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Ecological Sites of Memory



D. Markosian. One Day in the Life of Chernobyl. VOA News, photo gallery.

D. Markosian: One Day in the Life of Chernobyl, VOA News, photo gallery. Source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:VOA_Markosian_-_Chernobyl02.jpg

After several decades of intensive and controversial discussions, environmentalism is a concern of more than just the present. Debates over environmental issues are full of allusions to history—though these memories are usually implicit and rarely talked about. *Ecological Sites of Memory* is an RCC project that seeks to look into the historical memories that resonate in our environmental thinking, thus bringing environmental history into a dialogue with the burgeoning field of memory studies. What are the key events that have influenced and defined our understanding of environmental issues? How did memories take shape, and how have they changed over time? Do memories create opportunities for environmentalism, or are they more of a hindrance in the light of today's challenges? And how do these memories relate to historical facts? The overarching goal of the project is to achieve a better understanding of environmental memories and their meaning for environmentalism today.

Ecological Sites of Memory is a work in progress with several incarnations, including books, workshops, and online presentations. These projects run in parallel, speaking to each other while maintaining their own individual character. The concept draws strongly on the tradition of critical history pursuant to Pierre Nora's "Les lieux de mémoire." The project is under the directorship of Frank Uekoetter (RCC, now University of Birmingham), who gratefully acknowledges support from numerous scholars.

Related links:

- "Ecological Sites of Memory" at the Rachel Carson Center
  https://www.carsoncenter.uni-muenchen.de/outreach/past-projects/env_and_memory/index.html
- "Umwelt und Erinnerung" project website (in German)
  http://www.umweltunderinnerung.de/
- *Ökologische Erinnerungsorte* Book (in German)
  http://www.v-r.de/de/title-1-1/oekologische_erinnerungsorte-1010691/

Websites linked in image captions:

- http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:VOA_Markosian_-_Chernobyl02.jpg