

Queer Ecologies Across Socialisms (Regensburg, 15–16 Oct 26)

University of Regensburg, Germany, Oct 15–16, 2026

Deadline: Feb 15, 2026

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In literary and arts research on socialist worlds, both queer studies and environmental histories have been expanding – yet we still lack approaches that would systematically integrate these strands across global state socialisms. This conference responds to that gap by inviting work that reads queer practices alongside institutional and environmental policies and traces the queer ecological impulses emerging from socialist contexts across the globe.

As a conceptual starting point, we draw on queer ecology as an interdisciplinary field that explores how environmental thinking and queer critique inform each other, and how ideas of “nature” and sexuality are co-produced in culture, politics, and everyday life. Mortimer-Sandilands and Erickson describe its central task as to “probe the intersections of sex and nature,” in ways that reshape both sexual politics and environmental politics (Mortimer-Sandilands and Erickson 2010). Following Nicole Seymour, we ask: “What counts as ‘natural’ – and why?” – not only in relation to gender and sexuality, but also to environment, race, immigration status, health status, ability, and class (Seymour 2013). In this view, environments can both naturalize norms and become sites for challenging them, opening space to read LGBTQIA2S+ histories and cultures as entangled with more-than-human worlds.

Why focus on global state socialisms? First, we want to move beyond the moralizing narrative that treats socialism as a single story of ecological catastrophe, and instead compare how environmental damage and ecological governance were produced within broader twentieth-century modernizations. (Engel-Di Mauro 2021) Second, socialist worlds also generated early debates about the environmental and social costs of economic growth – debates that resonated across both capitalist and socialist states, complicating the image of a monolithic socialist public sphere. (Parfianowicz 2022) Third, these contexts invite new questions about the entanglements of human and non-human in socialist states – opening space for eco-socialist and proto-de-growth genealogies, as well as for environmental-justice perspectives attuned to inequality.

Placing queer scholarship on state socialist worlds in dialogue with queer ecology lets us ask how socialist projects of modernization – collective housing, work, public health, and planned landscapes – shaped intimate life and more-than-human environments, and how queer attachments formed within these material settings. It also foregrounds state-socialist archives as sites of ecological critique and collective imaginaries of care, marked by tensions and alternative possibili-

ties. Bringing queer, ecology, and state socialism together helps us trace how constructs of nature and sex were negotiated across bodies, institutions, and landscapes – and what forms of solidarity and coexistence became possible, or impossible, within socialist modernities.

We invite academic and artistic contributions from Environmental Studies, Gender and Sexuality Studies, Life Sciences, Literary Studies, Visual and Performance Studies, Cultural Studies, and related fields. We especially welcome interventions from Indigenous Studies and work grounded in environmental justice.

Possible topics include (but are not limited to):

queer ecological readings of literature, visual art, and performance created under state socialisms
trans* ecologies and trans-corporealities: embodied transitions, technoscience, and queer materialisms

reproduction, health, disability in their environmental entanglements

anti-queer mobilizations and backlash politics

housing, labor, leisure, and their more-than-human ecologies

archives, institutions, popular science, education

ecosocialist, proto-degrowth imaginaries: utopian/dystopian imaginaries and alternative models of planetary care, including transnational solidarities and activism

comparative, transnational, and decolonial approaches to “state socialism” as a global formation

Please send an abstract (250-300 words) and a short bio of about 150 words (both as one PDF document) to martyna.miernecka@ur.de and pawel.matusz@ur.de by 15 February 2026. Notification of acceptance will follow by mid-March 2026.

We are currently preparing a funding application for the event and have some limited seed funding secured to cover travel and accommodation for invited speakers, with priority given to early-career researchers and colleagues from lower-income countries. If you already have your own funding, please note this in your application – it may help us sponsor more participants from around the world who do not have access to these types of funds.

The event will be based on pre-circulated papers. We kindly ask participants to submit drafts of about 2,500 words by October 5, 2026 so we can circulate them among all attendees in advance and facilitate our work on the edited volume.

Reference:

CFP: Queer Ecologies Across Socialisms (Regensburg, 15-16 Oct 26). In: ArtHist.net, Jan 13, 2026 (accessed Mar 14, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/51474>>.