ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE IN A POPULIST/ AUTHORITARIAN ERA

Edited by
James McCarthy

Environmental Governance in a Populist/Authoritarian Era

This volume explores the many and deep connections between the widespread rise of authoritarian leaders and populist politics in recent years, and the domain of environmental politics and governance – how environments are known, valued, and managed; for whose benefit; and with what outcomes.

The volume is explicitly international in scope and comparative in design, emphasizing both the differences and commonalties to be seen among contemporary authoritarian and populist political formations and their relations to environmental governance. Prominent themes include the historical roots of and precedents for environmental governance in authoritarian and populist contexts; the relationships between populism and authoritarianism and extractivism and resource nationalism; environmental politics as an arena for questions of security and citizenship; racialization and environmental politics; the politics of environmental science and knowledge; and progressive political alternatives. In each domain, using rich case studies, contributors analyse what differences it makes when environmental governance takes place in authoritarian and populist political contexts.

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Authoritarianism, Populism, and the Environment: Comparative Experiences, Insights, and Perspectives

James McCarthy

Recent years have seen the widespread rise of authoritarian leaders and populist politics around the world, a development of intense political concern. This special issue of the *Annals* explores the many and deep connections between this authoritarian and populist turn and environmental politics and governance, through a range of rich case studies that provide wide geographic, thematic, and theoretical coverage and perspectives. This introduction first summarizes major commonalities among many contemporary authoritarian and populist regimes and reviews debates regarding their relationships to neoliberalism, fascism, and more progressive forms of populism. It then reviews three major connections to environmental politics they all share as common contexts: roots in decades of neoliberal environmental governance, climate change and integrally related issues of energy development and agricultural change, and complex conflations of nation and nature. Next, it introduces the six sections in the special issue: (1) historical and comparative perspectives (two articles); (2) extractivism, populism, and authoritarianism (six articles); (3) the environment and its governance as a political proxy or arena for questions of security and citizenship (seven articles); (4) racialization and environmental politics (five articles); (5) politics of environmental science and knowledge (six articles); and (6) progressive alternatives (five articles). It concludes with the suggestion that environmental issues, movements, and politics can and must be central to resistance against authoritarian and reactionary populist politics and to visions of progressive alternatives to them.

近年来，全球见证了威权领导人和民粹政治的广泛兴起，该趋势并带来了极度的政治忧虑。本刊特辑通过一系列在地理、主题和理论上涵盖广泛范围与视角的丰富案例研究，探讨威权主义与民粹政治转向和环境政治及治理之间众多且深刻的关联。本引文首先摘要诸多当代威权和民粹主义政体的主要共通处，并回顾有关其与新自由主义、法西斯主义以及更为激进的民粹主义形式的关系之辩论。本文接着回顾其所共享的与环境政治的三大连结作为共通脉络：数十年来新自由主义环境治理的根源、气候变迁和能源发展与农业变迁之整体相关议题，以及国族与自然的复杂结合。再者，本文引介本特辑的六大部分：（1）历史与比较性的视角（两篇文章）；（2）资源榨取主义、民粹主义，以及威权主义（六篇文章）；（3）环境及其治理作为政治代理或安全与公民权的问题场域（七篇文章）；（4）种族化与环境政治（五篇文章）；（5）环境科学与知识的政治（六篇文章）；（6）激进的另类方案（五篇文章）。本文于结论中主张，环境议题、运动与政治，能够且必须作为抵抗威权和反动的民粹政治、以及替代该政治的激进另类愿景之核心。*关键词：威权主义，环境治理，环境政治，民粹主义。*

Los años recientes han sido testigos de la recurrente aparición de líderes autoritarios y política populista alrededor del mundo, un desarrollo de seria preocupación política. Este número especial de *Annals* explora las numerosas y profundas conexiones entre ese giro autoritario y populista, y la política y la gobernanza ambiental, con una gama de ricos estudios de caso que suministran amplia cobertura y perspectivas geográficas, temáticas y teóricas. Esta introducción resume primero las principales características compartidas entre muchos de los regímenes autoritarios y populistas contemporáneos, y reseña los debates que abocan sus relaciones con el liberalismo, el fascismo y las formas más progresistas de populismo. Se hace luego la revisión de las tres principales conexiones con las políticas ambientales, compartidas por todos como contextos comunes: sus raíces en décadas de gobernanza ambiental neoliberal, cambio climático y cuestiones integralmente relacionadas de desarrollo energético y cambio agrícola, y complejas combinaciones de nación

y naturaleza. Luego, se presentan las seis secciones de que consta el número especial: (1) perspectivas históricas y comparadas (dos artículos); (2) extractivismo, populismo y autoritarismo (seis artículos); (3) el medio ambiente y su gobernanza como una proxy política o arena para cuestiones de seguridad y ciudadanía (siete artículos); (4) racialización y política ambiental (cinco artículos); (5) políticas sobre ciencia y conocimiento ambiental (seis artículos); y (6) alternativas de progreso (cinco artículos). Se concluye con la sugerencia de que las cuestiones ambientales, movimientos y políticas pueden y deben ser centrales en la resistencia contra la política populista autoritaria y reaccionaria, y a las visiones de alternativas progresistas. *Palabras clave: autoritarismo, gobernanza ambiental, política ambiental, populismo.*

The rise of authoritarian leaders and populist politics around the world and the multiple configurations in which those associated yet distinct political developments manifest have been the subjects of intense concern and analysis over the past several years. The spatial and temporal extent of this tide is terrifying: Authoritarian and populist political configurations have emerged and either taken control of the state or come increasingly close to doing so in a very large and growing number of polities around the world over the past decade, including many of the world's largest, most powerful, and most iconic democratic countries. Although the specific trajectories and genealogies of these political formations are always unique at some level, they also share many general features: nationalism articulated and justified in the name of frighteningly exclusive and often racialized iterations of "the people"; the demonization of alleged enemies internal and external; support for and selection of authoritarian leaders who rise to power by exciting such fears and promising simple, direct, often brutal action to protect and strengthen the nation; and contempt for and direct assaults on democratic norms and institutions. At the same time, though, genuinely progressive movements, leaders, and parties have seen increased support over the same period in many countries. Although we hear largely about alleged polarization, what those superficially opposed movements have in common is a rejection of neoliberal hegemony and the articulation of genuine alternatives. That suggests that this could be a moment of hope and opportunity as well, if the left is able to articulate positive radical alternatives that are broad, inclusive, and sustainable.

So much has been widely discussed. What has received far less analytical attention are the myriad connections between authoritarianism, populism, and environmental politics and governance, the topic of this special issue of the *Annals*, "Environmental Governance in a Populist/Authoritarian Era." An immediate list would include the ways in which populist and authoritarian politics and regimes often arise directly from tensions between rural and urban areas; assert "blood and soil" claims of indissoluble links between the nation and the biological and physical environment; deploy resurgent tropes of territorialized bodies politic, contagion, and disease; exploit national natural resources to buy political support and underwrite their political agenda; attack environmental protections and activists to give extractive capital free reign; eliminate or attack environmental data and science in a "posttruth" era; and are especially dysfunctional political responses to the security threats, fears, and divisions associated with climate change. On the positive side, environmental movements and politics remain both a critical front of resistance to authoritarian and populist politics in many places and one of the chief sources of visions of progressive alternatives to them. These and other actual and potential relationships between authoritarianism, populism, and environmental politics and governance are explored in this special issue's six sections, detailed here: (1) historical and comparative perspectives (two articles); (2) extractivism, populism, and authoritarianism (six articles); (3) the environment and its governance as a political proxy or arena for questions of security and citizenship (seven articles); (4) racialization and environmental politics (five articles); (5) politics of environmental science and knowledge (six articles); and (6) progressive alternatives (five articles). First, though, a slightly more in-depth discussion of the origins and contours of the contemporary turn toward authoritarian and populist politics and their relevance to environmental politics and governance is warranted, to put the articles in a common context.

The Rise of Authoritarianism and Populism

Bolsonaro in Brazil. Battulga in Mongolia. Duterte in the Philippines. Erdoğan in Turkey. Putin in

Russia. Modi in India. Xi in China. Trump in the United States. The list of authoritarian leaders who have recently won or consolidated power over their country's central state, often by deploying or harnessing some variant of populism, is soberingly long and appears to still be growing. In many other countries, perhaps most clearly in Europe, populist and authoritarian parties, leaders, and movements have had growing electoral success and political effect (e.g., Brexit), even if they have not yet been elected to the highest offices. Several things about this trend are noteworthy. First, it spans many usual divides, encompassing countries in every major world region and category. Second, it includes many of the world's largest and most powerful countries. Third, it includes many of the world's largest and most regionally symbolic democracies. Fourth, as that implies, this trend has widespread popular support: Although many elections have had some questionable aspects (e.g., in the United States, gerrymandering and voter suppression preclude truly democratic elections), in many instances it is clear that these leaders and their parties really were chosen by at least very large portions of their electorates.

Authoritarianism and populism can each take many forms, be allied with nominally right or left politics, and articulate with each other in multiple ways (Hall 1980, 1985; Bello 2018; Borras 2018). In the wave of authoritarian and populist politics we are currently experiencing, each national instance, of course, has vitally important specificities and a trajectory that is unique at a sufficient level of resolution. Yet, the political figures and regimes mentioned share a great many common features, as many have noted (Bessner and Sparke 2017; Fraser 2017; Snyder 2017; Albright 2018; Bello 2018; Bigger and Dempsey 2018; Collard et al. 2018; Scoones et al. 2018). They advance militant, often economically protectionist forms of nationalism, insisting on the precedence of national self-interest and sovereignty over shared global interests and institutions. They use bellicose rhetoric and gestures in theatrical efforts to project strength. They promise to take quick and decisive action on highlighted issues, in contrast to liberal democratic administrations portrayed as weak, passive, and indecisive. They make the central populist move of claiming to speak and act in the name of and with the support of "the people," who are typically identified in nativist, xenophobic, and often explicitly racialized

terms. Following closely from that, they often identify internal enemies—ethnic or religious minorities, immigrants, refugees, drug users—as scapegoats and targets for public anger. They use populist rhetorical tropes of resentful antielitism, suspicion of experts and complexity, and celebration of direct action to promise simple, immediate solutions to complex, long-term problems. They present themselves as being, and often truly are, willing and even eager to use violence against opponents internal and external. They engage in direct and indirect assaults on the norms and institutions of democratic societies, including the rule of law, freedom of the press, and opponents' rights of speech and assembly—directly through the centralization and consolidation of power in the executive branch, efforts to test or even actively subvert resistant institutions, and punishment of political critics or opponents and indirectly through the contempt that they exhibit for norms, institutions, and people who oppose them. Moreover, they claim and celebrate a direct connection with "the people" that purportedly bypasses just such potential obstacles. Alongside these many commonalties, they exhibit one last, somewhat ironic common feature: an opportunistic lack of ideological coherence or consistency.

This tide of authoritarian populism has prompted much soul-searching on the left and a few key analytical debates. What is the relationship between the authoritarian populist turn and decades of neoliberalism? Is the turn we are seeing more accurately labeled as fascism or as a clear step in that direction? Finally, is populism inherently conservative or are genuinely progressive populisms possible? A brief sketch of these debates is necessary before considering how each relates to questions of environmental politics and governance.

The politics and political economy of the relationships between neoliberalism and the turn toward authoritarian and populist regimes are clearly complex: Many of these regimes came to power on a platform of reversing major elements of neoliberal globalization, yet they are often continuing to pursue and deepen neoliberal policies in many areas. A number of articles in this special issue examine precisely that tension. Whether such contradictions reflect a coherent underlying strategy or constellation of interests remains unclear in many cases (see Bessner and Sparke 2017; Scoones et al. 2018), although an argument can be made that maximizing

capitalists' flexibility and accumulation appears to be a consistent principle through these trajectories, one pursued through different scalar strategies at different moments in time. Most analysts agree, though, that the turn toward authoritarian and populist politics is directly rooted in the failures and successes of neoliberal globalization. Starting as far back as the 1970s but with pronounced acceleration in the 1990s, decades of increasing economic and institutional integration failed to deliver the promised broad-based economic growth, producing instead wrenching economic restructuring, deindustrialization, intensified competition, and accelerating economic inequality that left many workers, sectors, and regions behind. These trends were dramatically intensified during and after the financial crisis beginning in 2008 and the increased volatility and imposition of austerity that followed it. It is entirely understandable that many people felt betrayed and sought leadership that would clearly prioritize their self-interests over some promised-yet-never-realized greater good whose fruits seemed in practice to accrue entirely to the already wealthy. At the same time, however, it became clear how deeply neoliberal ideology's delegitimation of the state as a potentially legitimate or competent owner, manager, or representative of public goods and interests had taken hold: Even as people demanded recognition of their needs and desires, many took for granted that the state could never truly represent "the people" or even their interests and so turned instead to charismatic leaders promising to repudiate elites, including those currently in power. In a widely cited piece, Fraser (2017) diagnosed this conjuncture as representing the failures of what she termed "progressive neoliberalism," which she defined as a Gramscian hegemonic bloc centered on an alliance between certain fractions of capital (notably finance capital but also other technology- and information-centered industries) and cosmopolitan elites, who used a superficial commitment to the politics of recognition and meritocracy to mask neglect of or direct assaults on the interests of the industrial working class and many rural populations, a position further justified by the cultural denigration of the latter groups as backward and reactionary. Fraser argued that perhaps the key feature of the current moment is that protest and resentment against these decades-long trends are now producing electoral effects, through the replacement or dramatic realignment of major political leaders and parties.

The electoral successes of authoritarian and populist leaders, parties, and movements, most but not all strongly right wing, bring us to another major debate: What, if any, are the inherent politics and trajectories of such formations? In a nutshell, would these current political developments be more precisely or accurately characterized as fascism or steps on a clear road toward fascism or can populism, at least, ever be genuinely progressive? These questions turn out to be tightly linked, inasmuch as both turn on what is at stake in shaping political identities, claims, and agendas in terms of some polity understood as "the people." On the strongly cautionary side, Albright (2018) and Snyder (2017) both drew explicit parallels between the 1930s and the present, particularly between the rise of fascism in Germany and Italy and the trajectories of many contemporary authoritarian leaders who trade in the politics of populism. Albright argued that the three key conditions that paved the way for fascism in the 1930s were economic and political decline and uncertainty; the failures of existing administrations to effectively govern and address key problems; and the collaboration of conservatives who believed that fascist leaders would serve them rather than the other way around. She contended that we see quite similar conditions today in many countries. Snyder, meanwhile, dug deeply into the cultural politics—of identification, fear, scapegoating, demonization, spectacle, and more—through which fascist leaders either actively enrolled people in their movements or at least led them to remain quiescent (see also Arendt [1951] 1973) and drew chillingly precise analogies to specific utterances and actions by President Trump and his administration in particular. For both, the essence of fascism lies in its division of the world into us versus them, with the us articulated in extremely nationalist, xenophobic, and often explicitly racialized terms. It is alleged existential threats to that us that require and justify the extreme political centralization and repression that form fascism's other essential elements. Others offer a somewhat different and more analytically cautious view. Bessner and Sparke (2017) suggested that comparisons between support for Trump and perhaps other contemporary populists and Nazism are perhaps too facile and decontextualized and that they miss something vitally important: The historical

experiences of mid-century fascism led to an elite suspicion of public involvement in politics and policy-making, a sentiment that in turn directly shaped the establishment of the elite international institutions, from the Bretton Woods framework onward, which provided the foundations of the neoliberal global order against which many contemporary populist movements are now rebelling. In other words, many people are not wrong in thinking that economic and foreign policy have been shaped by elites rather than the voices and interests of the majority: That was precisely true, by design. To dismiss the resulting resentment, however marred by other political admixtures, as simply and only fascism is both unjust and a missed political opportunity. The convergence with Fraser's (2017) argument is clear.

Turning to populism, many authors contend that its core logic is entirely too close to that of fascism for any version of populism ever to be truly progressive. Claiming to speak for and from "the people" is a move that, ultimately, requires the drawing of a political boundary between those who are included in that group and those who are not. For precisely that reason, Swyngedouw (2010), Rancière (2016), Hofstadter (1960), Müller (2016) and many others reject arguments that there can be truly left or progressive populisms, suggesting instead that in the end, populism is always necessarily antidemocratic, usually constructed and deployed by and for elites despite its superficial opposition to them and all too often enacted along lines of racialized identities. Yet a substantial and growing body of theorists (e.g., Laclau 1977, 2005; Hardt and Negri 2005; Badiou 2016; Grattan 2016; Mouffe 2016; Gerbaudo 2017) have argued that truly progressive, democratic, and inclusive versions of populism are both possible and politically promising. The core of these arguments comes from Laclau (1977, 2005), who emphasized populism as a political activity and process that can symbolically and affectively link disparate groups in a society into a common counterhegemonic struggle. In short, and in direct counterpoint to the preceding critiques, the emphasis is on alliances and inclusion rather than on exclusion, and the organizing principle and goal is the subversion of the dominant order in the name of genuinely greater democracy. This perspective has been most strongly developed in Latin America, where examples of left-leaning populist movements, leaders, and administrations are perhaps most abundant. An argument can also be

made that, in a political moment entirely too characterized by nihilism and dystopic visions, populism's powerful affective and emotional elements might be useful or even critical in catalyzing or sustaining political engagement. These questions, along with many others, turn out to be central to the multiple ways in which the rise of authoritarian and populist politics articulate with the environmental politics and governance.

Connections to Environmental Politics and Governance

As Gramsci (1971; see also Ekers, Loftus, and Mann 2009) and Williams (1980) each argued in different registers, hegemony over society cannot be separated from hegemony over nature: They function through the same political formations. Yet the ways in which they do so can be far from transparent. The connections between the widespread rise of authoritarian and populist leaders, administrations, and movements on the one hand and destructive trends in environmental politics and governance on the other are legion. Some are obvious—the Trump administration's withdrawal from the Paris Accord and approval of the Dakota Access Pipeline against the wishes and territorial claims of Indigenous people, the use of revenues from extractive industries to fulfill populist pledges throughout Latin America, the repression and murder of environmental activists—and others are perhaps less so, such as the ways in which emphasizing the credentialed expertise underpinning environmental science might fuel populist resentments in politically counterproductive ways.

Several themes stand out as deeply relevant to this special issue as a whole and to nearly the full breadth of relationships between contemporary authoritarianism and populism and environmental politics and governance. Although some are highlighted in particular articles, all three form inescapable and consequential contexts for all of the cases examined in the issue. Therefore, rather than use them as section headings applying to only some articles, I discuss them here briefly as structuring contexts for the entire issue.

The first is the continued salience of neoliberal capitalism in relationship to the environment to these political developments (see McCarthy and Prudham 2004; Heynen et al. 2007; Bigger and Dempsey 2018). A strong case can be made that deepening

rural–urban disparities in the neoliberal era were central to the emergence of the recent populist wave, as many rural areas reacted against the particular burdens increasingly mechanized resource extraction, globalization of primary commodity markets, volatility, austerity, and declining prosperity have imposed on them over the past several decades (for in-depth explorations of this thesis, see Bello 2018; Scoones et al. 2018; see more generally the Emancipatory Rural Politics Initiative at www.iss.nl/erpi). From this perspective, it is striking and telling that in the United States, "four hundred and eighty-nine of the wealthiest counties in the country voted for Clinton; the remaining two thousand six hundred and twenty-three counties, largely made up of small towns, suburbs, and rural areas, voted for Trump" (Remnick [2017]. Equally telling and more hopeful, however, is that many of those rural Trump voters had voted for the socialist Bernie Sanders in the primaries just months earlier; Kojola, this issue.) This argument, which overlaps with Fraser's (2017) presented earlier, is centrally about political contestation over how and for whose benefit particular environments and natural resources have been used and governed. Likewise, many—including a number of authors in this special issue—have argued that many contemporary authoritarian regimes are pursuing and deepening long-standing neoliberal goals with respect to the environment, removing restrictions on capitalist production by withdrawing from constraining international agreements and standards, rolling back domestic environmental protections, and appointing heads of polluting corporations to head the very agencies that are supposed to regulate those corporations (see, e.g., Monbiot 2017; Mansfield 2018). There is a superficial tension in this set of arguments—withdrawals from the European Union (EU), the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the World Trade Organization, and other iconic institutions of the era of trade liberalization are interpreted at different points as both a reaction against neoliberalism and as a way to further and deepen neoliberalism; globalization is interpreted at different points as both a way to increase flexibility for capitalists and a way of imposing constraints on them—but that tension is resolvable if we focus on the fact that the consistent goal of capitalists is to maximize their flexibility and accumulation. That goal is best pursued through different scalar strategies at different moments in time: Withdrawing from the EU or from NAFTA does not

mean that the United Kingdom or United States will go back to the union membership levels, labor protections, taxation levels, or social protections of the 1970s or 1980s that preceded those agreements.

The second is climate change, and integrally related issues of energy development and agricultural change (see Zimmerer 2011). Much current work on climate change (a bit too much of it uncritically neo-Malthusian) emphasizes the chances that it will create or exacerbate conflicts and lead to political destabilization—via conflicts over scarce resources, due to climate-induced migration across national borders, or through direct conflict over responsibility for climate change itself. More recently, the potential for conflicts over proposed geoengineering actions has been added to this list (Surprise 2018). Work focused on more explicitly theorizing the potential political trajectories that could follow from climate change (e.g., Mann and Wainwright 2018) considers the possibility that balancing demands for continued economic growth with responses to the security threats associated with climate change could present genuine, existential threats to democratic liberalism and smooth the way toward authoritarian political responses and formations. The continued legitimacy of states might rest on their ability to respond effectively to the threats associated with a changing climate and energy transitions, and authoritarian regimes might promise to take strong action and address the critical issues at which democracy has failed. Indeed, many authors suggest that such trends are already evident (e.g., Beeson 2010; Fritsche et al. 2012; Gilley 2012). Even before such overt junctures, mounting awareness of climate change, even when the latter is consciously denied, might contribute to a generalized sense of insecurity and instability that can find expression in populist and nationalist sentiments (McCarthy et al. 2014). At the very same time, authoritarian discourses, state violence, and state-sanctioned private violence are increasingly evident in efforts to keep fossil fuels flowing, exacerbating the problem.

The third is, broadly, the conflation of nature and nation: the multiple ways in which physical and biological environments and resources become politically understood as inextricably linked to national identities, fortunes, and prospects (Koch and Perrault 2018). Very old and very dangerous links between ideas about the environment and ideas about governance are resurfacing in the authoritarian and populist

turn around the globe. Current politics of nativism, masculinism, white supremacy, and the hardening of borders are deeply intertwined with ideas linking racialized, gendered, and national identities to specific environments, territories, and the alleged existential struggle for scarce resources. Likewise, metaphors of the nation as an organism that can be healthy or diseased, contaminated or cleansed, are closely linked to particular imaginaries of national environments. In a more straightforwardly economic register, natural resources within indigenous or otherwise contested territories are being claimed as assets both critical for, and rightly belonging to, the "nation" to be used for purposes of national development. Among the many problems with such frameworks, the intense impulse to recode "nature" as "national"—the national territory, national resources, national self-sufficiency in energy or food, and so on—tends to obscures global and transboundary connections and processes.

Articles and Organization of the Special Issue

The articles in this special issue analyze these and many other topics and dynamics linking authoritarianism and populism to environmental politics and governance. They examine a truly global range of cases of complex socionatures, from a diverse set of theoretical and political positions. No set of organizing categories could do justice to their richness and complexities, and some themes, such as those already presented, run through nearly all of the articles to one degree or another. Still, some quite distinct and more specific themes emerged as well, and they are used to organize and introduce the articles in the issue next.

The first has to do with the need for historical and comparative perspectives. Although geography often excels at producing detailed, intensive case studies, there is also great value in explicitly comparative studies and frameworks that look across larger stretches of space and time. Two articles in the special issue take such an approach. The first article in the section, by Wilson, takes an explicitly comparative historical approach, examining how environmental governance of key sectors functioned under authoritarian regimes in the Soviet Union, Maoist China, and Nazi Germany to see what history can tell us about environmental governance under authoritarian regimes. Several other articles,

although in other sections, also offer much longer term historical perspectives, although typically with respect to only one country or location. The second article in this section, by Middeldorp and Le Billon, provides a comparative perspective across a large number of cases in the present, examining the widespread violent, often deadly, repression of environmental activism and dissent by authoritarian regimes. Although Middeldorp and Le Billon focus in particular on one case in Honduras that also speaks to dynamics around extractives examined in the next section, they emphasize the broader pattern into which that case fits, including the complex ways in which populist and authoritarian politics can interact around questions of environmental governance. Comparative perspectives can be useful, but the article by Arefin in the third section cautions against the temptation of simplistic typologies and the importation and application of Western analytical categories onto states in other regions and political cultures. By contrast, the article by Clarke-Sather in the same section argues that Foucault's characterization of the relationship between liberalization and security does in fact offer sharp insights into the trajectory of agricultural policy under China's authoritarian government.

The six articles in the second section on extractivism, populism, and authoritarianism demonstrate how complex and polyvalent the relations among those categories can be (see also Koch and Perrault 2018). The first article in the section, by Kenney-Lazar, examines rapid economic growth in Laos over the past decade as a case of "neoliberal authoritarianism," arguing that authoritarian rule has been essential to the commodification of rural lands and resources—from mining to industrial tree plantations—that has fueled neoliberal accumulation, yet also fostered populist resistance in the countryside. By contrast, the second article, by Lyall and Valdivia, argues that "petro-populism" in Ecuador has turned on a populist regime gaining and maintaining power precisely by promising to reverse neoliberal policies but in ways that hinge on not only maintaining the flow of oil but actively speculating its price in international markets. The third article, by Myadar and Jackson, likewise examines the interplay of populism and resource nationalism with the legacies of neoliberalism, in their case taking the recent election of a populist strongman as president in Mongolia as an entry point. They argue that populist claims to resource

nationalism—or resource sovereignty—in relation to Mongolia's mineral resources, particularly copper and gold, are, in context, an articulation of a critique of neoliberal inequality and structural dispossession, whereas dismissals of such frameworks amount to defenses of neoliberal structures of production and distribution. The fourth article, by Kojola, picks up the thread of the interweaving of mining, authoritarian populism, and resource nationalism. Kojola uses the concept of a moral economy to link political ecology and analyses of populism, arguing that the sense of crisis felt by displaced and marginalized mine workers and their communities is the key to understanding both their attachment to identities that are deeply racialized, gendered, nationalist, and nostalgic but also very place and resource based and their responsiveness to the promise of hope they heard in Trump's rhetoric couched in precisely those terms. Related questions are central to the fifth article, by Graybill, on the relationships among extractive industries, governance, and emotions in Russia. Graybill explicitly links the literatures on affect and emotion with those on authoritarianism and extractive industries and economies, arguing that Russia's authoritarian government actively crafts emotional nationalist narratives in support of extractive development and that the resulting desires and emotions contribute to popular support for extractive industries and activities in the country. Finally, in the sixth article in the section, Graddy-Lovelace takes a longer perspective on the relationships between populism and extractivism by tracing the history of U.S. agricultural policy over the past century, including the fact that extreme populist and nationalist narratives have consistently been used to justify policies whose substance, which supported accumulation and overproduction, contradicted and undermined their professed populist goals.

The seven articles in the third section, on environment as political proxy and arena for security and citizenship, all examine ways in which environmental politics can be ways of advancing or contesting politics around these other fundamental political concerns and categories in modern societies. Such dynamics are, of course, deeply connected to those around populism and nationalism in the previous section and those around racialization in the following section, but at the center of these pieces are cases in which questions of security and citizenship are particularly close to the surface of environmental politics and management. In the first article in this

section, as part of a larger argument about how we should theorize political ecologies of the state, Arefin analyzes how the Egyptian state attempted to blame recent urban floods on terrorism rather than climate change or decaying infrastructure, as the former could be used to justify increased repression, whereas the latter would imply failures of the state to fulfill its core functions. The second article in the section, by Acara, examines water management in Turkey in the context of neoliberal authoritarianism and urbanization. Acara argues that the goal of exploiting and degrading water and other natural resources in the name of urban growth has been pursued in part through the centralization but also obfuscation of decisive aspects of water governance and that such centralization and mystification of control over a vital natural resource has functioned to help normalize authoritarian and arbitrary governance in the country more generally. The third article in the section, by Saguin, examines the management and elite capture of fisheries in Laguna Lake in the Philippines under two authoritarian governments, that of Marcos in the 1970s and 1980s and Duterte in the present. Saguin argues that both leaders fell into the same pattern of politicizing the problem, using populist narratives that emphasized conflict and social justice, but depoliticizing the solution by relying on technocratic management frameworks and techniques that elide fundamental social conflicts and goals. The fourth article, by Kantel, likewise links the management of lakes and fisheries directly to efforts to win national elections and consolidate power. Kantel argues that the Ugandan government recently dissolved community-based, more democratic fisheries management bodies as part of a direct effort to consolidate the ruling elite's increasingly authoritarian hold on power. By using discourses of security and citizenship to cast some, more artisanal, fishers as suspect citizens and potential threats to state security, state officials justified the reallocation of resources and the direction of control and wealth to the country's elite. As in Kenney-Lazar's case, though, Kantel suggests that such strategies might ultimately backfire by fueling opposition. The fifth article, by Clarke-Sather, examines a shift in northwest China from irrigated, subsistence-oriented agriculture to drought-resistant, market-oriented agricultural production, all within the context of what has been termed China's "fragmented authoritarianism," in which many actors within an overall

authoritarian state are relatively isolated and set to compete with one another. Clarke-Sather argues that Foucault's concepts of disciplinary power and security apparatuses can help us to understand the particular combination of liberal market mechanisms and authoritarian governance evident in contemporary Chinese agricultural and environmental policy. A key question in that framework, shared with the next article, is what a central state undertaking a broader developmental strategy takes on itself to provide to citizens in the way of environmental entitlements versus what it devolves to or demands of citizens or local governments. The sixth article, by Balls and Fischer, takes up related questions by examining the ways in which electricity provision, development, and democratic politics have been linked in modern India, producing clientelist politics in which promises of cheap or free electricity have been linked to electoral support, perhaps at the expense of more broad-based and inclusive development. Balls and Fischer examine how private solar microgrids—a superficially apolitical and environmentally progressive means of producing and distributing electricity—are disrupting such politics, yet often producing new forms of economic and political exclusion in the process. In the seventh and final article in this section, Chang, Bae, and Park compare the spatial and environmental effects of liberal (1997–2007) versus conservative (2007–2017) South Korean administrations on the landscape near South Korea's border with North Korea. Undertaking the difficult and perhaps too rarely attempted task of empirically documenting and analyzing the environmental outcomes of different governance regimes, they demonstrate that the effects are complex, contingent, and highly variable across space and scale, with notably different dynamics and trajectories in the two areas they analyze.

The five articles in the fourth section, on racialization and environmental politics, take up many of the previous questions about citizenship, security, neoliberalism, and authoritarianism in relationship to environmental politics but with a strong and explicit focus on how racial ideologies and the racialization of particular groups of people figure in those dynamics. The first, by Bledsoe, uses the example of three Afro-Brazilian communities in Brazil's Bay of Aratu to argue that, despite what are commonly perceived as major differences, putatively progressive populist and conservative administrations and political formations

in Brazil over the past two decades have in fact shared a reliance on and commitment to extractivism and racialized violence. The second, by Mullenite, analyzes the politics of infrastructure to unearth how targeted flood control and irrigation measures have been used to help build and maintain an authoritarian and racialized state in Guyana, by selectively directing wealth and protections to some while increasing the tax burdens and vulnerability of others. Taking a long historical perspective, Mullenite argues that these infrastructure measures were used to divide laborers along ethnic lines in the colonial era in ways that undermined anticolonial sentiment and enabled authoritarian rule, whereas in the postcolonial period selective neglect of the same infrastructure was used to marginalize groups who might otherwise have resisted an authoritarian administration. The third article in the section, by Wright, analyzes politics around Trump's promised wall on the Mexico–U.S. border to understand both its visceral appeal to a certain kind of nativist, isolationist imaginary and the rising opposition to the wall on ecological, practical, economic, and political grounds. Wright argues that these contrasting views of the proposed wall represent contrasting understandings of the border: one of the border as the clear, visible, and hardened edge of a discrete, territorialized, and deeply racialized white supremacist national space and identity and the other of the border as a zone of diverse social and natural life, connection, and exchange. The fourth article, by Pulido, Bruno, Faiver-Serna, and Galentine, takes up the theme of the extreme racism of the Trump era and administration and connects it to the wave of environmental deregulation the administration has undertaken. Pulido et al. argue that the highly visible, public, and controversial racism and white nationalism of Trump and many of his supporters—what they term "spectacular racism"—helps to obscure the often more mundane, concrete actions that the administration has taken as part of an enormous wave of environmental deregulation. Both are part of the ongoing unfolding of environmental racism in the United States but in new and complex forms. In the fifth and final article in this section, Sparke and Bessner, building from critiques of Nazi logics of governance, suggest that the Trump administration is not only rolling back environmental regulation but also very selectively reworking neoliberal notions of resilience through a hypernationalist and racially exclusionary

framework in which the security of a wealthy elite in an exclusionary homeland is pursued through the market mechanisms of disaster capitalism as other racialized people and places are abandoned to the mounting impacts of climate change. The result, they argue, is an odd, exceptionalist, and dangerous hybrid of the discourses and imaginaries of resilience thinking and "America First."

The six articles in the fifth section explore the politics of environmental science and knowledge in populist and authoritarian contexts: from the difficulties of making scientific knowledge claims in a "posttruth" era dominated by easily and endlessly manipulated digital and social media (MacDonald 2016), to those of asking particular questions in severely repressive and dangerous authoritarian countries, to investigations of the active production of doubt or ignorance regarding environmental quality or change (Proctor and Schiebinger 2008; Oreskes and Conway 2010). The first article in the section, by Dillon et al., follows particularly from the lattermost point. It details the efforts of a group of environmental justice and science and technology studies researchers in the United States and Canada to respond to the Trump administration's active removal of environmental data from federal Web sites and purging or constraining of federal agencies with environmental governance responsibilities. The group, working collectively as the Environmental Data and Governance Initiative, has responded by archiving environmental data, interviewing agency personnel, and monitoring changes to Web pages and environmental policy. In connection with these efforts, Dillon et al. develop and articulate a concept of environmental data justice. Continuing with the theme of the active suppression of environmental data, the second article in the section, by Kopack, examines the difficulties of getting and analyzing data about toxic pollution from the Baikonur Cosmodrome, a legacy of the Soviet space program located in what is now Kazakhstan but still run by the Russian space program. Multiple rocket explosions have contaminated the area with toxic debris, but the Russian government's continuing tight control over both the immediate territory and all directly relevant research and data, as well as active suppression and intimidation of activists by the authoritarian Russian and Kazakh governments, dramatically demonstrates how secrecy can be territorialized in ways that render organizing and dissent

both difficult and dangerous. (On this note, it is important to mention that one prospective contributor to this issue dropped out after deciding that publishing the results of recent research on environmental politics in another severely repressive country would be directly and significantly dangerous to the author and interview subjects alike.) The third article in the section, by Koslov, examines "agnostic adaptation" in response to Hurricane Sandy in New York's Staten Island. Koslov notes that this relatively conservative community has in fact taken significant steps to adapt to future effects of climate change in the aftermath of the storm, yet it has done so with almost no explicit reference to or discussion of climate change because of the charged and polarized politics around that term in the United States: Strategic decisions to not frame adaptive actions as responses to climate change specifically allowed for community agreement and action around them that might not have occurred otherwise. Koslov argues that this dynamic reverses the formulation of the relationship between the postpolitical and action on climate change posited by Swyngedouw (2010): Whereas Swyngedouw argued that focusing on technocratic and practical steps stands in the way of genuine responses to climate change, Koslov suggests that focusing on precisely such steps allowed for meaningful actions, and politics of a sort, that would have been precluded by an insistence on explicit discussions of climate change and climate science. The fourth article in this section, by Bosworth, examines the production of expertise among movements opposing the new Keystone XL and Dakota Access pipelines in the north-central United States. Bosworth argues that the construction and public deployment of environmental expertise by activists in these movements, as a counter to the forms and sources of expertise deployed against them, was itself a progressive form of populist politics that helped to constitute and strengthen the movements themselves. The fifth article, by Forsyth, examines the coproduction of environmental knowledge and narratives, environmental movements, and political power and authority in Thailand. Countering simplistic claims that environmentalism tends on the whole to contribute to the democratization of authoritarian regimes, Forsyth notes that environmental narratives can in fact be deeply conservative and contribute to the reproduction of existing social arrangements rather than

substantive democratization and argues that it is essential to analyze specific narratives within the framework of civic epistemologies, which seeks to analyze the broader dimensions a given political order within which particular narratives retain political and epistemic authority. In the sixth and last article in this section, Neimark et al. explore the potential tensions between political ecology as an approach that has often emphasized the social construction and political nature of scientific environmental knowledge claims and political ecology as a field in which many practitioners presumably want to hold on to many central tenets of environmental science in the face of their dismissal or outright denial by many contemporary authoritarian regimes. The keys to resolving this tension, they argue, lie in recognizing the blatant power relations and agendas at work in many contemporary denials of scientific knowledge and distinguishing between the politically motivated production of posttruth and the genuine recognition of sincerely held diverse epistemologies and ontologies.

The sixth and final section of the special issue ends on a positive note: The five articles in the section explore and advocate progressive alternatives to authoritarian and reactionary populist environmental politics and governance. The first, by Andreucci, makes an explicit, grounded argument for the possibility and potential of a genuinely progressive, indeed Gramscian, version of populism in relation to environmental politics in Bolivia. Echoing Bosworth's affirmation of the possibility of a progressive populism, Andreucci builds on Laclau's (1977, 2005) and Fraser's (2017) visions of populism as a potential strategy to enable the construction of a broad counterhegemonic bloc out of disparate particular struggles. Continuing with the theme of left and progressive populisms, the second article in the section, by Knuth, examines the past and potential contributions of populist movements to clean energy transitions in the United States and elsewhere. Knuth argues that left populist movements have already helped to shape clean energy programs in California and in the United States as a whole, in the context of calls for "green jobs" and a "green New Deal" in the wake of the financial crisis. At the same time, Knuth insists that more fully realizing the potential of populist contributions to just transitions will require engagement with the populist politics of grievance and reparation as well and a

strategy that engages with the full breadth of the economy, not just niche sectors. The third article in the section, by Cadieux et al., likewise emphasizes the progressive potential of populism, in their case through comparing major 1930s agrarian populist initiatives in the Midwestern United States to highly diverse and inclusive contemporary urban agriculture movements in the same region. Cadieux et al. use these examples to argue that focusing agroecological social movements on the repair of social and ecological relationships offers opportunities to use their power to counter capitalism and authoritarianism, avoiding many of populism's potentially more reactionary elements. The fourth article in this section, by Aitken, An, and Yang, examines how environmental governance of and around the Fanjingshan National Nature Reserve in China has changed following the election of President Xi, as an authoritarian government has professed a greater commitment to sustainability even as rapid development proceeds apace. Contrasting the trajectories of two development projects, one inside the park and one outside, Aitken et al. express cautious optimism regarding the potential of approaches rooted in increasing local capacities and sustainable ethics to produce real improvements in people's lives even under challenging circumstances. Finally, the fifth article in the section, and the last in the issue, by Goldstein, Paprocki, and Osborne, suggests that inasmuch as the attraction of authoritarian populism in the contemporary United States and beyond often appears to be strongest in areas hit hard by deindustrialization, agrarian dispossession, and climate change, scholars at public land grant universities have distinctive organizational affordances and obligations to respond to those forces. They respond by articulating a manifesto for a progressive mission for land grant institutions.

Looking Ahead

The current conjuncture is grim, but it also contains significant grounds for hope. The articles in this special issue demonstrate widespread rejection of major elements of neoliberal capitalism and deep desires for true alternatives. Although those sentiments have gone, or been taken, in deeply reactionary directions in many instances, they are also suggestive of a window of opportunity for truly broad-based, inclusive, and progressive coalitions and

alternatives, along the lines called for by Fraser (2017), Scoones et al. (2018), and many others. Indeed, such movements are having significant success in many places around the world, often although certainly not necessarily through the use of populist frameworks and strategies. Geographers have much to offer efforts to create a truly broad-based, inclusive, historically and geographically aware progressive politics, as we see in the kinds of work highlighted in this special issue. We are adept at analyzing and explaining how any environmental project is always also a social one and vice versa and, more particularly, at understanding how particular sorts of socioenvironmental projects—the liberalization and globalization of agricultural production, for example—relate to broad social tensions and trends. We are especially well equipped, and indeed have an obligation given our disciplinary history, to continue to remind publics of the moral and intellectual bankruptcy and consequences of conflating physical environments and social identities. We can advocate as well as analyze and add our voices and knowledge to the many others attempting to create realistic, grounded, yet ambitious visions of more just, equitable, and sustainable futures (see Braun 2015). In short, environmental issues, movements, and politics can and indeed must be central both to resistance against authoritarian and reactionary populist politics and to visions of progressive alternatives to them. The articles in this issue provide many promising starting points for such visions.

Acknowledgments

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Authoritarian Environmental Governance: Insights from the Past Century

Robert Wilson

For over a decade, nature–society geographers have focused on neoliberal and, more recently, postneoliberal environmental governance. Meanwhile, regimes in many nations have become less democratic and other countries, such as the United States, have elected leaders sympathetic to autocrats. Yet despite the spread of authoritarianism, nature–society geographers have as of yet devoted little attention to the subject, which hampers us as we confront this authoritarian moment. This article addresses this oversight but by examining the past rather than the present. Drawing on work by historians in general and environmental historians in particular, I explore authoritarian environmental governance in the Soviet Union, Maoist China, and Nazi Germany, three countries and eras largely overlooked by nature–society geographers. I focus in particular on agricultural collectivization, industrialization and river development, and nature conservation under authoritarian regimes. Understanding past authoritarian environmental governance will enable nature–society geographers to better reckon with the environmental ramifications of a possible new authoritarian era.

近十年来，自然—社会地理学者聚焦新自由主义的环境治理，更晚近则聚焦后新自由主义的环境治理。于此同时，诸多国家的政体已变得更不民主，诸如美国等其他国家，则选出了同情独裁者的领导者。尽管威权主义有所扩散，自然—社会地理学者却仍尚未对该主题投入足够关注，并使我们在面对此一威权时刻时受到束缚。本文应对此一疏忽，但是是通过检视过往、而非当下。我运用普遍的历史研究、特别是环境史研究，探讨苏联、毛时代的中国以及纳粹德国中的环境治理，这三个国家与时代受到自然—社会地理学者大幅忽略。我特别聚焦威权政体下的农业集体化、工业化与河川发展及自然保育。理解过往的威权环境治理，将能让自然—社会地理学者更佳地应付可能的新威权年代中的环境后果。 *关键词: 威权主义, 环境治理, 纳粹主义, 社会主义。*

Durante más de una década los geógrafos que se especializan en la relación naturaleza–sociedad han concentrado su atención en la gobernanza ambiental neoliberal y, más recientemente, en la gobernanza ambiental posneoliberal. Entretanto, en muchas naciones los regímenes de gobierno se han hecho menos democráticos y otros países, tal como los Estados Unidos, han elegido líderes que simpatizan con los autócratas. Pero a pesar de la propagación del autoritarismo los geógrafos de la naturaleza-sociedad hasta el momento han prestado poca atención a este asunto, lo que nos debilita cuando tenemos que lidiar con el momento autoritario actual. Este artículo aboca este descuido, aunque examinando más el pasado que el presente. Con base en el trabajo de los historiadores en general, y de los historiadores ambientales en particular, exploro la gobernanza ambiental autoritaria en la Unión Soviética, la China maoísta y la Alemania nazi, tres países y eras en gran medida ignorados por los geógrafos de la naturaleza–sociedad. Me centro particularmente en la colectivización agrícola, la industrialización y desarrollo fluvial, y la conservación de la naturaleza bajo regímenes autoritarios. Entender la gobernanza ambiental autoritaria pasada capacitará a los geógrafos de la naturaleza–sociedad para lidiar mejor con las ramificaciones ambientales de una posible nueva era autoritaria. *Palabras clave: autoritarismo, gobernanza ambiental, nazismo, socialismo.*

Liberal democracy is in peril. Russia's democratic reforms, which burgeoned after the collapse of the Soviet Union, have faltered and President Vladimir Putin has enshrined an autocratic government (Gessen 2017). In the Middle East, hope in 2011's Arab Spring has faded as countries such as Egypt returned to authoritarian rule and dictators such as President Bashar al-Assad used the Syrian civil war to further consolidate power. Venezuela, once a leading democracy in South America, has lurched toward dictatorship under President Nicolás Maduro (Naim and Francisco 2016; Aleem 2017).

Meanwhile, in the United States, President Donald Trump has revealed authoritarian leanings in numerous ways, such as by labeling news outlets "fake news" and accusing the mainstream media of being "the enemy of the American people" (Remnick 2017). President Trump has also vilified his political opponents and expressed admiration for strongmen such as Putin, Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte, and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un. Many citizens and scholars see these as dire threats to liberal democracy (Snyder 2017, 2018; Levitsky and Ziblatt 2018; Mounk 2018).

Although such developments have aroused deep concern, especially among vulnerable groups such as immigrants and those who champion freedom of the press, fewer commentators have examined what these developments mean for environmental governance. To be sure, in the United States, environmental activists and scholars have noted how President Trump and his cabinet, particularly former Environmental Protection Agency Chief Scott Pruitt, have tried to undermine environmental regulations and agreements drafted by President Barack Obama and his administration (Frontline 2017; Langston 2018). Hardly any commentators, however, have linked the Trump administration's authoritarian tendencies and contempt for rule of law with its attack on the environmental management state.

Given the long-standing interest among environmental geographers in governance, they would seem well positioned to study and critique how environmental rules, protections, and practices are changing in this populist and authoritarian era. As of yet, few have examined the connection between authoritarianism and the environment. For instance, in two exhaustive recent surveys of political ecology scholarship, there are no entries on authoritarianism and the environment or on similar subjects (Perreault, Bridge, and McCarthy 2015; Bryant 2017). Other nature–society geography surveys, textbooks, and edited collections over the past decade have not devoted space or chapters to authoritarianism and the environment (Castree et al. 2009; Heynen et al. 2009; Peet, Robbins, and Watts 2010; Robbins 2011; Moseley, Perramond, and Hapke 2013; Robbins, Hintz, and Moore 2014). Allied fields such as environmental historical geography have not engaged with the environment and authoritarianism either (Colten 2012; Wynn et al. 2014; Buckley and Youngs 2018).

This special issue focusing on environmental governance in our current age of populism and authoritarianism partially corrects this oversight. To better understand authoritarian environmental governance now, though, we also need to examine the past. In the twentieth century, authoritarianism dominated in a number of countries and eras, perhaps most notably in the communist Soviet Union and Maoist China as well as in Nazi Germany. Although there were many differences among these nations' governments, all were authoritarian regimes with extreme levels of state power, no free elections, and limited or no sanctioned means of public political dissent.

Yet applying the term *environmental governance* to analyze the environmental management systems in these countries requires some translation. Environmental governance is a concept that emerged in the mid-1990s as neoliberalism came to dominate approaches to environmental matters in many countries and sectors of resource management (McCarthy and Prudham 2004; Himley 2008; Bridge and Perreault 2009; Bakker 2010). Using the term *neoliberal environmental governance* in these studies is somewhat redundant because most environmental governance work address neoliberalism to one degree or another. In more recent years, a few scholars have debated whether some places, particularly in Latin America, have entered a postneoliberal era (Bakker 2013; Ruckert, Macdonald, and Proulx 2017). Even these recent studies, though, rely on and modify the framework crafted by scholars examining neoliberal environmental governance. Yet if we understand environmental governance more broadly as a concept referring to forms of politics and social control under which nature is managed, then we can use the concept to investigate society–environmental relations in earlier eras.

In what follows, I examine some of the features of authoritarian environmental governance in three countries: the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany, and Maoist China. I draw on work by environmental historians and other historians who have studied the environmental history of these regimes. My analysis is also an outgrowth of more than a decade of teaching where I have synthesized this scholarship for undergraduate and graduate students, most of whom are entirely unfamiliar with the environmental histories of these nations. To do so, I venture into the allied discipline of history because there is little scholarship about environmental governance, broadly defined, in

political ecology or historical geography about these countries during these eras. This speaks more broadly to the lack of research over the past two decades by political ecologists and historical geographers about the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany, or Maoist China. Political ecology emerged as a field beginning in the 1980s, focusing mostly on peasants in what was then called the third world, particularly Africa, South Asia, and Latin America. Historical geographers, too, were largely silent about these authoritarian countries, as evidenced by articles published in the *Journal of Historical Geography* since it was founded in the 1970s.

Certainly there are challenges in examining these three countries and time periods in one article. Doing so risks homogenizing the different histories of these nations by overlooking their numerous differences. Some scholars of authoritarianism, such as Arendt ([1951] 1973) in her classic work on totalitarianism, saw important similarities between fascist Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. More recent scholarship, however, has questioned the totalitarianism framework, seeing the term in many ways as a Cold War relic (Geyer and Fitzpatrick 2008). Nevertheless, despite the differences among the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany, and Maoist China, it is worth highlighting the commonalities among the environmental governance strategies in these authoritarian regimes. In doing so, I am inspired by Snyder's (2017) recent book *On Tyranny: Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, which explores some of the similar features of authoritarian regimes in the last century, particularly Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union, and Eastern Bloc nations. His book also serves as a cautionary tale about how authoritarian regimes come to power and a warning to Americans in the age of Trump. In a similar manner, this article identifies distinguishing characteristics—insights rather than lessons—of environmental governance in twentieth-century authoritarian regimes. This history helps us better understand the possible social and environmental repercussions when democracy erodes and the environmental policies of authoritarian leaders proceed unchallenged.

Authoritarianism and Collectivization

Although environmental historians have produced histories of environmental management for the Soviet Union, Maoist China, and Nazi Germany,

few have examined the common aspects of environmental governance in authoritarian contexts. An important exception is Josephson, who in a series of monographs, most notably in *Resources under Regimes* (Josephson 2005), identified some of the key features of authoritarian environmental management (see also Josephson and Zeller 2003). They include one officially sanctioned political party, state-directed development, tight control of media, and a group venerated by the ruling party, such as workers in communist countries or Aryans under the Nazi regime (Josephson 2005). As we shall see, however, one-party rule did not preclude the existence of conservation and environmental organizations, although their freedom was often highly circumscribed, their ability to challenge the ruling party limited, and critique came with great risk.

In twentieth-century authoritarian regimes, Josephson recognized a common fondness for large-scale projects such as hydroelectric dams, river rerouting, and the construction of industrial or nuclear complexes. Josephson called these projects "brute-force technologies," which he defined as large-scale systems including both their technological and administrative components (Josephson 2002, 4–8, 255–63). Of course, more democratic societies also undertook such projects—the U.S. 1930s New-Deal–era dams on the Columbia River and in the Tennessee Valley come readily to mind (White 1995; Sneddon 2015)—but state-socialist regimes and the Nazis were particularly enamored with them.

Perhaps the most egregious examples of disastrous twentieth-century environmental governance were collectivization campaigns in the Soviet Union and China during the Mao period. In both cases, the communist governments sought to collectivize agriculture as part of larger efforts to consolidate power, squash opponents, and modernize their countries (Wemheuer 2014a, 2014b). Collectivization entailed transferring formerly privately controlled land to the hands of the state. The first collectivist programs in what would become the Soviet Union began shortly after the Bolsheviks seized power from the Provisional Government in the fall of 1917 (A. Brown 2009; Priestland 2009; Josephson et al. 2013; Wemheuer 2014a, 2014b). Joseph Stalin inaugurated a collectivization program when he launched his first Five-Year Plan in 1928. With this plan, the Soviet Union sought to inaugurate a Great

Break with the past and catapult the nation into a place among the world's modern industrial nations (Josephson et al. 2013; Wemheuer 2014a, 2014b). For the Communist Party and Stalin in particular, collectivizing agriculture was essential to transform the nation and to feed workers in growing industrial cities. Stalin saw peasants working these lands as impediments to his aspirations, however. The communist government expected them to surrender their land, livestock, and farm implements to work on communal fields; live in collective housing; and eat in common dining halls (Applebaum 2017). They sought to transform these peasants into agricultural workers who would labor on vast collective farms, use modern machinery like tractors, and toil under the gaze of Soviet officials in watchtowers. Those who refused were executed or sent to labor concentration camps—later known as the Gulags (Snyder 2010 Applebaum 2017).

Few peasants willingly joined collective farms by 1930, so the Soviets adopted further coercive measures to drive peasants onto state farms and renewed targeting those it deemed hostile to collectivization. Most of these were *kulaks*, supposedly wealthy peasants who resisted official decrees and who communist officials considered enemies of the state (Applebaum 2017). In reality, few of these *kulaks* were wealthy. Many only had a few more livestock or hectares of land than others in their communities. As government quotas to eliminate *kulaks* increased in the early 1930s, though, officials began arbitrarily labeling unwanted peasants as *kulaks*. By the end of 1931, the Soviets had branded 1.8 million citizens as *kulaks*, and 300,000 of them died during expulsion to labor camps (Scheidel 2017). From 1930 to 1933, Soviet-led collectivization became, in the words of Josephson et al. (2013), "violent, brutal, and murderous coercion, a revolution of totality, rapidity, and violence" (97).

Peasants opposed this transfer of private land to the communist state as best they could. Their resistance took many forms. Some simply refused to join the collectives, and others slaughtered their livestock rather than let the Soviets confiscate them. Other peasants, such as in Ukraine, fled to cities or, in some cases, tried to escape the Soviet Union itself. Demonstrators, particularly women, protested the Soviet government. The most risky strategy was to take up arms, kill party activists, and raid grain storage facilities (Snyder 2010; Applebaum 2017). Such

resistance served as a convenient pretext for Stalin to crack down on *kulaks* even further, to arrest them, and deport them to labor camps (Applebaum 2017). By late 1932 and early 1933, hundreds of thousands of peasants were dying, particularly in the Ukraine. The death toll from the famine ultimately reached 5 million in the Soviet Union, with perhaps 3.9 million deaths in Ukraine alone, a calamity known to Ukrainians as the Holodomor (Applebaum 2017; see also Naimark 2017; Scheidel 2017).

Twenty-five years later, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) under the leadership of Chairman Mao Zedong undertook its own environmental program and collectivization campaign, the Great Leap Forward, with even more devastating consequences. In recent years, journalists and scholars have accessed CCP archives, allowing a much richer understanding of this calamity to emerge (Priestland 2009; Jisheng 2012; Dikötter 2013; Wemheuer 2014a; McNeill and Engelke 2016; Naimark 2017; see also Shapiro 2001; Xun 2013). As with Stalin's collectivization drive in the late 1920s and early 1930s, Chairman Mao's Great Leap Forward sought to increase grain production and harness a more efficient agricultural sector to support industrialization. Collectivization entailed confiscating land that peasants acquired after the Chinese revolution of 1949 and herding peasants into massive communes. Also, in an effort to boost the country's steel production, the communist government forced rural Chinese to build thousands of backyard furnaces to melt farming equipment, cooking implements, and other items to forge steel. Nearly all of this metal was useless, and in the process, peasants lost key tools needed for farming and cooking food. As the Soviets did in Ukraine during the 1930s, Chinese communists continued to confiscate grain to supply cities or to sell it internationally, in this case, to the Soviet Union. Chinese peasants died during the Great Leap Forward on a scale even greater than Ukrainian peasants did during the Holodomor. An accurate tally of people who perished from starvation, disease, or execution might never be known. Using the best available evidence, though, historians now estimate the total dead between 20 and 45 million (Dikötter 2011; Walder 2015; Scheidel 2017).

The authoritarian context of China during the late 1950s and early 1960s both made the famine possible and likely prolonged it. Mao undertook the Great Leap Forward after the Hundred Flowers

movement in 1956 in which he encouraged citizens and party officials to critique CCP policies. With the government facing a torrent of criticism, Mao launched an anti-rightist program to punish those who denounced the regime. The party branded tens of thousands as counterrevolutionaries, who then lost their jobs or were deported to labor in rural reeducation camps (Shapiro 2001; Dikötter 2011; 2013). In the wake of this, both senior communist leaders and low-level officials were loath to criticize Mao's directives, fearing that they might meet the same fate (Walder 2015). The climate of fear fostered by the post–Hundred Flowers campaign promoted an atmosphere in which Mao could pursue his deeply misguided Great Leap Forward with few repercussions for him. The campaign continued into 1960 and 1961 even as it became clear the program was an utter failure and millions of Chinese were dying (Dikötter 2011).

Industrialization and River Development

In the decades after the Russian and Chinese revolutions, Lenin, Stalin, and Mao encouraged rapid industrial development of their countries in hopes of matching or even surpassing the United States and countries in Western Europe. In doing so, they tried to achieve in a few years what these capitalist societies had accomplished over decades or a century. This quest for rapid industrialization along with state control and the lack of political opposition would seemingly lay the groundwork for widespread environmental degradation. Indeed, older scholarship on the environmental politics and management of the Soviet Union and postrevolutionary China fiercely critiqued these authoritarian regimes for what they argued were dismal environmental records (Goldman 1972; Pryde 1991; Shapiro 2001). More recent scholarship, particularly about Soviet industrial development in the Arctic and river development in China, does not discount the pollution and environmental degradation in these countries during these times, but it does paint a more nuanced picture of the environmental costs of modernization.

Nations with Arctic regions such as the United States and Canada undertook or fostered exploration, mining, extractive development, and the creation of military bases during the twentieth century to better incorporate these northern areas into their respective nations (Haycox 2002; Wynn 2007; Piper

2010; Desbiens 2013). Arctic development was also crucial for authoritarian states such as the Soviet Union. As it did elsewhere in the country, the central government pursued collectivization programs in the Arctic but over reindeer herding rather than agriculture. Unlike in other circumpolar nations, though, the Soviets depended on thousands of slave laborers to harness the region's resources (Josephson 2014). Although some environmental historians see this modernizing push in the region as an attempt to conquer the Soviet Arctic (Josephson 2014), Bruno (2016) offers a more nuanced view of the Soviet state's efforts to industrialize the area. He argued that parts of nonhuman nature facilitated Soviet attempts to transform the region, whereas others hampered the government's efforts to incorporate the Soviet Arctic into the communist society it sought to build.

Soviet-led modernization and industrial development in the Russian Arctic had similarities to such occurrences in liberal democracies elsewhere in the circumpolar north. River development in China during the Mao era also bore the hallmarks of comparable processes elsewhere. Although the Chinese had managed its major rivers for centuries, water control entered a new phase after the 1949 revolution with the ascent of Mao and the creation of the CCP. As we saw, modernizing China and forging a communist state entailed collectivizing the nation's agriculture. In addition to this, though, the CCP embarked on a water development program closely modeled on Soviet water management, which included construction of massive, multipurpose dams. The Soviet approach, in turn, was influenced by other global developments in water management, particularly the Tennessee Valley Authority in the United States. Engineers who questioned the wisdom of these schemes of the long-term viability of some dams were silenced and labeled "rightists" (Shapiro 2001, 2016; Pietz 2015). Engineers did not face this level of intimidation in liberal democracies. Maoist water management also departed from watershed transformations in North America and Western Europe with its mass mobilization of Chinese laborers to construct water holding ponds and dig canals. During this era, but especially during the Great Leap Forward, millions of Chinese peasants were put to work constructing irrigation works on the North China Plain and elsewhere (Pietz 2015). By reworking China's waterscape, Mao hoped to foster "a

'second creation,' namely, the creation of Communist China" (Pietz 2015, 231).

Green Authoritarianism?

The limited space for dissent in these authoritarian societies would seem to hinder nature protection and render conservation impossible. Certainly, the lack of sanctioned political opposition parties and a free media made criticism and protests against industrial development and large-scale environmental projects difficult. Despite these obstacles, conservationists sometimes found room to pressure these regimes to undertake environmental reform, create protected areas, and conserve wildlife. Also, in some cases, authoritarian states and their leaders supported conservation initiatives and the creation of protected areas.

The case of Nazi Germany is instructive. In the 1932 election, the Nazi Party gained a plurality in the German parliament, and after a fire decimated the Reichstag in early 1933, parliament passed an enabling act granting Chancellor Adolph Hitler sweeping powers. The Nazis outlawed other political parties and imprisoned political opponents in the first German concentration camp, Dachau. From then until the downfall of the regime in 1945, the Nazis ruled Germany. Despite the ascendance of this authoritarian regime and the repression that came with it, conservationists were able to make progress. As Frank Uekötter and other environmental historians of Germany showed, Nazi leaders sympathetic to conservationist aims, most notably Herman Göring, used their clout to help enact environmental decrees (Brüggemeier, Cioc, and Zeller 2005; Uekötter 2006). The most important of these was the Reich Nature Protection Law of 1935. This far-reaching law enabled officials to identify areas worthy of protection, improve the state's administrative capacity to manage the environment, and enact measures to conserve threatened wildlife and habitat (Closmann 2005; Uekötter 2006). After having little success in parliament during the preceding Weimar Republic, German conservationists felt that at least some Nazi leaders appreciated their ideas and concerns (Uekötter 2014).

Despite the seeming success of the new nature protection decree and other measures to conserve forests, the Nazis proved fickle conservationists. As the 1930s progressed, the Nazi regime focused on rearming the country and preparing for war, and this growth in industrial production inevitably affected the environment and conservation measures did little to curtail it (Uekötter 2014). Also, although Hitler was a vegetarian, celebrated alpine landscapes, and owned a beloved German shepherd, Blondi, there is little evidence that he cared much for conservation. The reign of the Third Reich proved the high tide for conservation up to that point in German history, but after the war, conservationists had to reckon with their close association with the Nazis and for being "complicit in a genocidal regime" (Uekötter 2014, 56).

Given its association with political purges, breakneck industrialization, Gulags, and forced labor, the early decades of the Soviet Union would seem unfertile ground for conservation. Even under this dictatorship, though, state-led conservation programs grew during Lenin's short reign, and he expanded a nature preserve system begun under the Czars known as the *Zapovendniki*. Unlike national parks in the United States, which were established both to protect wildlife and sublime landscapes and provide spaces for recreation, the *Zapovendniki* were more akin to natural laboratories and inviolate sanctuaries where scientists could study biological processes. By 1929, more than sixty-one preserves existed covering nearly 4 million ha (Josephson et al. 2013).

Recent work by historian Stephen Brain further challenges the declenionist narrative of much scholarship on the Soviet Union's environmental record. "Dictators like trees," wrote Brain, and perhaps few dictators appreciated the values of trees more than Stalin (Brain 2011, 115). During his time as ruler of the Soviet Union, Stalin endorsed the creation of protected forest reserves, the largest forest reserve system in the world at that time. Although forests in Siberia and the north were opened to wholesale development, Stalin decreed that some forests in Russia remain inviolate reserves. The Stalinist environmentalism, as Brain called it, protected these forests from economic development on a scale unmatched in most other countries. The vision of the communist dictator as a proto-environmentalist seems odd given his push to rapidly modernize the country and his brutal purges of real and imagined political opponents. Yet Stalin was swayed by conservationists who argued that overlogging in some forested areas would negatively affect the country's rivers, which in turn might threaten cities with

flooding and harm the hydropower system the regime was developing. This utilitarian-oriented forest protection endured during the Stalin years but in the service of the state's larger goals of industrialization and modernization (Brain 2010, 2011).

Unlike in the case of Nazi Germany, where conservation groups consisted of ordinary citizens interested in environmental protection, Soviet conservation organizations were closely associated with scientists, such as the All-Russian Society for Conservation (VOOP). When advocating for environmental reforms or protecting landscapes, these groups had to carefully couch their language and aims so as not to appear counterrevolutionary (Weiner 1988). Despite the loosening of political restrictions after Nikita Khrushchev came to power and denounced Stalin in 1956, the communist government monitored groups such as VOOP. They certainly were not able to halt or even alter massive development initiatives such as Khrushchev's Virgin Lands campaign, inaugurated in 1954, which opened millions of acres of Kazakhstan steppe to industrial farming. Plowing the grasslands helped foster Dust Bowl–like conditions by the mid-1960s, and by then, the communist government realized that the campaign was a colossal failure (Josephson et al. 2013). Truly independent environmental groups and a more vibrant civil society did not really emerge in the country until Mikhail Gorbachev enacted *glasnost* (openness) reforms during what, as it turned out, were the waning years of the Soviet Union before its collapse in 1991 (Weiner 1999; Josephson et al. 2013).

Conclusion

What insights can nature–society geographers glean from this brief survey of twentieth-century authoritarian environmental governance? There is ample evidence that these authoritarian regimes caused massive environmental destruction and social dislocation, whether through the development of mining and smelting operations, industries, or land collectivization campaigns. Certainly the environmental history of liberal democracies such as the United States, Canada, and Western Europe have also shared the same history of industrialization and modernization with its associated environmental consequences. Indeed, one is struck more by the many similarities between the environmental

consequences of development in communist dictatorships such as the Soviet Union and Maoist China and Western democracies. As Soviet environmental historian Bruno (2016) noted, the "relentless impulse to modernize society and the natural world" resulted in "similar environmental trajectories" (274) that transcended the purported differences between capitalist democracies and authoritarian communist systems (Bonhomme 2013; see also K. Brown 2001, 2013; Johnson et al. 2013).

Perhaps most surprising is that during some periods, these authoritarian states implemented progressive and far-reaching environmental reforms. With the support of conservationists, the Nazis enacted sweeping conservation legislation, made possible, in part, by the suppression of opposition parties and political groups that might have opposed it prior to the 1930s. In the Soviet Union, scientists were able to carve out a "little corner of freedom" within a repressive state and establish nature preserves for scientific research (Weiner 1999). Even Stalin, one of the twentieth century's most brutal authoritarian rulers, supported the creation of a vast forest reserve network. Indeed, the fact that these countries were authoritarian made implementing such reforms more straightforward because they did not have to contend with opposition parties who might have stymied their plans.

What if scientists, conservationists, and ordinary citizens questioned or opposed government plans for industrialization, modernization, and river development, however? Compared to liberal democracies, citizens in the Soviet Union, Maoist China, and Nazi Germany had fewer avenues of recourse or redress if industries polluted their communities or development schemes displaced them. In liberal democracies, citizens could vote for more environmentally progressive elected officials, demonstrate, and freely join conservation and environmental groups. Yet these options were often unavailable in these authoritarian regimes. Even when they permitted conservation groups or environmental scientific societies to exist, members had to exercise caution lest their advocacy be construed as counterrevolutionary or hostile to the regime. Capitalist liberal democracies and authoritarian communist countries undertook or enabled environmentally destructive projects, but the "main distinction lies less in the different economic systems (socialist versus capitalist) and more in the variant political cultures

(authoritarian versus democratic)" (Bonhomme 2013, 27). Although these twentieth-century authoritarian regimes did sometimes take measures to curtail pollution or reduce deforestation, citizens had fewer political tools to influence government practices, particularly if doing so ran counter to the regimes' goals.

To confront our own authoritarian moment, we need to better understand this past. "History does not repeat, but it does instruct," wrote Snyder (2017, 9), but history is what has been lacking from much environmental governance scholarship with its resolute focus on contemporary neoliberalism and postneoliberalism. Although most nature–society geographers have vigorously critiqued current neoliberal environmental governance, they have perhaps unwittingly overlooked history, or at least the history of twentieth-century forms of environmental governance under socialism and Nazism. If we have indeed entered a new authoritarian era, then it is all the more necessary to understand the environmental dimensions of tyranny in the not-so-distant past.

Acknowledgments

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Deadly Environmental Governance: Authoritarianism, Eco-populism, and the Repression of Environmental and Land Defenders

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Environmental and resource governance models emphasize the importance of local community and civil society participation to achieve social equity and environmental sustainability goals. Yet authoritarian political formations often undermine such participation through violent repression of dissent. This article seeks to advance understandings of violence against environmental and community activists challenging authoritarian forms of environmental and resource governance through eco-populist struggles. Authoritarianism and populism entertain complex relationships, including authoritarian practices toward and within eco-populist movements. Examining a major agrarian conflict and the killing of a prominent Indigenous leader in Honduras, we point to the frequent occurrence of deadly repression within societies experiencing high levels of inequalities, historical marginalization of Indigenous and peasant communities, a liberalization of foreign and private investments in land-based sectors, and recent reversals in partial democratization processes taking place within a broader context of high homicidal violence and impunity rates. We conclude with a discussion of the implications of deadly repression on environmental and land defenders.

环境与资源治理模型，强调在地社区与公民社会的参与以达到社会公平与环境可持续性目标的重要性。但威权政治的形成，却经常通过对异议的暴力压迫，破坏此般参与。本文企图推进我们对于对抗挑战威权的环境与资源治理形式之环境与社区行动者的暴力之理解，该暴力是通过生态民粹主义的斗争。威权主义与民粹主义存在着复杂的关系，包含迈向生态民粹主义运动、并存在于该运动中的威权实践。我们检视洪都拉斯国内一起重大的农业冲突与一位重要的原住民领导者的谋杀事件，指向在经历高度不平等的社会中经常发生的致命压迫、原住民与农民社区在历史中的边缘化、以土地为基础的部门对外国与私人投资的自由化，以及晚近在高度杀人暴力与免责率的更广泛脉络下民主化进程的部分倒退。我们于结论中讨论对环境与土地保卫者的致命压迫之意涵。 关键词: 威权主义: 环境保卫者, 洪都拉斯, 民粹主义, 压迫。

Los modelos de gobernanza ambiental y de los recursos enfatizan la importancia de la comunidad local y la participación de la sociedad civil para alcanzar las metas de equidad social y sustentabilidad ambiental. No obstante, las formaciones políticas autoritarias a menudo socaban tal participación por medio de la represión violenta del disentimiento. Este artículo busca avanzar en el entendimiento de la violencia contra activistas ambientales y comunitarios que retan las formas autoritarias de la gobernanza ambiental y de los recursos por medio de luchas ecopopulistas. El autoritarismo y el populismo albergan relaciones complejas, incluso prácticas autoritarias, hacia y dentro de los movimientos eco-populistas. Con el examen de un conflicto agrario mayor y del asesinato de un prominente líder indígena en Honduras, señalamos la ocurrencia frecuente de represión letal en sociedades que experimentan altos niveles de desigualdad, marginación histórica de comunidades indígenas y campesinas, una liberalización de inversiones extranjeras y privadas en los sectores basados en la tierra y recientes reveses en los procesos de democratización parcial que ocurren dentro de un contexto más amplio de altas tasas de violencia homicida e impunidad. Concluimos con una discusión de las implicaciones de la represión letal contra los defensores del medio ambiente y de la tierra. Palabras clave: autoritarismo, defensores ambientales, Honduras, populismo, represión.

Environmental and resource governance models emphasize public participation to achieve social equity and environmental sustainability goals (Ribot 2002; Bryan 2011). Yet, authoritarian forms of environmental and resource governance frequently undermine such principles through inconsequential
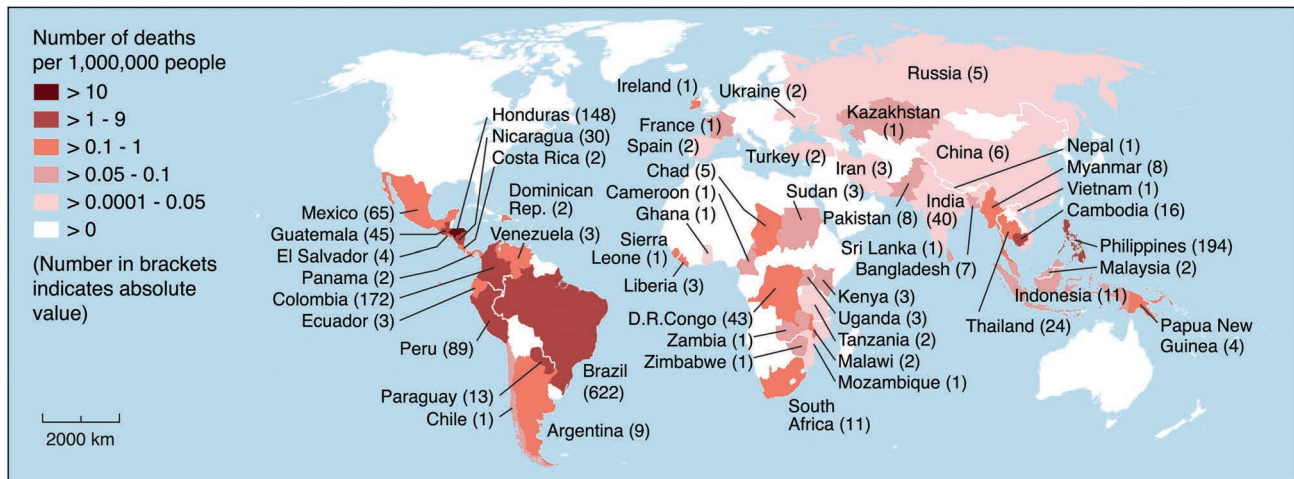
Figure 1. Reported killings of land and environmental defenders worldwide, 2002–2017. *Source:* Global Witness (2017a) data set.

consultation processes, criminalization of dissent, and violent repression (Perreault 2015). In turn, populist forms of emancipatory politics potentially lead to further escalation as they seek to broaden social mobilization beyond directly affected communities to challenge privileged elites and oppressive institutions.[1] At least 1,570 people were killed globally between 2002 and 2017 while seeking to protect their land, community, and the environment through socioenvironmental movements (see Figure 1). Many of them are Indigenous people, thereby pointing at the colonial dimensions of many resource development projects. Beyond these reported cases, many other people have likely lost their lives in more individual and anonymous struggles over lands, resources, and the environment, and countless individuals and communities have experienced harm as a result of the social and environmental impacts of resource projects (Temper et al. 2015; Le Billon and Sommerville 2017).

Studies of repression mostly come from political science, pointing at impunity factors, uncertainty about behavioral norms, and the rise of contentious politics (Earl 2003; Hill and Jones 2014); however, these rarely engage specifically with socioenvironmental conflicts. In contrast, such conflicts are the focus of political ecology studies interpreting repression as one of the violent expressions of uneven power relations, diverging value systems, and the dispossession of agrarian and Indigenous communities (Bury and Kolff 2002; Escobar 2006; Le Billon 2015; Martinez-Alier et al. 2016). Yet few political ecology studies have focused on killings as part of

authoritarian forms of resource governance, which also include the intimidation and criminalization of activists, the securitization of "resource development," and coercive forms of conservation (Peluso and Lund 2011; Roa-García 2017). Finally, studies from anthropology have shown how violence has a profound impact on the lives of targeted activists and community members, but less scholarly attention has been given to the interplay of repression and resistance shaping environmental governance (Rasch 2017).

In this article, we focus on repression in relation to populist forms of socioenvironmental movements and authoritarian forms of environmental and resource governance. Following this introduction, we discuss eco-populism and associated forms of repression. We then examine in more detail the repression of land and environmental defenders in Honduras, based on eight months of fieldwork between May 2013 and March 2018. We conclude with a brief discussion of the effects and implications of violence on community and civil society participation in environmental and resource governance and suggest an agenda for further research.

Eco-Populism, Authoritarianism, and Socioenvironmental Struggles

Eco-populism is defined as socioenvironmental movements scaling up their struggle and inscribing their demands into a "more universal rhetoric and strategy for change" (Griggs and Howarth 2008, 123;

see also Szasz 1994; Leonard 2011). Eco-populism thus broadens social mobilization beyond directly affected communities and often seeks to unite the people against ruling elites and dominant corporations. *Authoritarianism* refers to political formations demanding obedience, punishing dissent, and generally proving to be inflexible and oppressive (Levitsky and Way 2010). Authoritarian forms of environmental and resource governance by states and corporations seek to impose authority over territories, resources, and ecosystems at the expense of local communities' values, uses, and rights.[2]

Authoritarianism and populism, however, should not be considered binary and mutually exclusive categories. Both can take many forms, be asserted to different degrees, and be associated with either right-wing or left-wing values and political regimes (Borras 2018). Most political formations involve hierarchical relations instrumentalizing forms of discrimination, coercion, and restrictions on political freedoms (Levitsky and Way 2010). Most sociopolitical movements tend to homogenize and unify the voices of those they seek or pretend to represent (Laclau 2007). Interactions between populism and authoritarianism can take the form of populist authoritarianism involving the use of popular rhetoric and practices by authoritarian parties or authoritarian populism whereby populist parties drift toward authoritarian discourses and practices. In Bolivia, the populist discourse that had challenged neoliberal forces and brought Evo Morales's Indigenous–popular coalition to power was later used by the Morales government to legitimize the repression of Indigenous movements threatening extractivist accumulation (Andreucci 2018; Marston and Perreault 2017). Interactions can also involve populist responses to authoritarianism, as seen in the case of popular revolutions against dictatorships, as well as authoritarian responses to populism, with, for example, weak democratic regimes responding to populist challenges through increasingly authoritarian behavior. The application of these concepts thus needs to be highly contextualized to recognize some of the contradictions, antagonisms, overlaps, and synergies involved in their relationships (Borras 2018). Here, we briefly nuance the concept of eco-populism in relation to authoritarianism, especially in the context of repressed socioenvironmental struggles.

Eco-Populism

The concept of eco-populism can be interpreted as an emancipatory form of social mobilization seeking to broaden solidarities against a dominant elite-based system governing resources and the environment. Whereas environmental modernization approaches promoted by mainstream development agencies seek to achieve "sustainability" through fine-tuning the status quo, socioecological populism generally seeks to terminate environmentally destructive projects rather than derive benefits from them; to promote eco-centric or alternative local development models; to reaffirm environmental and local, rural, or Indigenous subjectivities; and to pursue a common front among social justice movements challenging systems of domination (Szasz 1994; Leonard 2011; Antal 2017; Condé and Le Billon 2017). If eco-populism is generally associated with left-wing environmental movements struggling against destructive resource use, some eco-populist movements also pursue conservative right-wing values or involve authoritarian practices, both within and outside the movements (McCarthy 2002; Scoones et al. 2018). Populist rural organizations include peasant movements seeking to (re)gain control of lands and community governance, union-based agrarian and miners' movements pursuing better working conditions and control over means of production, and socioenvironmental movements reclaiming notions of indigeneity and traditional livelihoods (Borras 2018). Populist eco-authoritarianism can also take the form of state-imposed obedience to strict environmental behavior and resource use, and follow populist strategies to scapegoat particular resource users.

Political ecology studies have documented both the causes and practices of resistance against land-based, large-scale projects, yet only quite rarely mobilized the concept of eco-populism (Szasz 1994; Luke 1995; Dietz 1999; McCarthy 2002; Robbins and Luginbuhl 2005). By early 2018, the Environmental Justice Atlas had documented about 2,400 cases of environmental justice movements throughout the world, half of them less than a decade old (see EJAtlas.org; Temper et al. 2015). Many of these movements are eco-populist insofar as they intertwine environmental concerns with wider human rights and (differentiated Indigenous) citizen rights and constitute broad networks calling into question dominant models of resource exploitation

(Martinez-Alier et al. 2016). As discussed later, such networks become all the more important in the context of a repressive apparatus denying basic individual rights. Eco-populism, in this regard, also constitutes a safety-in-numbers strategy reducing individual vulnerabilities and consolidating solidarities. Yet, although eco-populism can help broaden coalitions across political divides through local values and interest-based collective identities (Rice and Burke 2018), these same identities can also prove exclusionary and feed in turn authoritarian discourses and practices, including within the movements themselves (see Levitsky and Loxton 2013).

Eco-Populism, Authoritarianism, and Repression

Socioenvironmental conflicts arise in large part due to the inflexible and repressive character of political formations and their denial of effective community or civil society participation in environmental governance. In turn, such authoritarianism is frequently responded to by a reassertion of alternative modes of governance, such as Indigenous or customary laws and institutions. Because it challenges established state and corporate authority, eco-populism is frequently perceived as *insurgency*, a form of rebellion bordering on the belligerent. Eco-populism also frequently relies on public protests as a mode of political engagement, which can bring about violent interactions between parties. Furthermore, whereas many forms of eco-populism mobilize nonviolent forms of struggle, some eco-populist groups violently reject state authority, thereby further constituting a clash of authoritarian practices, as seen with cases of right-wing environmental populism in the western United States, such as the Sagebrush rebellion (McGregor Cawley 1996), the Wise Use Movement (McCarthy 2002), and, most recently, the occupation of Oregon's Malheur National Wildlife Refuge by armed militia members rejecting U.S. federal government control of western lands (Gallagher 2016). In Peru, self-defense peasant organizations (*rondas campesinas*) involved hierarchical, authoritarian, and at times violent internal practices (Gustafsson 2018).

To quell contestation and deter mobilization, governments and corporations use a range of counterinsurgency strategies reflecting their relative impunity and the sophistication of their coercive apparatus and the level of perceived threats to their interests.

Liberal formations generally respond to opposition through inclusion and buy-in strategies, often consisting of public participation processes channeling resistance toward what Blaser (2013, 21) called the "house of reasonable politics," within which only minor differences amenable to compromises are allowed. Outside of the house, authoritarian spaces of criminalization and forceful policing often reign, thereby exposing the authoritarian character of actually illiberal regimes. Authoritarianism is also demonstrated through exclusionary rules and biased judicial systems undermining environmental and community struggles, including burdensome registration processes for civil society organizations, restrictions on foreign nongovernmental organization (NGO) funding, or strict conditions for the expression of dissent (Deonandan and Dougherty 2016), as well as defamation, harassment, spying, infiltration, and disruption through biased investigations, criminal accusations, and long-term detention before trial (Smith 2008; Birss 2017; Vasconsela Rocha and Barbosa 2018).

Deadly forms of state repression are generally understood as the result of impunity for perpetrators associated with the lack of independent and effective judiciary and media reporting; tight and unaccountable networks between political, economic, and military elites; and social habituation to homicides on the part of authorities—including as a result of recent wars and state-tolerated or -encouraged vigilante activity (Cruz 2011; Hill and Jones 2014). Deadly escalation also often results from high uncertainty in the capacity and behavioral norms among protagonists in a context of contentious politics (Leitner et al. 2008), a situation characterizing intermediary political regimes falling between "full" autocracies and democracies (Davenport 2007; Pierskalla 2010). In such contexts, government authorities and corporations are frequently unwilling to follow the praxis of negotiated conflict settlement, and social movements refuse to back down on the premise that sustained contestation will further erode authoritarian power, even if at the cost of deadly repression. The likelihood of killings of environmental and land defenders thus seems higher among middle-income countries with semiauthoritarian regimes (see Figure 2A), a recent history of armed conflicts or high homicide rates (Figure 2B), and frequent conflicts around resource exploitation projects, as seen in
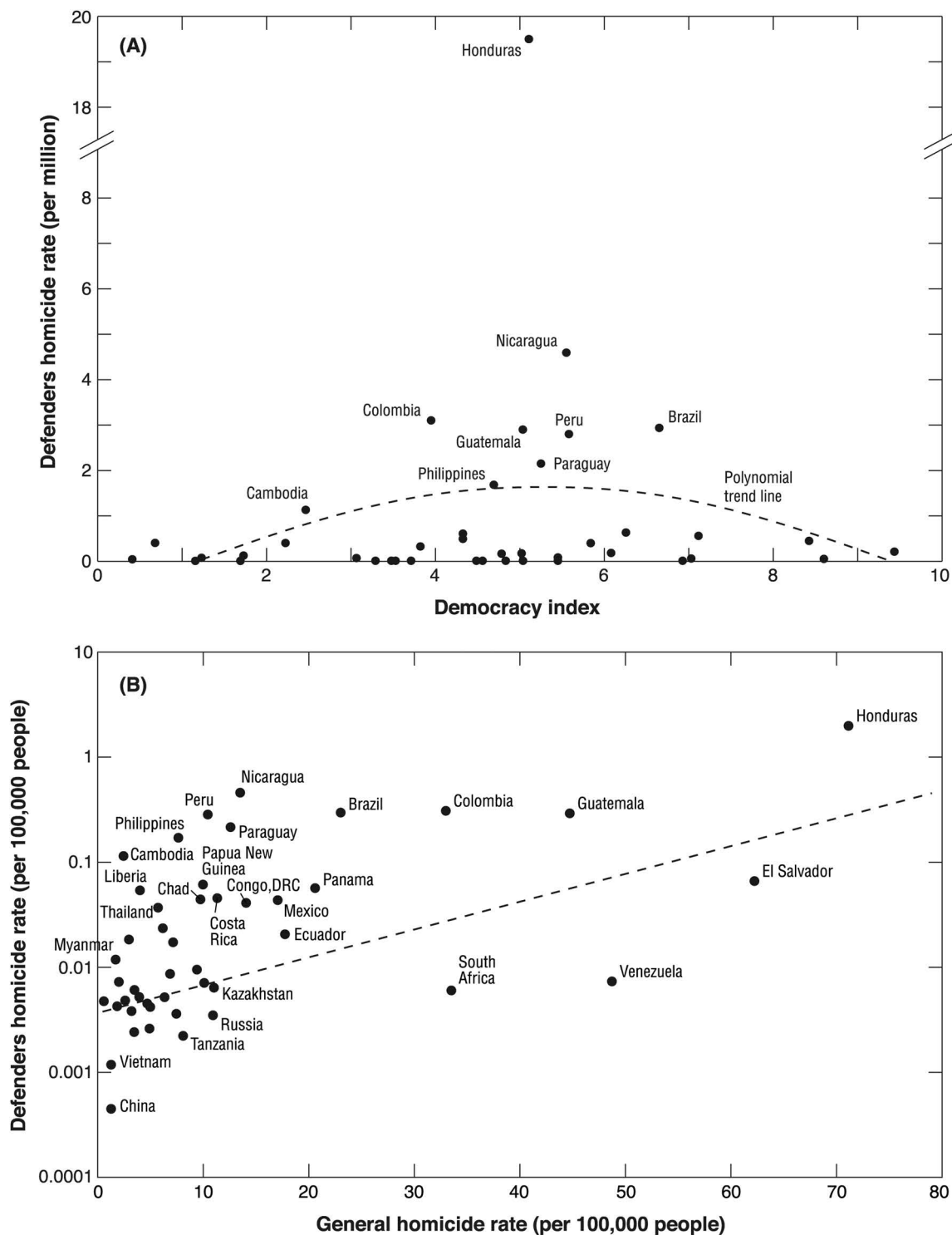
Figure 2. Defenders' homicide rates, democracy levels, and general homicide rates, 2002–2016. *Sources:* Global Witness, Combined Index of Democracy, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and World Bank data sets.

Latin America (see Bebbington and Bury 2013; Himley 2013; Temper et al. 2015; Jeffords and Thompson 2016; Wayland and Kuniholm 2016; McNeish 2018).

Whereas both states and corporations have directly instrumentalized their own security organizations to exert deadly repression, notably in the context of public protests, more insidious forms of