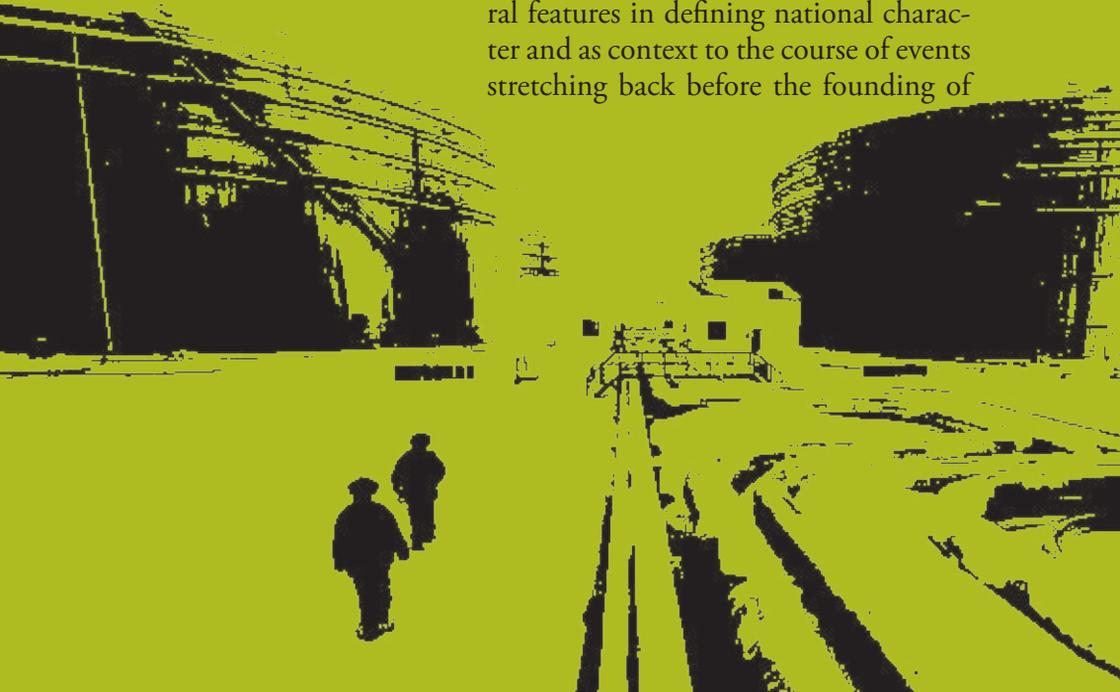


Writing the Environmental History of the World's Largest State: Four Decades of Scholarship on Russia and the USSR

Brian Bonhomme

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s writers often note, *The Environment* (or more likely just the geographical setting) has actually been a foil and background to historical writing about Russia for a very long time. Well over a century ago, the great Russian historians Sergei Solov'ev (1820-79) and his student Vasilii Kliuchevskii (1841-1911) each emphasized the role of Russia's forests, swamps, steppes, rivers and other natural features in defining national character and as context to the course of events stretching back before the founding of



the Kievan state in the ninth century, and from there on through Russian history.¹ Legions of others writing in Russian and English made similar points over the following decades. This was not environmental history, of course. For Solov'ev, Kliuchevskii, and all the others, the environment was mere background. It constituted something essentially separate from human societies, and also something static. It functioned more as an absolute context or frame for human history rather than an integral and ever-changing part of it. The historicizing of the natural environment and its integration fully into narratives and analyses of human history – in other words, the birth of Environmental History – happened first and most self-consciously in the American academy during the late 1960s through the 1970s. The pioneers, such as Roderick Nash, Samuel P. Hays, and Donald Worster, focused understandably on their own environment, the American, and were inspired in part by the simultaneous rise of popular environmentalism in America and across the West.²

It is harder to identify an obvious founding moment or group of texts for the case of Russia or the Soviet Union. Rather, the discipline of Russian Environmental History (as the field has come to be known³) emerged slowly after a long gestation through the 1970s

¹ S.M. Solov'ev, "O vliianii prirody russkoi gosudarstvennoi oblasti i na ee istoriiu", in *Otechestvennyye zapiski*, 69, 1850, pp. 229-44. V.O. Kliuchevsky, *A History of Russia*, Trans. C.G. Hogarth, Vol. 1, Russell and Russell, New York 1960, p. 218.

² R. Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, Yale University Press, New Haven 1967. D. Worster, *Nature's Economy: The Roots of Ecology*, Sierra Club Books, San Francisco 1977. S.P. Hays, *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency: The Progressive Conservation Movement, 1890-1920*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA 1959. Published relatively early, Hays's book was understood as a contribution to environmental history only after about 1972, once the field itself had begun clearly to take shape.

³ We "Russian" environmental historians seem especially guilty of a rather common academic sin, that of sometimes using the term *Russian* rather too widely to encompass also histories that others might consider Ukrainian, Belorussian, Baltic, Central Asian, and so on. On the other hand, the term is a useful shorthand given the overwhelming influence of the Russian state in the affairs of the larger Eurasian region considered.

and 1980s.⁴ Much of this happened outside the discipline of History and was the work of geographers, political scientists, economists, and others.

At the start of the 1970s, among English-language writers, relatively little was known about the Russian natural environment – beyond basic geographical factors and resource inventories. Resource management and environmental problems were particular blank spots. The language barrier and lack of access to primary sources of information compounded the problem. Thus, it does not surprise us to find that two early studies of the Russian situation, both published in 1972, focused on the most basic question of all: What *is* the state of the Soviet natural environment? These were Marshall I. Goldman's *The Spoils of Progress: Environmental Pollution in the Soviet Union* and Philip R. Pryde's, *Conservation in the Soviet Union*.⁵ Neither author was a historian. Goldman (an economist) and Pryde (a geographer) each offered a general overview of environmental management across the Soviet Union. In so doing, they introduced English-speaking readers to many of the main events and critical issues that have remained center-front since, including the desiccation of the Aral Sea, pollution of Lake Baikal and related protest movements, large-scale engineering projects, deforestation, industrial pollution, and so on. Although working from different disciplinary backgrounds, Pryde and Goldman made essentially the same main point: the Soviet Union had at least as many environmental problems as the US and other Western countries – a notion that was at that time far less obvious than it became later. Goldman in particular sought to counter then-prevalent western notions (fed by Marxist theory and Soviet rhetoric) that environmental damage was primarily a symptom of capitalist economies, and that it could

⁴ Some writers date the emergence of Russian environmental history to the past 25 years or so, restricting the term more narrowly to work done in History departments or with clearly historical methodologies. I have chosen a looser and broader framework of analysis here.

⁵ M.I. Goldman, *The Spoils of Progress: Environmental Pollution in the Soviet Union*, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA 1972. P.R. Pryde, *Conservation in the Soviet Union*, CUP, Cambridge 1972.

be ameliorated or even cured, by sufficiently increasing the power of the government “through regulation and even nationalization”.⁶ Against this, Goldman argued that the “prevailing form of ideology or government” was not the main determinant of environmental outcomes.⁷ Rather, “industrialization, urbanization, and technological change” were.⁸ The implication was that observers were probably paying too much attention to the *differences* between the capitalist and socialist worlds – the presence or absence of political democracy, private versus public ownership, and so on – and not enough to their *similarities*. After all, the steel mills in Magnitogorsk were essentially copies of those in Gary, Indiana. They relied on the same basic inputs of labor and raw materials and made use of similar technologies and processes to produce more-or-less the same end-products. The environmental impacts were therefore similar all along the chain. Pryde made comparable assertions. Nonetheless, both authors still sensed that the two systems – East and West – were not identical. The power the Soviet state and its underpinning one-Party dictatorship could bring to bear in order to conceive, plan, and execute huge-scale projects such as the First Five-Year Plan seemed unique. So did the accompanying brutality, particularly the mass deportations and famines associated with Collectivization. So also did the lofty Soviet rhetorical discourses about re-engineering man and nature, about creating a new human social order, a new society. Both authors therefore spent considerable time and effort examining the unique circumstances of Soviet political culture, economic planning, and Marxist-Leninist ideology, as if unsure in the final telling whether or not East and West really *were* more alike or unlike. Not only did Pryde and Goldman leave this particular question unresolved – the degree or the manner in which socialism produces a unique sort of industrialism and thus unique environmental problems remains one of the great debates of the field to this day. It has continued to be a particular focus over several books for Paul R. Josephson, for ex-

⁶ Goldman, *Spoils of Progress* cit., p. 4.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

ample (see below). On the other hand, interest in Marx and Engels's theories as a viable or possibly superior ideological foundation for ecological analysis or progress, after waxing strong in the 1970s and 1980s, has faded more recently, at least among Russianists.⁹

A second wave: Reform- and Collapse-Era writings, late 1980s-early 1990s

Gorbachev-era reforms inspired researchers to take a closer look both at environmental realities and their historical contexts in the Soviet Union. *Glasnost*, in particular, also made the enterprise more productive. The relatively open attitude to research and expression facilitated a wave of new publications from the late 1980s. Philip R. Pryde offered a much-updated and more detailed look at the subject he had helped pioneer back in 1972, finding matters generally had not improved, and in some cases had deteriorated.¹⁰ Political Scientists such as Charles E. Ziegler¹¹ and Barbara Jancar-Webster¹² took the oppor-

⁹ The issue got an early and fairly thorough going-over in H.L. Parsons, *Marx and Engels on Ecology*, Greenwood Press, Westpoint 1977. Nearly a decade later, J. DeBardeleben's *The Environment and Marxism-Leninism: The Soviet and East German Experience*, Westview Press, Boulder 1985, also treated the subject in detail. DeBardeleben, however, focused less on the relevance of Marxist ideology to environmental issues than on the responses of Party theorists to ongoing environmental damage in the USSR during the 1970s and early 1980s. See also J. Bellamy Foster, "Marx's Ecology in Historical Perspective", in *International Socialism Journal*, 96, 2002, <http://pubs.socialistreviewindex.org.uk/isj96/foster.htm>.

¹⁰ P.R. Pryde, *Environmental Management in the Soviet Union*, CUP, Cambridge 1991. Pryde went on to publish a further update: *Environmental Resources and Constraints in the Former Soviet Republics*, Westview Press, Boulder 1995.

¹¹ C.E. Ziegler, *Environmental Policy in the USSR*, University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst 1987. Ziegler, a political scientist also did not seek to criticize the Soviet system, rather to unfold the policy-making process as it related to environmental issues. Like DeBardeleben, he saw the Soviet Union as essentially similar to the US and other Western countries in terms of the sorts of environmental problems generated or experienced and attributed them to common goals of economic growth.

¹² B.W. Jancar-Webster, *Environmental Management in the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia: Structure and Regulation in Federal Communist States*, Duke University Press, Durham 1987.

tunity to use environmental challenges and policies as a window into the operations of the Soviet political system. (Both essentially argued that in the USSR polluters were insufficiently checked by public input, or institutional accountability, making efficient environmental policy and enforcement problematical). Focusing instead on the increasingly available published economic data, Mildred M. Turnbull examined patterns of investment in environmental management across a number of major industries during the Brezhnev to Gorbachev years – painting a picture of increasing spending with at best mixed results.¹³ Around the same time, Brenton M. Barr and Kathleen E. Braden’s geography- and economics-oriented *The Disappearing Russian Forest* provided an early example of a study focused on one resource, rather than a general overview of environmental issues.¹⁴

Interest in the Russian/Soviet environment received a second filip after 1991 as studies of Soviet reform gave way to a slew of first-draft post-mortems of a failed state.¹⁵ Both in academic and journalistic circles a consensus began to take shape that Soviet environmental problems were not just *as bad* as the West’s (as Goldman and Pryde had suggested) but were far *worse*. Blame fell primarily upon the Soviet planned economy and upon unchecked Soviet fantasies about reengineering landscapes and “fixing nature’s mistakes”. Stalin and the First Five-Year Plan came under particular scrutiny. Thus as the Soviet sys-

¹³ M.M. Turnbull, *Soviet Environmental Policies and Practices: The Most Critical Investment*, Dartmouth Publishing Company, Aldershot 1991.

¹⁴ B.M. Barr, K.E. Braden, *The Disappearing Russian Forest: A Dilemma in Soviet Resource Management*, Rowman and Littlefield, London 1988.

¹⁵ Among the most important of this “first batch” are D.J. Peterson, *Troubled Lands: The Legacy of Soviet Environmental Destruction*, Westview Press, Boulder 1993. M. Feshbach, A. Friendly, Jr., *Ecocide in the USSR: Health and Nature under Siege*, Basic Books, New York 1992. R.A. Mnatsakanian, *Environmental Legacy of the Former Soviet Republics*, Centre for Human Ecology, Institute for Ecology & Resource Management, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh 1992. Although not strictly a “post-mortem”, another contribution from this time is the collection published as J. Massey-Stewart (ed.), *The Soviet Environment*, CUP, Cambridge 1992. Also valuable, though a little later, is J. Dawson, *Econationalism*, Duke University Press, Durham 1996, which focuses on anti-Soviet and pro-independence political movements motivated by environmental damage.

tem waned and died it was condemned with increasing vigor – rejected not just as a failed political system but also as an environmental disaster (accompanied with a medley of concomitant estimations, hopes, or cynicism about possible improvement in the post-Soviet future).

The tone had been set several years earlier with the publication in 1980 of an English translation of Russian scientist Boris Komarov's *The Destruction of Nature in the Soviet Union*¹⁶. ('Komarov' – a pseudonym of Ze'ev Wolfson – argued that environmental damage in the USSR was worse than even most well-informed persons realized, and strongly linked the problems to official Soviet secrecy and corruption.) It probably culminated (in terms of alarm, if not in order of publication) with Murray Feshbach and Alfred Friendly, Jr.'s well-known *Ecocide in the USSR* (1992).¹⁷ In support of their thesis – that the collapse of the Soviet Union may have been caused first and foremost by a suite of related environmental and public health disasters that traced back to Stalin's First Five-Year Plan, accompanied by an unbridled Soviet passion for massive engineering projects – the authors rolled out chapter after chapter of truly alarming statistics about poisoned rivers and seas, massive soil erosion, and pollutant-laden air, along with woefully inadequate and hugely overwhelmed health care systems. Even today it makes harrowing reading. *How* does ecocide bring down a superpower? According to Feshbach and Friendly, Jr., it did so in several inter-related ways. Massive waste of natural resources undermined economic growth and stability; failing public health reduced labor efficiency and contributed to cascading economic collapse; health problems also reduced military effectiveness by diminishing drastically the pool of draftable young men and women; and at the same time, environmental abuses in the restive non-Russian republics drove a new and effective political phenomenon called eco-

¹⁶ B. Komarov, *The Destruction of Nature in the Soviet Union*, M.E. Sharpe, New York 1980. (Pseudonym of Ze'ev Wolfson). "Komarov" also published *The Geography of Survival: Ecology in the Past Soviet Era*, M.E. Sharpe, Armonk, NY 1994.

¹⁷ See n. 15. Feshbach (alone) also published, *Ecological Disaster: Cleaning up the Hidden Legacy of the Soviet Regime*, Twentieth-Century Fund, New York 1995. Feshbach was trained in history, economics, and demography, while Friendly, Jr., is a journalist.

nationalism, linking ecological improvement with political independence from Moscow. There is much to these arguments.

Gorbachev- and Soviet collapse-era writings on the Russian environment share some common features, including significantly greater access than their predecessors to reliable sources of information, thanks to the policy of *glasnost*. What had before only been suspected or glimpsed (the sorts and scale of environmental problems, for example) could now be better verified; more accurate assessments could be made of their causes and contexts. And it became possible to focus on specific issues such as nature preserves, forests, or public health. Up to at least the early 1990s, also, authors wrote for the most part assuming little to no prior knowledge on the part of their readership (a symptom of the infancy of the field). Most book-length studies, for example, began with an introductory chapter on Marxist ideology and the environment. And the sense was strong that it was indeed necessary to understand Marxist ideology before proceeding, as if ideology was the primary cause of outcomes. This idea has waned in more recent times. As the field has blossomed it has become less deductive and more inductive or empirical – concerned less with inferring narratives from Marxist ideology and more given to careful reconstructions based on archival evidence. One can get a sense of the changes simply by comparing the source-bases for studies discussed in this paper from 1970s and 1980s – which comprise mainly published material and oral accounts – with those done in the past couple of decades – which are based in multiple archives not only from the Russian capitals but also from relevant provinces.¹⁸

¹⁸ Just to give one example, D. Moon's *The Plough that Broke the Steppes: Agriculture and Environment on Russia's Grasslands, 1700-1914*, OUP, Oxford 2013, lists forty document collections from seven different archives in six different Russian and Ukrainian cities. The bibliography to M. Goldman's 1972 *The Spoils of Progress*, by contrast, cites only newspapers, journals, published books and articles, and oral interviews. Similar differences divide virtually all work in the field done during the 1970s and 1980s from most of what has been done in recent years. On the "deductive" versus "empirical" claim, note the absence in most scholarship of the past twenty years of introductory chapters on Marxist ideology and its implications for natural resource use that one finds in Goldman, Ziegler, and other earlier works cited in this article.

Russian environmental history: from topic to field

A common feature of scholarship throughout both periods already noted (early 1970s-early 1990s) is the relative absence of historians. Political scientists, geographers, economists, demographers, statisticians, and others dominated. Russian environmental history at this point could even be considered less a coherent *field* than simply a *topic* of interest to a small but diverse scattering of scholars.¹⁹

If there is a particular point when this all began to change, it was probably with the publication in 1988 of Douglas R. Weiner's groundbreaking study *Models of Nature*, which is perhaps the closest thing Russian environmental history has to a founding text.²⁰ Eschewing the prevailing emphases on recent and current affairs, pollution and public health – and plunging more deeply than anyone hitherto into the Soviet archives, Weiner argued that “through the early 1930s the Soviet Union was on the cutting edge of conservation theory and practice”.²¹ This was a powerful statement – and counterintuitive when read in the context of near-ubiquitous blanket condemnations of the whole Soviet project during the turbulent period of Soviet reform and collapse. Like all great theses, Weiner's not only framed

¹⁹ The relative lateness of historians to this area of study is perhaps understandable. Geographers deal constantly with the interaction of humans societies with natural resources and landscapes – so the jump to environmental issues in the recent past was not a great leap. Economists' and demographers' work similarly connects readily with resources, public health, and other environmental factors. While one might make a similar argument for historians the connections are probably less obvious and direct, and in any case historians had for several decades nurtured strong suspicions about theories that smelled too much of nineteenth-century “geographical determinism”. Even today, incautious (or dissenting) environmental historians sometimes trigger criticisms over this very issue (J. Diamond's hugely successful book *Guns, Germs, and Steel* comes to mind) – even as the field overall assumes a more nuanced position based in notions of nature as a historicized and socially-constructed phenomenon (see discussion farther below).

²⁰ D.R. Weiner, *Models of Nature: Ecology, Conservation, and Cultural Revolution in Soviet Russia*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington 1988.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. x.

an excellent book, it also inspired many further studies. (The present author's own first book, a study of early Soviet forestry practices, was conceived as a test-case of *Models's* main arguments).²² *Models of Nature* was centered on the story of a network of nature preserves (*zapovedniki*) established, for the most part, during Lenin's years as Soviet leader and with his support. At the heart of the *zapovedniki* was a unique concept – territories protected from *all* forms of use and development (including tourism) and set up as “benchmarks” of wild nature, natural laboratories where scientists could study natural processes in order to develop new and useful knowledge. In telling this story, Weiner introduced us to much else besides, including a cast of hitherto poorly-known Russians who did pioneering work in the ecological sciences and were in this regard easily the equals of counterparts in Europe or America. He undermined – even as it was being constructed – the notion that the USSR's environmental history was relatively simple, involving a defective and destructive ideology single-mindedly pursued by a monolithic system that had remained essentially uniform since 1917. Instead, he showed us a Revolution that – in terms of its environmental policies – had many competing strands, overlapping and contesting bureaucracies, dissenting voices, and promising developments. He was far from the first to do this for Soviet history overall, but he was the first to bring this sort of analysis into Russian environmental history.

Post-Soviet scholarship

In the past twenty years or so scholarship on the environmental history of Russia and the former Soviet Union has blossomed and ramified – to such an extent that it is impossible to provide any sort of comprehensive overview or to reduce everything to a few general trends. Instead, I have selected a cluster of developments that strike me as important, interesting, or both. Taken together they should

²² See B. Bonhomme, *Forests, Peasants, and Revolutionaries: Forest Conservation and Organization in Soviet Russia, 1917-1929*, East European Monographs, Boulder 2005.

give a fair impression of some of the major currents and debates within recent and ongoing research.²³

1. “Stalinist environmentalism”

One of the main stories has been the ongoing deconstruction of what we thought we knew about Stalinist conservation. Once imagined an oxymoron, the term is now increasingly part of the lexicon. The poles in this debate are easily rendered in the main. One assesses the Stalinist period as a brutal onslaught against nature characterized by massive and ill-conceived projects to re-engineer natural systems accompanied by a near-total disregard for environmental consequences, all of which was greatly worsened by the absence of meaningful public or institutional checks. The counter-argument is that the preceding constitutes a Cold War caricature that although useful as a general outline largely misses the complexity of the period; even under Stalin, the argument goes, there were meaningful and effective environmental policies, constituencies, and outcomes.²⁴

To be fair, it is hard to find anyone these days whose writings are unequivocally and exclusively in the first category. A remnant of the Cold War/Totalitarian school in historical studies, it serves instead more as a navigational marker (or even a straw man) in reference to which current scholars construct their arguments. The trend over the past two decades has been to highlight more and more ways in which conservation persisted, or even thrived, throughout the

²³ Those wishing to develop a broader sense of developments in the field over the past two decades would do well to consult in addition to the present article, and among others: A. Bruno, “Russian Environmental History: Directions and Potentials”, in *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, 8, 3, 2007, pp. 635-50. S. Brain, “The Environmental History of the Soviet Union”, in J.R. McNeill, E.S. Mauldin, *A Companion to Global Environmental History*, Wiley-Blackwell, Oxford 2012, pp. 222-244. Z. Gille, “From Nature as Proxy to Nature as Actor”, in *Slavic Review*, 68, 1, 2009, pp. 1-10. Gille’s article introduces a set of informative pieces in this environmental-history-themed edition of the journal. See also R. Dills’s article elsewhere in this issue of *Global Environment*.

²⁴ The categories reflect similar debates about the nature of Stalinism in general, of course.

Stalinist period. Douglas Weiner, once again, made an early contribution. In his second book, *A Little Corner of Freedom: Russian Nature Protection from Stalin to Gorbachev* (1999), he found that environmentalism, while hardly a priority of the Stalinist central political apparatus, was to a surprising degree tolerated and sometimes even encouraged as a relatively harmless and apolitical endeavor. Conservation causes and organizations, rather than being strangled under the boot of the dictator, constituted “archipelagos of freedom” in an otherwise highly repressive society. Weiner also highlighted conflicts over environmental questions among government officials at different levels, again picking apart notions of a monolithic state with a singular environmental profile.²⁵

Subsequent historians have continued in this direction. A recent article by William Husband, for example, reveals pro-conservation (and perhaps even tinges of deep-ecological thinking) in officially-approved Stalin-era children’s literature.²⁶ Mark Bassin, similarly, has argued that despite the Soviet authorities’ unshakeable “belief in the virtually unlimited ability of a socialist society to transform the environment”, socialist-realist art of the Stalin era nonetheless “evok[e] a picture of Soviet society as ‘nature-friendly’, non-destructive, and even loving of the natural environment”. This “paradox” he suggests, indicates “the profound complexity of social views of the natural environment” in the Stalinist context.²⁷

The most far-reaching reinterpretation to date of environmentalism in the Stalin era is probably Stephen Brain’s 2011 book, *Song of the Forest*. It counter-poses narratives of Stalinist breakneck industrialization and battles for the conquest of nature with an assessment of the Leader as “a peculiar kind of environmentalist”. Says Brain: “[A]

²⁵ D.R. Weiner, *A Little Corner of Freedom: Russian Nature Protection from Stalin to Gorbachev*, University of California Press, Berkeley 1999.

²⁶ W.B. Husband, “‘Correcting Nature’s Mistakes’: Transforming the Environment and Soviet Children’s Literature, 1928-1941”, in *Environmental History*, 11, 2, 2006, pp. 300-18.

²⁷ M. Bassin, “The Greening of Utopia: Nature, Social Vision, and Landscape Art in Stalinist Russia”, in J. Cracraft, D. Rowland (eds), *Architectures of Russian Identity: 1500 to the Present*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY 2003.

lthough not apparently driven by conservationist or preservationist concerns, [Stalin's] policies withdrew millions of hectares [of forest] from economic exploitation on the grounds that this would improve the hydrology of the Soviet Union. These millions of hectares were left more or less untouched, in keeping with the supposition that complex, wild forests best regulated water flows, and thus one may conclude that Stalin's policies were steadfastly environmental – and because of the way they were carried out, preservationist as well".²⁸ Although it is difficult to imagine Stalin as an environmentalist, even an accidental one, Brain pushes us to make the leap: "[F]orest protection driven by different motivations than those that animate conservationism in other countries is forest protection nonetheless".²⁹ This is an ambitious thesis and an important and provocative book.³⁰ It represents to some degree the current state of the art on scholarship of the intersection of Stalinism and the natural environment.³¹

2. *Is there a uniquely socialist (or soviet) environmentalism?*

A related debate continues over the question of how unique was the USSR's environmental record when compared with the US or when set in an even wider international context – questions that were raised first by Goldman and Pryde before being picked over

²⁸ S. Brain, *Song of the Forest: Russian Forestry and Stalinist Environmentalism, 1905-1953*, University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh 2011, p. 2.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 131.

³⁰ A lively discussion of Brain's book by multiple writers appears at *H-Environment Roundtable Reviews*, 3-5, 2013, J.D. Hamblin (ed.), <http://www.h-net.org/~environ/roundtables/env-roundtable-3-5.pdf>.

³¹ Scholars continue not only to deconstruct but also to deepen our understanding of the complexity and variety of environmental developments under Stalin through more narrowly-targeted case-studies. Among many examples, see A. Bruno's work on the Kola Peninsula: "Making Reindeer Soviet: The Appropriation of an Animal on the Kola Peninsula", in *Other Animals: Beyond the Human in Russian Culture and History*, J. Costlow, A. Nelson (eds), University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh 2010, and *Making Nature Modern: Economic Transformation and The Environment in the Soviet North*, Doctoral Dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign 2011.

in more detail, and with more statistical evidence, by the cohort of the late 1980s and early 1990s discussed above. Perhaps the most important recent author here is Paul R. Josephson who has devoted several monographs to comparing Soviet industrialization with counterparts in other parts of the world.³² His *Industrialized Nature: Brute Force Technology and the Transformation of the Natural World*, to pick one example, offers a national-comparative examination of large-scale (“brute”) engineering projects and programs related to forest and water resources in the USSR, USA, and other countries, including large dams, hydroelectric plants, river diversions, clear-cutting, etc. Josephson generally finds more similarities than differences. Grandiose plans – and completed projects – are common internationally. Soviet river-diversion schemes have their analogs in the US western states, for example. US mining interests have easily matched their Soviet counterparts in leveling mountains and altering terrain. And despite all the Soviet rhetoric about “conquering nature” and “fixing its mistakes” it is perhaps the Dutch who have done the most in this way, wresting about a quarter of their land from the sea and constructing some of the world’s best examples of monumental engineering works to keep the water out. And there are many, many other examples. This sort of “Prometheanism”, clearly, while especially obvious in Soviet rhetoric, is therefore not unique to the USSR and communism in reality – but is an outcome of modernization in general, of science and technology, and in particular of a near-universal desire for higher living standards and continually expanding economic activity in most corners of the world. On the other hand, Josephson argues here (and again in a more recent book called *Would Trotsky Wear a Bluetooth?*) that different political systems tend either to facilitate and focus these destructive tenden-

³² See the following, all by P.R. Josephson, *Totalitarian Science and Technology*, Humanities Press, Atlantic Highlands, NJ 1996; *Industrialized Nature: Brute Force Technology and the Transformation of the Natural World*, Island Press/Shearwater Books, Washington DC 2002; *Resources under Regimes: Technology, Environment, and the State*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge 2004; *Would Trotsky Wear a Bluetooth?: Technological Utopianism under Socialism, 1917-1989*, Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore 2010.

cies or, conversely, to mitigate them to some degree – or perhaps to establish (or fail to establish) some sort of tendency to engineer more carefully and responsibly. The Soviet system, Josephson concludes – its Stalinist incarnation in particular – was in some ways unique because it manifested a particularly brazen and destructive infatuation with at-all-costs massive engineering, a point he generalizes throughout several of his writings to all authoritarian socialist regimes. Mark Bassin says something similar (about the Russians, at least) when noting that Marx’s “belief in the possibility and desirability of reshaping nature through human agency” was “absorbed . . . with a special eagerness” by the Russian communists. Bassin traces the predilection to the Russian natural environment: the harshness of its landscapes and climate – and the difficulties these presented to procuring and managing the basic necessities of life – conditioned Russians to think of nature less as a “nurturing mother” than as a “cruel stepmother” to be resisted and beaten back.³³

It is important, I think, to ground all these debates in quantifiable data, which is not always provided in our scholarship. Whatever the Russians may have thought about nature; whatever Marxism or Stalinism may have encouraged or justified; whatever Americans, Europeans, Asians or others may have done in the way of their own Promethean engineering projects – what have been the *actual* results? Is the environmental record quantifiably better or worse in one political-economic system or another? Feshbach and Friendly’s aforementioned *Ecocide* provides copious verifiable statistical evidence about Soviet affairs; but even here there is very much less in the way of international comparative statistics – limiting our ability to make judgments about the *relative* position of the USSR against peer states. From multiple authors we have the *sense* that the Soviet system was particularly bad in this regard. And even without specialized scholarship we know the USSR as the site of some of the planet’s most spectacular and visible environmental disasters: the

³³ M. Bassin, “Nature, Social Vision, and Landscape Art in Stalinist Russia”, in J. Cracraft, D. Rowland (eds), *Architectures of Russian Identity: 1500 to the Present*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY 2003, p. 151.

Chelyabinsk (1957) and Chernobyl (1986) nuclear incidents, the disappearance of the Aral Sea, and relatively short male life-expectancy, to name just a few. But our conclusions, I suspect, are still somewhat provisional and approximate. Perhaps to some degree this is because, being historians first and foremost, we tend to focus on qualitative analysis and less on hard quantitative evidence.

If the environmental record of the USSR, and by extension of authoritarian socialist states, really *is* worse than that of its western counterparts (which I suspect is the case), then perhaps the main distinction lies less in the different economic systems (socialist versus capitalist) and more in the variant political cultures (authoritarian versus democratic). This was essentially the conclusion of an important study by Raymond Dominick published about fifteen years ago in *Environmental History*.³⁴ Dominick, a historian of Germany, compared the environmental records of East and West Germany and concluded that the West had managed its environmental issues considerably better. He went on to argue persuasively that the critical differences lay not in the economic but in the political sphere. Following the Second World War *both* Germanies, he argued, sought economic growth through industrial development in similar sectors (steel, chemicals, automobiles, etc.). They employed comparable technologies and processes, potentially producing much the same environmental challenges. Only in West Germany, however, was there a democratic political system and culture allowing for public input – via the ballot box, NGOs, demonstrations, and otherwise. This, in turn, provided a powerful limitation on the sometimes ill-conceived ambitions of technocrats and led to significantly better environmental outcomes in West Germany compared to East Germany. A similar logic can be applied to the USSR and probably to all authoritarian states.

³⁴ R. Dominick, “Capitalism, Communism, and Environmental Protection: Lessons from the German Experience”, in *Environmental History*, 3, 3, 1998, pp. 311-32.

3. *The linguistic turn*

Environmental History in general, Russian perhaps in particular, was relatively slow to take the much-vaunted “linguistic turn”. Nonetheless, it has clearly done so in recent years. Few historians now write about the Russian natural environment without placing human culture close to the center of their analyses; and few if any continue to conceptualize nature as an absolute system or entity external to and independent of human thought. The development has certainly provided benefits, helping tamp down earlier historiographical tendencies towards simplistic narratives about the decline of the natural world in the face of ill-conceived economic development – with actors sometimes cast, a little woodenly, as “good” (conservationists and indigenous peoples, for example), “bad” (rabid industrialists and government and Party officials), or just misguided (peasants, perhaps).³⁵ We are now much more willing to view natural resources as imagined and contested sites; and we are better aware that battles over the use or protection of the natural environment are not *only* episodes in the long story of humans-versus-Nature (or of humans-on-behalf-of-Nature) but are also very much about the collision of different anthropomorphic *conceptions and constructions* of Nature, and of the competing self-interests of different social groups. All this has raised our field to a greater level of sophistication, yielding insights into the relationship between national identity and natural environment in Russia, into peasant culture, and a host of other topics.³⁶

³⁵ I was perhaps somewhat guilty myself of having treated the Russian peasantry and conservationists in these terms in my book, *Forests, Peasants, and Revolutionaries*.

³⁶ Pioneering examples of this sort of scholarship include J. Pallot, D. Shaw, *Landscape and Settlement in Romanov Russia, 1613-1917*, OUP, Oxford 1990. C.D. Ely, *This Meager Nature: Landscape and National Identity in Imperial Russia*, Northern Illinois University Press, DeKalb 2002. A. Rosenholm, S. Autio-Sarasma (eds), *Understanding Russian Nature: Representations, Values, Concepts*, Aleksanteri Papers n. 4, Aleksanteri Institute, Saarijärvi 2005; and a themed set of articles that appeared in a special section titled “Nature, Culture, and Power”, in *Slavic Review*, 68, 1, 2009, pp. 1-94. Contributors here are Z. Gille, J. Costlow, D. Mincyte, K. Metz, and C. Staddon.

The flip side here, of course, is the danger that we end up slighting as somehow less sophisticated (and thus less worthy) more traditional and “positivist”– inclined scholarship that seeks to figure out what’s “really going on” in terms of human-induced changes in nature – including the quantitative analyses discussed above. This, I think, needs to be avoided. There is an important place in Russian environmental history (and far beyond), for probing, understanding, and communicating the tangible and measureable effects of human activity on the physical environment, of investigating real “changes in the land” to borrow Cronon’s phrase.³⁷ It would be a shame if our field were to split into positivist and postmodernist camps. Occasional comments I hear at conferences, among other things, make me wonder if this isn’t happening already. The best work we produce clearly draws on both traditions – simultaneously understanding the subjectivities of the power struggles we wage over describing, accessing, and controlling natural resources while also rigorously anchored in real data about the real world.

4. *Animal Studies*

In a recent edited collection focused entirely on Russian topics, Jane Costlow and Amy Nelson make the case for a potentially new subfield called Animal Studies. Perhaps best understood in terms of re-conceptualizing a collection of existing academic strands into a single self-conscious field, Animal Studies might be described as an interdisciplinary undertaking focused on the study of human societies through the prism of their evolving interactions with and conceptualizations of animals. Animal Studies, in the words of Costlow and Nelson, would involve “researchers in such animal-centered fields as ethology, ecology, evolutionary biology, and animal behavior” as well as history.³⁸ The field (sometimes also known as Human-Animal

³⁷ W. Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England*, Hill and Wang, New York 1983.

³⁸ J. Costlow, A. Nelson (eds), “Other Animals: Beyond the Human in Russian Culture and History”, in *Slavic Review*, 71, 1, 2012, p. 2.

Studies) has in fact been gestating for well over a decade already (at least since the publication of *Animal Geographies* by Jennifer Wolch and Jody Emel in 1998)³⁹ but it has remained somewhat detached from the discipline of History so far, rooted instead in geography, biology, and ethics. There certainly seems potential for fruitful interaction. Among many other possibilities, Animal Studies might provide a meeting point for environmental historians and scholars working on animal rights and anti-cruelty movements. These have generally occupied separate academic spaces thus far, even though they have much in common and might benefit from each other's perspectives.⁴⁰

5. *Moving onto/into the water*

Environmental History started out not only as an American History field, but also with its sights set rather firmly on the land. But in the past couple of decades, bodies of water have attracted increasing attention, too. In the American context, Arthur McEvoy wrote a founding text in this field called *The Fisherman's Problem: Ecology and the Law in the California Fisheries, 1850-1980*.⁴¹ Much more recently, "Marine Environmental History" was even the subject of a special issue of *Environmental History*.⁴² Landlocked bodies of water have long attracted the attention of Russianists – the Aral Sea and Lake Baikal in particular – but more recently attention has spread

³⁹ J.R. Wolch, J. Emel, *Animal Geographies: Place, Politics, and Identity in the Nature-Culture Borderlands*, Verso, London/New York 1998.

⁴⁰ There are numerous articles in print on the history of animal rights and anti-cruelty movements, for example, but the topic has not yet been embraced by environmental history journals. Consequently most have appeared in journals specializing in other areas, such as the nineteenth-century, Victorian studies, Area Studies, or in more general journals. An article of my own on nineteenth-century Russian anti-cruelty movement provides one example: B. Bonhomme, "Russian Compassion: The Russian Society for the Protection of Animals – Founding and Contexts, 1865-75", in *The Canadian Journal of History/Annales Canadiennes d'Histoire*, 45, 2, 2010, pp. 259-98.

⁴¹ A.F. McEvoy, *The Fisherman's Problem: Ecology and Law in the California Fisheries, 1850-1980*, CUP, Cambridge 1986.

⁴² *Environmental History*, 18, 1, 2013.

to other waters. A recent US conference of Russian environmental historians yielded numerous papers on a diverse array of water topics – surface and subsurface, and in natural and artificial systems – but even here few have ventured out on to the open seas.⁴³ An important exception is Ryan Tucker Jones’s work on Russian maritime expansion in the North Pacific during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.⁴⁴ Among other points, Jones argues that educated participants (naturalists, captains, others) of Russian expeditions in this timeframe were both aware of and alarmed by the environmental degradation their activities were causing, including the precipitous decline of the sea-otter and other fur-bearing animals. Insofar as much of this story centers on the Aleutian Islands, Jones’s work confirms and expands that of Richard Grove, who was the first to explore in some detail the connections between fragile island environments and the rise of environmental consciousness in the context of seventeenth-to-nineteenth century colonialism.⁴⁵ Tucker’s work also deepens our realization that Russians and others in Russian service were among the most prescient and sensitive in this regard, even if they were unable to check the damage being done by Russians overall. Although not one of the truly great maritime nations, the Russians nonetheless have a very significant marine history stretching back into the eighteenth century at least, and with

⁴³ “Eurasian Environments: Nature and Ecology in Eurasian History”, held at The Ohio State University, September 16-17, 2011. An edited collection of revised papers from the conference is forthcoming as N. Breyfogle (ed.), *Eurasian Environments: Nature and Ecology in Russian and Soviet History*, University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh 2014.

⁴⁴ R. Tucker Jones: “A ‘havoc made among them’: Animals, Empire, and Extinction in the Russian North Pacific, 1741-1810”, in *Environmental History*, 16, 2011, pp. 585-609. Jones has a monograph forthcoming on Oxford University Press in 2014: *Empire of Extinction: Russians and the Strange Beasts of the Sea, 1741-1867*. See also the same author’s “Running into Whales: The History of the North Pacific from below the Waves”, in *American Historical Review*, 118, 2, 2013, pp. 349-77, which assesses the influence of marine animal migrations on European imperialism and navigation in the North Pacific during a similar period.

⁴⁵ R. Grove, *Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens, and the Origins of Environmentalism, 1600-1860*, CUP, Cambridge 1995.

particular impacts in the twentieth.⁴⁶ There is huge scope for useful and original work in this area.

Where might we go from here?

Russian Environmental History as a field has matured and progressed mightily from humble origins in the 1970s. The recent publication of the multi-authored *An Environmental History of Russia* – which combines original scholarship and a survey of the field – provides a sense, I think, of where we are now and what we have learned.⁴⁷ Although there remain important questions, we have clearly dug productively and quite deeply into environmental topics related to post-Emancipation peasants and land issues, the rise and professionalization of environmental expertise in the late Imperial period, Soviet attitudes towards nature and its transformation, “Stalinist environmentalism”, monumental engineering projects, inter-departmental conflicts and bureaucratic power struggles over control of natural resources, specific environmental disasters such as the desiccation of the Aral Sea or the Chernobyl nuclear accident, and the rise of eco-nationalism and its role in the collapse of the USSR – to pick just a few. We have looked in some detail by now at forests, soil and agriculture, nature preserves, industrial pollution, public health, and more (but not so much at oil, gas, and coal, for some reason). As already noted, we have progressed methodologically, too, replacing earlier oversimplifications – based on questionable assumptions about the Marxist-Leninist, monolithic, and top-down characteristics of Soviet authority – with more nuanced assessments of inter- and intra-bureaucratic conflicts, regional and local peculiarities, and the

⁴⁶ Even prior to this time, one group of Russians at least – the Pomors of the White Sea coast – also pursued sea-travel. They represent another lacuna in our knowledge. For one of the few environmental history approaches to the topic, see S. Brain, “The Christian Environmental Ethic of the Russian Pomor”, in *Ecozon@: European Journal of Literature, Culture and Environment*, 2, 2, 2011, <http://www.ecozona.eu/index.php/journal/article/view/239>.

⁴⁷ P. Josephson, N. Dronin, R. Mnatsakanian, A. Cherp, D. Efremenko, and V. Larin, *An Environmental History of Russia*, CUP, Cambridge 2013.

contingency of concepts of nature. We have become less certain than we once were that the Soviets were so different from the rest of us in more market-oriented economies. We have benefited hugely from the wealth of archival and other sources that have become available in the past two-and-a-half decades. And perhaps not insignificantly, we have multiplied in numbers, too. What was once the preserve of a few pioneering individuals is now, clearly, a burgeoning field.

Nonetheless, the same book – itself an important piece of work deserving of much praise – inadvertently suggests at least one ringing deficiency of our field overall. Focused almost exclusively on the years 1861 to the present, it surveys the period 900-1700 in just over two pages (and the following century-and-a-half in only a few more pages). These are years over which people and environment must have left indelible marks on each other; but we have traced them in only the slightest outline and continue to consign them to generalized, introductory remarks. There are reasons for this, of course: the paucity of sources is certainly one; but there is also the general bias of Anglo-academia toward more modern (and supposedly “useful” history), the related realities of the job market (modern historians tend to have better job prospects), and the tastes of scholars. It is noticeable that what little work *has* been done on the earliest times is mostly the product of Russian scholars.⁴⁸ Perhaps the difficulty of reading older Russian sources is also relevant. Nonetheless, I cannot help thinking that our fascination with the modern period (of which I am guilty, too) is especially lamentable in Russian environmental history. Environmental change, while sometimes quick, is more often slow and subtle – and surely best studied over the so-called *longue durée*. More, perhaps, than in many other fields, in Russian environmental history, we have not done this sort of work. Would it not be good to properly investigate, test, and flesh out those oft-cited platitudes about how the Russian character has been shaped by environments of forest and steppe, by a lack of good natural boundaries, by harsh climates and short growing seasons, and all the rest?

⁴⁸ The many works of V.E. Boreiko are particularly valuable in this regard.

Similarly, most of us still have an abiding preoccupation with the role of political culture and systems – the tsarist and Communist governments in particular. Again, this is understandable. In few countries has the role and reach of government been as broad and complete as in Russia, so much so that no matter what one studies, government seems to be central, and thus usually becomes the object of attention. But perhaps this is as much apparent as real. Or perhaps, at least, it distracts us from investigations of other topics. Little has been done on the environmental contexts of public leisure or consumption habits, for example, or on other aspects of private life (which as Sheila Fitzpatrick and others have shown certainly existed even during Stalinism).⁴⁹ One of the most fascinating environment-related pieces I have ever encountered decoded British social elites' criticisms of the construction of London's first proper sewer-system as a set of thinly-veiled, class-based concerns about the private-property status of (their own) bodily wastes, government intrusion in the form of publically-owned tunnels under private property, and even the comingling of elites' feces with those of their class "inferiors".⁵⁰ Who among the current crop of Russian environmental historians could have thought of such a topic? Not me, for sure! Returning to the more mundane – we have yet to write all that much about the history of changes in the Russian land itself, something that our American counterparts have done in detail both on a national scale and for specific areas.⁵¹ (On the

⁴⁹ See in particular S. Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism: Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: Soviet Russia in the 1930s*, OUP, New York 1999.

⁵⁰ M. Allen, "From Cesspool to Sewer: Sanitary Reform and the Rhetoric of Resistance, 1848-1880", in *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 30, 2, 2002, pp. 383-402.

⁵¹ One exception is D. Moon's previously cited new study of the Russian steppe. Work on the forests, on the other hand – Russia's dominant landform by area – remains largely focused on policies, bureaucracies, and legislation, with less attention given to actual changes in the composition, health, and uses of the forest over time. See works cited elsewhere in this article by Bonhomme, Brain, and Brenton and Barr. For a study of nineteenth-century literary, painterly, and scientific conceptions of the forest, see J. Costlow, *Heart-pine Russia: Walking and Writing the Nineteenth-Century Forest*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca 2013.

other hand, they have been at this for longer than we have). These are all areas for possible future research.

It is gratifying to find that we are not simply talking to ourselves. Environmental perspectives are more and more finding their way out of the environmental history silo and are informing a diversity of related Russian-history analyses. This is particularly noticeable in scholarship on the peasantry by authors such as Cathy Frierson (on the social history of forest fires and other types of arson),⁵² Stephen Frank (on rural concepts of crime and justice),⁵³ Tracy McDonald (on the Riazan peasantry),⁵⁴ Aaron Retish (on the Revolutionary-era peasantry)⁵⁵ and many others; and in work on nation-building and national-identity construction by writers such as Christopher Ely⁵⁶ and Mark Bassin.⁵⁷

Conclusions

Doing Russian history, environmental or otherwise, has always presented certain distinctive challenges. Russia was and is a place where the state casts a heavy shadow. Particularly but not exclusively in Soviet times, the truth has sometimes been massaged, buried, or even erased. This has been done at all levels, from political regimes determined to control and shape information down to ordinary workers or local officials reluctant to admit having missed a quota. Published Russian and Soviet official histories are usually where the problems

⁵² C.A. Frierson, *All Russia is Burning! A Cultural History of Fire and Arson in Late Imperial Russia*, University of Washington Press, Seattle 2002.

⁵³ S. Frank, *Crime, Cultural Conflict, and Justice in Rural Russia, 1856-1914*, University of California Press, Berkeley 1999; and “Confronting the Domestic Other: Rural Popular Culture and Its Enemies in *Fin-de-Siècle* Russia”, in S. Frank, M. Steinberg (eds), *Cultures in Flux: Lower-Class Values, Practices, and Resistance in Later Imperial Russia*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1994.

⁵⁴ T. McDonald, *Face to the Village: The Riazan Countryside under Soviet Rule, 1921-1930*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto 2011.

⁵⁵ A. Retish, *Russia's Peasants in Revolution and Civil War: Citizenship, Identity, and the Creation of the Soviet State, 1914-1922*, CUP, Cambridge 2008.

⁵⁶ Ely, *This Meager Nature* cit.

⁵⁷ M. Bassin, *Imperial Visions: Nationalist Imagination and Geographical Expansion in the Russian Far East, 1840-1865*, CUP, Cambridge 1999.

are greatest,⁵⁸ but even archival materials need to be viewed with an especially critical eye. We have become particularly aware in recent years of struggles, sometimes bitter and with high-stakes, waged over control of natural resources between different state entities. One cannot read effectively into this or that ministry's papers without keeping this in mind. Although the state's voice(s) is/are usually preponderant among the sources, those searching in Russian archives (including holdings in American and European repositories) can always find countervailing information and voices "from below". There are rich holdings, at least from the 19th century on, from a welter of individuals, amateur and professional organizations, and other dissenting voices. Most of the recent scholarship discussed in this article, and much more that has not been, has made good use of these.

Similarly, in Russian affairs more than the average, there is often a particularly marked disconnect between paper realities and facts on the ground – between what has been legislated and what is actually going on. One has to be careful not to mistake one for the other, nor to rely too heavily even on archival evidence as a sure indicator of realities on the ground. Early Soviet forest legislation (1918), for example, placed large tracts of forest under fairly strict environmental controls and prescribed rational management systems across much of the country. In fact, it has become clear now that the forests were mismanaged and pillaged during these years in ways that far exceeded what had gone before and what followed for several decades. Reading only the laws and related documentation one would easily gain an entirely false notion in this regard. In the afterword to the

⁵⁸ A good example is provided by the corpus of Soviet publications dating from the 1960s through 1980s implausibly constructing Lenin as an important and pioneering conservationist-environmentalist. See, for example, P.I. Zhukov, *Leninskiye printsipy okhrany prirody*, Gosudarstvennyi komitet soveta ministrov Belorusskoi SSR po okhrane prirody, Minsk 1969. I.I. Khutortsov, *V. I. Lenin ob okhrane prirody*, Adygeiskoe otdelenie krasnodarskogo knizhnogo izdatel'stva, Maikop 1969. N.A. Gladkov, *Okhrana prirody v pervye gody Sovetskoi vlasti (po materialam leninskikh dekretov)*, Izdatel'stvo moskovskogo universiteta, Moscow 1972. *Vladimir Il'ich Lenin i priroda: Beseda dlia shkol'nikov*, Irkutskaiia oblastnaia stantsiia iunykh naturalistov, Irkutsk 1980.

second edition of *Models of Nature* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000) Douglas Weiner, while reasserting his main claims about the importance and novelty of the early Soviet nature reserves he had written about back in 1988, also acknowledged “surprising” new research showing that in fact there had been considerable corruption involving special hunting privileges gained by “high-level Bolsheviks” in violation of law along with other poaching activities. He also speculated that “the same gap between legislation and policy” might become apparent as research continued into other Russian environmental topics.⁵⁹ In general, he was right.

Let me close by citing the American environmental historian J. Donald Hughes who not long ago defined the “varied” discipline of environmental history by noting its three main themes: “the influence of environmental factors on human history”, “the environmental changes caused by human actions” including their repercussions, and “the history of human thought about the environment” including actions taken as a result.⁶⁰ We Russian environmental historians might do well to ponder for a moment where we fit in this schema. Although we have tackled all areas to one degree or another, to my mind we have made our best contributions so far in the third category (thought and consequent actions). Conversely, our preoccupation with the recent past (and perhaps also with political institutions) leaves us much work to do in the first category, while greater attention to quantitative analysis might gird our future contributions in the second.

⁵⁹ D.R. Weiner, *Models Of Nature: Ecology, Conservation, and Cultural Revolution in Soviet Russia (Pitt Russian East European)*, 2nd Edition, University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh 2000.

⁶⁰ J.D. Hughes, *What is Environmental History?*, Polity, Cambridge 2006, p. 3.