



Noosphere—Ecosphere—Semiosphere: Explorations into Environmental Thoughts

Conveners: Julia Lajus, Julia Herzberg

The current interest in conceptualizing the ongoing geological period of the history of Earth as the Anthropocene demands a deeper look into the predecessors of such thinking. The Russian-Ukrainian and Soviet geochemist Vladimir Vernadsky, who named humankind “a geological force,” is undoubtedly among them. This workshop intends to locate, quite contradictorily, Vernadsky’s legacy into a broader context of ecological thought in Russia and beyond with a particular focus on his ideas on Noosphere as a new state of biosphere, “a sphere of reason.” Unpacking the concept, comparing it to related research, and discussing the possible causes of the weak state of planetary thinking in contemporary Russia make the workshop relevant to the current debate on environmental governance and governance in general.

6 October 2022, 11:00–16:00, Rachel Carson Center

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| 11:00 | Welcome Christof Mauch
Opening Remarks by Julia Herzberg and Julia Lajus |
| 11:15 | Julia Lajus
“What is the Noosphere?” |
| 11:30 | Philipp Kohl
“Biosphere and Semiosphere: Natural Temporalities in the Tartu-Moscow Semiotic School” |
| 12:00 | Andrei Vinogradov
“Environmental Thought and Imaginaries of Pollution in Late Imperial Russia” |
| 12:30 | Julia Lajus
“The 1970s Conceptualization of ‘Ecological Crisis’ in the USSR” |
| 13:00 | Lunch |



- 14:00 Victoria Myznikova
"Different Ways of Thinking Global: The Unlikely Return of 'Noosphere' into Environmental Discourses"
- 14:30 Timofey Rakov
"The Urban and the Natural: Environment and Its Understanding in Soviet Science Cities"
- 15:00 Jonatan Palmblad
"No to the Noosphere: Organicist Objections to a Promethean Panacea"
- 15:30 Final Discussion