The present taxidermied:

Soviet ‘common unsaids’ in Russian *krayevedcheskiy* museums

Sofia Gavrilova

Christ Church

Supervisors:

Professor Judith Pallot and Dr. Ian Klinke



Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
School of Geography and the Environment
Oxford 2019

Abstract

This dissertation analyses the current state of the krayevedcheskiy museums network in Russia against the backdrop of the historical development of a (post-) Soviet knowledge production system known as krayevedeniye. These museums constitute one of the largest cultural networks in the post-Soviet space, and their aim is to create a representation of the place in which they are located. In the dissertation I explore the principles underpinning the structure of their departments and uncover the common principles on which they are based, including those inherited from the period of Soviet governance. The research I present draws on two types of data: the archival documents of Soviet institutions supervising krayevedeniye which constructed the central ideology informing yhe curation of kraevedcheskiy museums' expositions, and field data collected from 2014 to 2017 in seven regions and twenty-five regional and local museums, which allowed the common patterns of museum expositions and underlying theoretical principles to be excavated.

The main theoretical challenge of the thesis was to bring together relevant debates in geography and cognate sciences concerning wilderness and nature, post-colonial approaches to issues of domination and submissson and memory, including trauma, silences, erasing narratives and forgetting. I ipresent a critical theory of *krayevedeniye* and place *krayevedcheskiy* museums in the context of museum studies. In order to bring these concepts together this study, I develop the concept of 'common unsaids', based on the Barthes' myth-creation techniques, which have further been developed by Svetlana Boym. With the aim to contribute to debates around Soviet knowledge production, museum studies, representation of nature, and area studies, I analyse one of the largest museum network in the post-Soviet space. My intention is to tbroaden our knowledge of post-Soviet institutional development and to add new and important detail to our understanding of regional identity production in present-day Russia.

Acknowledgements

This challenging, exhausting but nevertheless exciting D. Phil journey would have never been possible without the support, help, and love of people around me in Oxford and back in Russia.

I would like to thank School of Geography and the Environment of the University of Oxford for providing a unique opportunity to work on my D. Phil project. I cannot imagine this thesis coming to life anywhere else but within these walls. The generous financial support of the Hill Foundation made it possible for me to come to the University of Oxford and conduct the research I had been dreaming about. I will never forget the moral and financial support of the Trustees, who helped me through darker periods of my time in Oxford. I want to thank Christ Church for giving me a home and a sense of belonging to an incredible community; I am equally grateful for the financial support at the final stages of writing-up.

Professor Judith Pallot and Doctor Ian Klinke offered me a kind of supervision that that went much further than I had expected. They gave me freedom and trusted in me, compelling me at the same time to face intellectual challenges that I would never have courage to tackle without their guidance. Five years of their supervision made me a researcher I never thought I could become. I want to thank Dr Klinke for pushing my theoretical thinking far beyond the boundaries I set for myself. Professor Pallot was the best possible advisor on the survival at the Russian periphery and I will always remember the trip to northern Perm that we made together to look at gulag sites. At some stages only our Skype conversations reminded me that it was time for me to come back to Oxford from the fascinating corners of Russia I was visiting.

I further would like to thank the directors and research staff of *krayevedcheskiy* museums in Tomsk, Kolpashevo, Parabel, Narym, Perm, Krasnovyshersk, Cherdin,

Yakutsk, Anadyr, Tver, Kaliazin, Kashin, and Kazan for their help during my fieldwork, together with and all other people I met there and whose help is sincerely appreciated.

I want to thank my friends from the D. Phil community at Christ Church and the School of Geography who were always there for me. Sergey Fadeev, Marianna Chernobrivenko, Floriana Fossato, Hannah Reinhold, Christine Moore, Johanna Kohler, Xavi Liao—I am so glad that I have met them and I hope that we will maintain our connection at our next destinations.

My special love and gratitude goes to my mother and father who have supported me thoughout my life and encouraged me in my intellectual quest. Last but certainly not least, I thank my daughter Veronika, who has given me the energy and the will to finish this work. I dedicate this thesis to her.

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT 2

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 3

LIST OF FIGURES 7

INTRODUCTION 13

CHAPTER 1 16

INTRODUCTION 16
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE THESIS 18
CULTURAL SILENCES AND 'COMMON UNSAIDS' 22
THE FORMATION OF 'COMMON UNSAIDS' 28
MILITARY LANDSCAPES AS 'COMMON UNSAIDS': GEOGRAPHICAL IMAGINATION IN POST-SOVIET RUSSIA 32
DIACHRONIC AND GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS: INTRODUCTION OF CASE STUDIES 38

CHAPTER 2. *KRAYEVEDENIYE*: A SOVIET KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION PROJECT 46

INTRODUCTION 46

WHAT IS *KRAYEVEDENIYE*? APPROACHING A DEFINITION. 47
WHO IS A KRAYEVED? 54
CENTRAL-PERIPHERAL RELATIONSHIPS IN KRAYEVEDENIYE 56
EXISTING APPROACHES TO *KRAYEVEDENIYE* 59
FROM REGIONAL INITIATIVES TO CENTRALIZED GOVERNANCE: A TURN TOWARDS 'SOVIET *KRAYEVEDENIYE*' 63
PRE-REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITIES AND THE 'GOLDEN AGE' OF KRAYEVEDENIYE 63
THE TURN TO CENTRALIZATION 67
NEW SOVIET KRAYEVEDENIYE: SCIENCE? METHOD? MASS MOVEMENT? 74
KRAYEVEDENIYE AND THE FIVE–YEAR PLAN 82
THE INSTITUTIONAL NETWORK OF KRAYEVEDENIYE 88
CONCLUSIONS 96

CHAPTER 3. *KRAYEVEDCHESKIY* MUSEUMS 98

INTRODUCTION 98
WHAT IS A *KRAYEVEDCHESKIY* MUSEUM? 98
***KRAYEVEDCHESKIY* MUSEUM WITHIN WESTERN MUSEUM HISTORY** 104
PERMANENT DISPLAYS OF PRE-SOVIET KRAYEVEDCHESKIY MUSEUMS 117
'NEW SOVIET' *KRAYEVEDCHESKIY* MUSEUMS 125
PERMANENT DISPLAYS IN SOVIET KRAYEVEDCHESKIY MUSEUMS 131
OBJECTS IN *KRAYEVEDCHESKIY* MUSEUMS AND CULTURAL COLONIZATION 139
CONCLUSIONS 150

CHAPTER 4. REPRESENTING NATURE IN *KRAYEVEDCHESKIY* MUSEUMS 152

INTRODUCTION 152

SOVIET GEOGRAPHICAL THOUGHT AND *KRAYEVEDENIYE* 153
THE NATURE IN NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUMS 162
'SOVIET TAXONOMY': NATURAL HISTORY DEPARTMENTS IN SOVIET *KRAYEVEDCHESKIY* MUSEUMS 166
NATURE–HUMAN RELATIONS IN *KRAYEVEDCHESKIY* MUSEUMS TODAY 177
LANDSCAPE APPROACH IN KRAYEVEDCHESKIY MUSEUMS 178
NATURE AND INDUSTRY 188
HUMAN–ANIMAL RELATIONS IN KRAYEVEDCHESKIY MUSEUMS 195

Representing wildlife in krayevedcheskiy museum. 199
Alternative approaches to the representation of nature 205
Conclusions 210

CHAPTER 5. ERASING THE GULAG: REPRESENTATIONS OF STALINIST REPRESSION IN *KRAYEVEDCHESKIY MUSEUMS* 213

Introduction 213
Representation of history in Soviet times 214
An overview of history departments today 221
What history do *krayevedcheskiy* museums represent? 223
Representation of the Gulag: from 'denial' to 'understanding'? 226
Overview 227
Representing the Gulag on the regional level 230
'Gulag' with a St. George ribbon 244
Exclusion as a 'blank spot'? 252
Representation of the Gulag at the local level 256
Conclusions 272

CHAPTER 6. THE CONSTRUCTION OF 'THE OTHERS' IN *KRAYEVEDCHESKIY* MUSEUMS 274

Introduction 274
The Soviet 'national question' and *krayevedeniye* 277
'Nationalities' in Soviet *krayevedcheskiy* museums 280
National minorities in contemporary *krayevedcheskiy* museums 285
Northern minorities in *krayevedcheskiy* museums 286
Yakutia Republic 286
Chukotka 297
Representations of national minorities in *krayevedcheskiy* museums 308
Conclusions 315

CONCLUSION 317

BIBLIOGRAPHY 327

Primary sources. 327
Archival documents. 327
Other primary sources 329
Scholarship 331

Note to the readers:

For transliteration the BGN/PCGN romanysation system was chosen.

All photos in the dissertation are made by the author in 2014-2016 unless indicated otherwise. The front page photo is made in the yard of Yakutsk' *krayevedcheskiy* museum in 2016.

List of figures

All the photos in the dissertation were made by the author in 2014-2016, unless other is stated.

Chapter 1

Figure 1.1. Map of Russia with case study museum locations highlighted in red, Open Street Map

Chapter 2

Figure 2.1 'Make yourself a backpack: the primitive one (on the left) and the upgraded one (one the right).

Chapter 3

Figure 3.1 – 3.2 *Krayevedcheski y*museums in Kalyazin and Kashin, 2016.

Figure 3.3. Overview of *krayevedcheskiy y*museum in Solikamsk. The museum is situated in the all buildings of monastery complex in the centre of the city, 2016.

Figure 3.4 'Museum of Faith' in Cherdyn', 2016.

Figure 3.5 'Chukotka's Heritage' Museum Centre, Anadyr', 2016.

Figure 3.6. *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Bolshaya Atna, Tatarstan, 2016

Figure 3.7 *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Chusovoy, Perm' region, 2016

Figure 3.8 Poster from the Samara museum of its 1940 exposition, showing three departments, including nature, history, and economics.

Figure 3.9 Harpoon with 'flying object' from Lavrentiya museum

Figure 3.10 Objects from Alaska in Provideniya museum with text

Chapter 4

Figure.4.1 Exposition of the nature department in the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Berezniki, northern Perm' region, in 1955.

Figure 4.2. The representation of 'Arctic landscapes' in the Yakutsk *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2015. Overview.

Figure 4.3. The representation of 'Arctic landscapes' in the Yakutsk *krayevedcheskiy* museum. Close up.

Figure 4.4. Display case on mountain regions. Yakutsk *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 'Nature' department.

Figure 4.5. The 'nature' department in the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Krasnovyshersk.

Figure 4.6. General Introduction to the 'nature' department, Kolpashevo *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2016.

Figure 4.7 Natural resources display in the 'nature' department, Kolpashevo *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2016.

Figure 4.8. 'Scheme of the complex uses of cedar forests', Kolpashevo *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2016, overview and close-up.

Figure 4.9. Description of landscapes. Parabel *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2016.

Figure 4.10. Mount dedicated to the forestry industry and collectivization, Krasnovyshersk *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2016.

Figure 4.11. Fur industry exposition in the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Kolpashevo, 2016.

Figure 4.12. Fur industry exposition in the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Lavrentiya, Chukotka, 2016.

Figure 4.13. The great sturgeon in Kazan's *krayevedcheskiy* museum

Figure 4.14. Wildlife representation in the 'nature' department, Solikamsk *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2016.

Figure 4.15 Wildlife diorama in the ‘nature’ department, Tomsk *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2016

Figure 4.16. *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Bolshaia Atna, Tatarstan, 2016.

Figure 4.17. *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Chusovoy, Perm’ kray, 2016.

Figure 4.18. *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Lavrentiya, Chukotka, 2016.

Figure 4.19. Anadyr’ *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2016.

Figure 4.20. Anadyr’ *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2016.

Figure 4.21. Anadyr’ *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2016.

Figure 4.22. Anadyr’ *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2016.

Figure 4.23. Anadyr’ *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2016

Chapter 5

Figure 5.1. ‘Fifteen years of struggle and social construction’ exhibition, view of ‘The Second Five Year Plan’, 1932. Perm’ museum (Baranova, 2005 p. 42).

Figure 5.2. ‘Siberians free and exiled’ exhibition, Tomsk, overview. October 2016.

Figure 5.3. ‘Siberians free and exiled’ exhibition, Tomsk, inside Stolypin car. October 2016.

Figure 5.4. ‘Siberians free and exiled’ exhibition, Tomsk, mounts dedicated to special settlements. October 2016.

Figure 5.5. ‘Siberians free and exiled’ exhibition, Tomsk, mount dedicated to exiles of the second category – forced to leave, October 2016.

Figure 5.6. Map of personal stories, places of relocation, and villages in the Tomsk region.

Figure 5.7. NKVD Jail Museum banner, Tomsk, October 2016

Figure 5.8. Overview of museum corridor with entrances to the exhibition rooms, NKVD Jail Museum, Tomsk. October 2016.

Figure 5.9. Map showing Gulag camps in the USSR, NKVD Jail Museum, Tomsk. October 2016.

Figure 5.10 Information mounts, NKVD Jail Museum, Tomsk. October 2016.

Figure 5.11. NKVD Jail Museum, Tomsk. October 2016.

Figure 5.12. Biographies of victims, NKVD Jail Museum, Tomsk. October 2016.

Figure 5.13. Interior of a crime investigator's office, NKVD Jail Museum, Tomsk. October 2016.

Figure 5.14. Cell, left untouched, NKVD Jail Museum, Tomsk. October 2016.

Figure 5.15. Overview of Great Patriotic War department, *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Yakutsk, June 2015.

Figure 5.16. Mount dedicated to Gulag, *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Yakutsk, June 2015.

Figure 5.17. Gulag exposition, *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Yakutsk, June 2015.

Figure 5.18. Map of camp administrations and labour colonies in the Perm' region. (made by author)

Figure 5.19. The History department, *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Perm'. October 2016.

Figure 5.20. The interior of an apartment during the time of the Great Patriotic War, History department, Perm' *krayevedcheskiy* museum. October 2016.

Figure 5.21. Soviet period, History department, Perm' *krayevedcheskiy* museum, October 2016.

Figure 5.22. Museum in Narym named after Stalin in 1950 (archives of Narym museum).

Figure 5.23. Overview of the Narym Museum of Political Exiles, 2016.

Figure 5.24. Soviet mounts in Narym Museum of Political Exiles. October 2016.

Figure 5.25. Exhibit dedicated to Stalin in exile in Narym Museum of Political Exiles. October 2016.

Figure 5.26 The history department in Kolpashevo's *krayevedcheskiy* museum. October 2016.

Figure 5.27. 'Repressions' in the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Kolpashevo. October 2016.

Figure 5.28. The 'barrack' in the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Berezniki. October 2016.

Figure 5.29. Part of the Gulag section in the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Berezniki. October 2016.

Figure 5.30. Part of the Gulag section in the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Berezniki. October 2016.

Figure 5.31. Interior of the 'barrack' in the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Berezniki. October 2016.

Figure 5.32. The 'Shalamov room' in the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Krasnovishersk. October 2016.

Figure 5.33. 'Labour is an affair of honour, glory, heroism, and valiancy' slogan in the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Krasnovishersk. October 2016.

Figure 5.34. The 'dark' part of the Shalamov room, *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Krasnovishersk. October 2016.

Figure 5.35. Photo from the Facebook page of the 'Museum at the Cold Pole'. Image from the museum Facebook page.

Chapter 6

Figure 6.1 The display in room 1 of the 'prehistoric' family, *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Yakutsk, 2015

Figure 6.2 The representation of national minorities in *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Yakutsk, 2015

Figure 6.3. The expositions in the second room, with mannequin of a ‘northern’ man, *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Yakutsk, 2015

Figure 6.4. Reconstruction of Yakut lifestyle (undated), Yakutsk *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2015.

Figure 6.5. The expositions in the Anadyr’ *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2016.

Figure 6.6, The expositions in the Anadyr’ *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2016.

Figure 6.7. Overview of the main square and main street of Lavrentiya, 2016

Figure 6.8. ‘Ethnographical’ department of *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Lavrentiya, 2016

Figure 6.9. ‘Ethnographical’ department of *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Lavrentiya, 2016

Figure 6.10. *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Provideniya, 2016

Figure 6.11. *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Provideniya, 2016

Figure 6.12. *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Provideniya, 2016

Figure 6.13. *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Tomsk, 2016

Figure 6.14. *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Tomsk, 2016

Figure 6.15. *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Parabel, 2016

Figure 6.16. *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Narym, 2016

Figure 6.17. *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Narym, 2016

Figure 6.18. *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Narym, 2016

Introduction

Even for a most seasoned traveller who knows Russia through and through it might still be difficult to name a town or city that does not feature a public establishment called '*krayevedcheskiy* museum'. A humble village or little town might lack a crucial element of urban infrastructure, but somewhere on its streets there will be a building, a section of a building, or a shack adorned with a plaque saying '*krayevedcheskiy* museum'. This institution may occupy a tiny room on the ground floor of a residential building as in Chusovoiy, or a large former monastery complex in the city centre as in Solikamsk; it might play a vital role in the cultural life of the community as in Tomsk, or be completely disconnected from the cultural agenda as in Perm'; it can be run by individuals and activists as in the villages across northern Perm' kray, central Yakutia and northern parts of Chukotka or be professionally staffed and divided into museum and scientific departments as in Kazan'. Scattered all around Russia's vast territory, coming in all sorts of shapes and sizes, playing various roles in the life of local communities, these organisations still can be unmistakeably identified as *'krayevedcheskiy* museums' by the look of their expositions and the ways these expositions are presented to the public.

The name of the knowledge area that these museums are meant to represent, *krayevedeniye*, can be translated literally as 'the knowledge (or study) of a home area', which suggests its apparent purpose: to provide a summary of all essential information about the nature and society of a given territory. However, this is one of the cases when the literal meaning is misleading or, at least, incomplete. As I travelled to various corners of Russia, *krayevedcheskiy* museums were always high on my list of places to visit. Despite the name, I did not come there to discover something new about the region. Quite the opposite: the picture of what I would find in yet another *krayevedcheskiy* museum in the places as different as a local administrative centre mostly populated by one of the

Minor Peoples in Chukotka and a town in western ('Central') Russia was already deeply embedded in my mind.

The expectations of what I was about to see there had been engraved even before I began my academic study of them. Like most people born in Russia, for me the phenomenon of *krayevedcheskiy* museum is known from childhood, when during school tours and family trips teachers or tour guides took me through a panopticon of taxidermized animals, bones, mannequins wearing strange clothes, weapons, and pictures of the Bolsheviks flying red banners. The guides suggested that all these various objects somehow reflected the identyity of a place and people, and where they come from historically and geographically. Indeed, to this day these museums (that together form one of the largest cultural networks in the post-Soviet space and even the world) affect how people in Russia think about their history, geography, culture and identity on a population level from Chukotka to Kaliningrad.

Perhaps it was precisely because of this ubiquity and embeddedness of *krayevedcheskiy* museums into the social fabric that made them a topic of little interest for academics, museum scholars and even general public.

Now, after I have studied tens of them all across the country, I can claim that the phenomenon of *krayevedcheskiy* museums is unique and specific to a time and region, for Soviet and post-Soviet Russia. As such, it makes not just an important and gravely understudied aspect of the regional cultural landscape, but a very powerful case for the decolonization of the predominant Western paradigm of knowledge production. I aim to broaden the existing 'geographies of scientific knowledge' paradigm by revealing the main principals of how *krayevedeniye* and *krayevedcheskiy* museums function and what type of knowledge they produce.

Inspired by Livingstone's principle whereby 'science is concerned with both ideas and institutions, with theories and practices, with principles and performances', this study aims to present a critical introduction for both Western and non-Western academia to a discipline unique to the (post)-Soviet space, *krayevedeniye* (Livingstone, 2003). Despite its very tangible presence in the region, it so far has often been neglected by both conventional history of knowledge production and by critical museum studies. In this thesis I will track the history of *krayevedeniye* back to its academic routes in Soviet ethnography, history, and geography, and unpack the history of the largest citizen knowledge production systems created by the Soviet authorities. Based on my archival research, I will claim that *krayevedeniye* was one of the most ambitious modernist knowledge-engineering projects undertaken by the Soviet regime. I will also address *krayevedcheskiy* museums as they stand now by examining both what they show and, even more importantly, what they *do not* show. By comparing current approaches to exhibitions with the historical data, I will demonstrate how Soviet guidelines still affect the presentation of regional identity and, therefore, the perception of the 'little Motherland' at large and produce characteristic 'blank spots' of regional identity that affect the population of Russia today.

Chapter 1

Introduction

'I'm so happy we didn't have many camps in our region. God knows how I would show them in the museum'
(from the interview with museum director in *Provideniya*)

National, regional, and local identities are always built upon shared common myths, cultural clichés, images, or notions in a particular society, which are often constructed by government and implemented from above. But where there is a room for such myths, there is equally a place for concealment. Can silence be as powerful to unite people as cultural myths do? Many scholars of Russian and Soviet culture and society point out that Russians used to understand each other 'with half words'; they underline the importance of that which is shared in silence, that which is unsaid in Soviet and post-Soviet identity.[1] Usually, such silences are associated with governmentally-produced narratives, which cover traumatic periods of history not fitting into overarching discourse. This thesis aims to reveal those 'common unsaids' created by one of the widest spread cultural networks in the country: *krayevedcheskiy* museums.

In the introduction to her book *Common Places: Mythologies of everyday Life* one of the leading theorists and philosophers of Russian culture, Svetlana Boym (Boym, 1994), gives a list of untranslatable Russian words (such as *sobornost'*, *podvig*, and *sostradaniye*); she organizes her work around those words which reflect the common places of everyday life (including *byt*, *poshlost'*, and *meshchanstvo*). In this work I add the word *krayevedeniye* to her list. I claim that despite various attempts at translation,

[1] See for example Alexey Yurchak 'Everything Was Forever, until It Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation' Yurchak, 2005) for the discussion on silences and Soviet identities.

krayevedeniye remains an idea that is untranslatable, embedded as it is in Soviet and post-Soviet culture identity, and geographical imagination, with no direct analogues in other societies. By studying the core meaning of *krayevedeniye*, the modes of its knowledge production, its relationships with power (centre) and local initiatives (peripheries), and by unpacking its representation in *krayevedcheskiy* museums, I aim to understand those 'common unsaids' which were constructed in Soviet times by *krayevedeniye* and are today reproduced in the museums across the country.

Krayevedeniye and *krayevedcheskiy* museums were (and probably – are) solving one of the crucial problems of Russia, which emerges from its territorial size. Its vast lands are hard to control, and its natural resources hard to study and manage. Furthermore—and particularly significant for this study—it is difficult to control such a large and diverse population's perception of the country as a whole. To solve some of these difficulties, the Soviet government from the beginning united and centralised local activities across the country under the name *krayevedeniye*, unpacked in Chapter 2, and created a unique cultural network—the widest in the country—for its coordination, in the form of *krayevedcheskiy* museums (see Chapter 3). Through this initiation, the Soviet government created a unique knowledge production system for the production of data and local knowledge (see Chapter 2) and to represent regions for pedagogical purposes (Chapter 3). However, as I will show in Chapter 2, the plan to create a self-contained discipline from *krayevedeniye* failed, and the knowledge production system was not created anew but rather blended the approaches and methodologies of Soviet History, Geography, and Ethnography, and the methods of representing these subjects in museums (Chapters 4 and 5). *Krayevedcheskiy* museums became important institutions in the building up of national and local identities and in the creation of positive images of regions, regardless of what actually took place in a region. To do so, Soviet authorities drew up guidelines concerning how to create a positive image of a region, and how to set

up suitable exhibitions (Chapters 4, 5, and 6). However, the period of strict control and governance from the centre ended in 1955, leaving the remaining *krayevedcheskiy* museums without any new agenda. Today, after the collapse of the USSR and the reorganisation of many institutions and governing networks, *krayevedcheskiy* museums remain as a part of the museum network found in every settlement; they rely on government funding and staff, but lack any direct ideological agenda. This thesis thus aims to understand whether these 'common unsaids' remain the same as in the Soviet period, or whether, after the end of strict governance, they are beginning to reveal themselves as subjects for critical discussion and acknowledgement by museums and wider society. To do so, the main sections of this thesis discuss in turn the history (Chapter 4), nature (Chapter 5), and society (Chapter 6) departments in Russian regional museums to search for the shared patterns of Soviet 'common unsaids' and any examples of Soviet patterns being overturned. I introduce my theoretical concept of 'common unsaids' in Chapter 1, revealing how Soviet governmental were contributing to their creation in Chapter 2 and 3 and actually discovering the rhetorical and exposition methods of their creation in the departments.

This introductory chapter aims to clarify the theoretical framework of this thesis, justify the selection of case study museums, and provide an overview of the methodological approaches used.

Theoretical framework of the thesis

The theoretical architecture of this work if based on several theoretical frames and concepts, which I will try to map now. First, this thesis introduces a critical theory of *krayevedeniye*, which has not yet been done properly in the existing scholarship. I locate *krayevedeniye* within the discussion of knowledge production modes and systems, approaching it as a potential example of a specific nomadic discipline. Secondly, in subsequent chapters I explore *krayevedcheskiy* museums as *krayevedeniye*'s material

representation in museums. As already stated, *krayevedeniye* was a mixture of Soviet geography, history, and ethnography, and *krayevedcheskiy* museums show themselves to be a material expression of this mixture. The theoretical challenge of this study is to bring together respective debates concerning wilderness and nature (in geography), dominating and submissive societies (in postcolonial theory), and memory, Soviet traumas, silences, erasing narratives, and forgetting (in history). All of these angles involve their own 'common unsaids', which were directed by the strict Soviet government and Soviet science aligned to the party line.

Research into what is not present is always difficult due to the nature of the subject—absence is hard to document. My research is made more difficult still by the fact that I focus on 'common unsaids' in a specific yet under-studied set of museums—*krayevedcheskiy* —which in turn represent a knowledge production system almost neglected by the history of Soviet science and ideas. For example, there are many works approaching metanarratives of Soviet history (Fitzpatrick, 1999; Baron, 2007), geography (Shaw and Oldfield, 2007, 2015; Hooson, 1964, 1993; Martin, 2005), ethnography (Slezkine, 1991, 1994; Tishkov, 1992) or philosophy of science (Graham, 1973). These are long-standing academic disciplines with an established place in universities. *Krayevedeniye*, which is a matter of current thesis, by contrast, is not a recognised academic discipline and has only just begun to be studied more widely. To explore the metanarratives created by *krayevedeniye* and *krayevedcheskiy* museums I first need to give a critical introduction of *krayevedeniye* itself, discuss its place in the broader context of knowledge production, and place *krayevedcheskiy* museums within the broader museum context. Only after all this is it possible to discuss the 'common unsaids' and ways they are constructed.

If we approach 'common unsaids' as constructs of a particular society, which chooses to hide certain narratives and events, and exaggerate others, it would be

reasonable to assume that 'common unsaids' might change after the collapse of the USSR. To see whether that has happened this thesis deals with two different periods of time. My first reference period is the period of Soviet *krayevedeniye* project from 1921 until 1955 (though I am touching previous decades to show how *krayevedeniye* was emerging), when the Soviet centralisation has weaken. My second reference period is 2014–2017, when the fieldwork was carried out. The main purpose of approaching two periods is to analyse the 'common unsaids' of today's museums to assess whether things that previously went 'unsaid' are now being revealed openly. The results of my investigation will help us to understand the nature of 'common unsaids' and whether their reproduction is conscious.

This work also relates to centre–periphery debates. Such debates are impossible to ignore when discussing a network distributed across Russia or the former USSR, especially given the size of the territory concerned. There are two main centre-periphery relationships to consider. The first arises from *krayevedeniye*'s status as a specific mode of Soviet knowledge production with no direct counterparts in the West, which failed to obtain support for further development after the collapse of the USSR. This aspect of *krayevedeniye* corresponds to the emerging trends on de-westernization of academia (Müller, 2019; Koch, 2016; Murawski, 2018), which were underdeveloped and taken over by the western model of organizing knowledge production.[2] Here, the 'periphery' is Russia and the Russian academy of science, while the 'centre' is made of the western academic tradition. The second main centre-periphery relationship of importance is found within the network of *krayevedcheskiy* museums themselves, which were (and remain) the cultural network with the widest geographical spread across the country, which used to be directed from the 'centre' but located at the 'periphery'.[3]

[2] See Chapter 2 for discussion of knowledge production and *krayevedeniye*.
[3] By 'centre' here I mean the governmental authorities of *krayevedeniye*—see Chapters 2 and 3 for further discussion.

So, this thesis introduces and explores the post-Soviet evolution of geographical imaginations, constructed by the specific Russian, Soviet, and post-Soviet type of *krayevedcheskiy* museums. Specifically, I explore this theme through analyses of what is *not* shown in these museums, what is omitted from them—especially those local landscapes and events which are not represented at all or are presented as disconnected from the region. I introduce the concept of 'common unsaids' and the techniques by which they are constructed. I argue that some of the 'common unsaids' are typical for *krayevedeniye* and even inseparable from *krayevedeniye* as a discipline, and that they are widespread on a national level. Moreover, among all various types of Soviet/post-Soviet silences, created by various institutions (media, academia, NGO, photo-projects) I argue that *krayevedcheskiy* museums are the ones constructing truly 'common' silences, shared by the majority of people. And that the reason for that lies in the very heart of what *krayevedeniye* is – a vernacular Soviet knowledge production project. To approach these 'common unsaids' - the ones inseparable from *krayevedeniye* - we need to return to the critical history of krayevedeniye in the Soviet period, because it does not exist in the contemporary Russian structure of academic thought. This makes it impossible to trace the critical history of *krayevedeniye* up to the present, and places constraints upon research design, as officially krayevedeniye no longer exists at the scale it was during Soviet times. So, to reveal those yet Soviet 'common unsaids' that were programmed by Soviet *krayevedeniye* we need to unpack how it was constructed and deconstruct its theory. In brief, *krayevedeniye* has always been encompassing Soviet landscape studies, history and social construction, each of which causing specific 'common unsaids', created by a metanarrative of respective discipline and its museums representation. In other words, I argue that 'common unsaids' on a national level depend on the understanding of nature, history, and society in academic discourse in the Soviet Union and how these subjects were presented in museums.

The ‘common unsaids’ constructed in particular regions and museums will be approached through my case study selection. They will be revealed by a close study of contemporary *krayevedcheskiy* museums, which have rarely been approached as a group of specifically Soviet and post-Soviet museums, and—as I argue—have no real counterparts in the West. Apart from decoding those regional and local ‘common unsaids’ I will try to reveal the techniques of their construction and compare them with ‘national’ ones to see whether there is any level of contestation of central agenda.

In what follows I will introduce my understanding of ‘common unsaids’, which I build in comparison with ‘cultural myths’, and hypothesize what techniques might be used to create them within a knowledge production system and its material representation in the museums.

Cultural silences and ‘common unsaids'

My thesis is not the first work to approach *the excluded* in (post)Soviet representations. Cultural silences and exclusion of a certain topic from predominant representations or narrative is one of the most popular academic debates in memory studies and public history research. Quite often to address something omitted or not included the term ‘blank spot’ is widely used today in different scientific disciplines, art projects, and policy guidelines (Wersch, 2008; Herminghouse, 1991; Dickerman and King, 1998; Ellman and Maksudov, 1994). It may refer just as easily to visual representation as to historical narrative. With reference to Soviet history, scholars usually use the term ‘blank spot’ to refer to an event that is hidden or excluded from metanarratives. One of the first to actually apply the term ‘*belie piatna’* to the Soviet historical narrative was Mikhail Gorbachev, in a speech delivered in 1987 to journalists and writers at the Kremlin; he directly stated that ‘blanks spots’ in Russian history should

be eliminated (Remnick, 1993). The American journalist David Remnick in his Pulitzer Prize-winning *Lenin's tomb: The Last Days of the Soviet Empire* put Gorbachev's phrase in the context of the screening of Tengiz Abuladze's film *Repentance*, linking the reference to 'blank spots' quite obviously link to Stalin's Terror and repressions: 'We should not forget the names and … the whole periods of people's life. History should be seen as it is' (ibid, p.35). Since then various authors have used the term to address different topics in Soviet history. Michael Ellman and S. Maksudov (Ellman and Maksudov, 1994) apply the term 'blank spot' to the misrepresentation of the number of victims of the Great Patriotic War. Another use of 'blank spot', and one of the closest understandings and implications of the term to what is used in current thesis, is used in Russian and post-Soviet studies in historical and memory-related research. James V. Wertsch, a social anthropologist working with collective memory, develops the concept of 'blank spot' in Russian collective memory in his '*Blank Spots in Collective Memory: A Case Study of Russia'*. Wertsch describes the way Russians tend to create 'blank spots' concerning certain historical episodes, whether applied to personalities or historical events (Wertsch, 2008, p. 58). Wertsch develops the concept of 'blank spot', arguing that alongside cases of literally 'vanishing something away', it could also include things that cannot be—or are not—said in public. This is something I agree with; I argue that some of the 'blank spots' in today's *krayevedcheskiy* museums are created by an unelected idea, shared by curators, of what should not be shown. However, others are kept from the Soviet era quite consciously. Wertsch argues that despite the form of 'blank spots', Soviet citizens know what should and should not be discussed in public; he examines how a blank spot is created around the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact in historical textbooks.

Other examples of similar implementation of the concept of 'blank spots', though less reflective on the concept itself, can be seen in Sirkka Ahonen's work on the exclusion of Soviet history from the history curriculum in Baltic countries (Ahonen, 2001), or in Eliza

Congdon investigation into the events of 1968 in Prague, revealing, through interviews of witnesses, the ‘blank spots’ surrounding the Soviet intervention (Congdon, 2000). Patricia Herminghouse conceptualizes the idea of a ‘blank spot’ as not only an exclusion from historical narrative but as a part of a broader understanding of ‘silences’ in her work concerning German communists who died in the Soviet Union. She shows that these ‘blank spots’ are created not only by an exclusion from historical narrative created after the event, but also in the actions undertaken at the time by the Soviets between 1940–50 to cover the traces of mass graves and camps (Herminghouse, 1991, p. 345–65).

There is also a wider discussion of misrepresentations during the Soviet era, which includes contribution on broader falsifications across various media to promote the party line (see, for example, David King’s book *The Commissar Vanishes: The Falsification of Photographs and Art in Stalin’s Russia*). Applying ‘blank spots’ to the traumatic pages of Soviet history is relatively common through a range of Soviet and post-Soviet scholarship addressing a wide range of historical events, which go far beyond Gorbachev’s original reference.

But my idea of ‘common unsaids’ represents something wider than the total exclusion from historical narrative usually implied by the term ‘blank spots’. In intellectual histories of geography and ethnography, the concept of a ‘blank spot’—and its possible analogues—has not been developed as thoroughly as it has been for the discipline of history. The predominant theoretical debates criticise the idea of representation in general (Thrift, 2007), and the concepts of wilderness environments and the level of anthropocentrism in their representation, while the predominant debates in ethnography concerned postcolonialism and relationships between societies. Thus the concept of total exclusion or ‘blank spots’ is not easily found in the intellectual history of those disciplines and is a matter of this thesis to reveal them.

‘Common unsaids’ differ from ‘blank spots’, therefore. They might not represent the complete neglect of a land-(memory)scape, but rather, as with cultural myths, may be affected by different levels of falsifications and manipulation justified on some level by those who create them. In the case of the USSR and contemporary Russia, the creation of ‘common unsaids’ is connected with the government ‘party line’, which uses various techniques in their creation. Moreover, I argue that *krayevedeniye* is one of the Soviet and post-Soviet knowledge production systems most responsible for creating cultural myths and ‘common unsaids’, since *krayevedcheskiy* museums were the most widespread regional institution for promoting them. Their ‘blank spots’ have undergone little change since the collapse of the Soviet Union. The ‘common unsaids’ in *krayevedeniye* echo those in the disciplines it was based upon: Soviet ethnography, geography and history. And if we are practised to think about ‘blank spots’ in historical narratives, we do not yet apply this practice to other disciplines.

As previously stated, this thesis will explore various ‘common unsaids’ constructed by *krayevedeniye* in Soviet times and traced in contemporary exhibitions. The concept of ‘common unsaids’ in *krayevedeniye* is built upon various silences or ‘unsaids’ in Soviet historical narrative, Soviet geographies, and Soviet ethnography. This work approaches them from two perspectives: (1) from an analysis of Soviet ideas of *krayevedeniye* and (2) through current permanent displays in *krayevedcheskiy* museums. The first perspective highlights ‘common unsaids’ imagined by the Soviet government, while the second identifies those which remain after the collapse of the Soviet Union and is based on empirical study of case studies. Those two will be compared to prove or contest the continuing tradition of ‘common unsaids’ in *krayevedeniye* and *krayevedcheskiy* museums and trace how the ‘national’ and ‘regional’ and ‘local’ ones correspond.

The right to speak about a topic or the right to omit, exclude, and neglect it is, in the postmodern tradition, always associated with power. Moreover, the creation of cultural myths within society is a privilege belonging to those in power, and the same is true of the creation of 'common unsaids'. According to Boym, 'mythologies are cultural common places, recurrent narratives that are perceived as natural in a given culture but in fact were naturalized and their historical, political, or literary origins forgotten or disguised' (Boym, 1994, p.4). In the introduction to her *Common Places: Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia*, Boym underlines the importance of cultural myths in Soviet and Russian contexts by stating that it is not enough to 'to trace their origins in intellectual history, state policy, or actual practice. It is necessary to remember that they function in the culture as magical incantations, memorized or paraphrased but rarely interpreted critically'. Boym reveals that cultural myths were constructed by various ideologies, 'both Communist and nationalist'. Moreover, she claims that 'Myths are sites of a shared cultural memory, of communal identification and affection', which 'shapes the national imagination' (ibid, p.5). Boym constructs her concept of 'cultural myth' upon the earlier work of Levi-Strauss and Roland Barthes, particularly the latter's *Mythologies* (Barthes, 1957).

I propose the concept of the 'common unsaid' as a negative form of 'cultural myth'. While myths create a shared past, memory, and identities around existent historical events or landscapes, a 'common unsaid' in *krayevedeniye*, represents a historical event or landscape that is set aside and omitted from public discourse, despite the level of its influence on society or local environment. To develop this further, we can say that 'common unsaids' unite people and create identities around shared societal silences. They are often formed out of problematic topics, pasts, and landscapes, or from societal traumas. Moreover, some cultural myths are produced and presented to the public precisely as part of an effort at creating a 'common unsaid' on another event: the enormous exaggeration of the significance of the Great Patriotic War across all possible

media, for example, sought to silence—and thus create as a 'common unsaid'—the depth of Stalin's repressions which were happening in parallel.

The question that arises is why unsaids become 'common' rather than being shared only by local communities or a specific social group? In other words, why we are claiming that the silences developed by *krayevedeniye* are shared by so many people that they become as recognizable for the whole country as cultural myths and therefore become 'common'? Do these 'common unsaids' divide people *or unite them? The answer to that question lies in very core of what krayevedeniye* is and will be unpacked in detail in Chapter 2. In short, *krayevedeniye* was a vernacular (*narodnyy*) knowledge production project with massive involvement of ordinary people – non-professionals. The scale of their 'volunteers' participation was so large that *krayevedeniye* became one of the mostly common shared knowledge in the country.

Knowledge production systems, academic disciplines, museums, and the representations they create, are all cultural constructs and products of the particular political and social regimes. Boym develops 'cultural myths' as social constructs, which various under different regimes and governance (Boym, 1994, p.4). As such, we would expect the 'common unsaids' to change as well in various social and political contexts. We would expect a certain topic to be represented differently in museums according to changes in the political and social climate. I am not suggesting here that these representations are only a matter of political climate. That would imply, that we are dealing with direct governmental influence on the permanent displays, which was true for the Soviet era, but less so now. What I am proposing/positing in this thesis is that 'common unsaids' are subject to change in various societies. So, we would assume that the 'silences' produced by the Soviet regime ought to undergo changes after the collapse of the USSR. Contemporary Russia should produce different 'common unsaids', or even

alternative narratives, from Soviet Russia. So we might be able track the evolution of 'common unsaids' in *krayevedcheskiy* museums and see to what extent they have changed over last 30 years.

The formation of 'common unsaids'

In theory, it can be argued, therefore, that 'common unsaids', are not constant, but subject to change depending on their political and social context. The particular focus of this work is to find if the 'common unsaids' 'represented' in *krayevedcheskiy* museums have, indeed, changed, since Soviet times. This analysis (which are discussed in the following empirical chapters) are made through the research of Soviet guiding documents of the period of sovietization and centralization of *krayevedeniye* (1921-1955) and of current museums expositions. However, this works not only aims to reveal the 'common unsaids' in *krayevedeniye,* but also to approach the methods of their creation – both in *krayevedeniye, and* in its material form – *krayevedcheskiy* museums. In what follows, I hypothesise that 'common unsaids' in *krayevedeniye* might be built on the same techniques of myth creation described by Boym (Boym, 1994) based on the classical '*Mythologies*'of Roland Barthes (1972).

To reveal the 'common unsaids' of *krayevedeniye* we need to discuss the discursive techniques used in their construction. Bathes in his classical book goes in to the details of myth making and 'sketches …rhetorical forms' of bourgeois myths (Barthes, 1972, p.150). He talks about rhetoric as a 'set of fixed, regulated, insistent figures, according to which the varied forms of mythical signifiers arrange themselves, listing following principal figures. He starts with '*the Inoculation'*, which is 'admitting an accidental evil to conceal its principal evil; Bathes call this process 'immunization of collective imagination' to protect it against 'the risk of a generalized subversion' (ibid, p.151). As I am going to reveal in my thesis, *inoculation* is used relatively often in Russian

krayevedcheskiy museums to talk about the system of Gulag and Stalinist repression – not showing its scale and influence on the region, but admitting fact of its existing. The next figure in Barthe's list is '*the privation of history'* – 'ideal servant of the History', which makes it seem as though social phenomena, facts, or myths simply 'exist', and are there for the viewer's gaze, eliminating questions of both causality and agency (ibid, p. 151). Further, Barthes talks about '*identification'* – 'an inability to imagine the Other', projecting self-characteristics onto others. Barthes, referencing to the petit-bourgeois mentions that he 'ignores and denies the Other, even if the Other is brought face-to-face' (ibid, p. 152). I find that figure useful to speak about the construction of Soviets and Russians in the museums. Barthes describes '*tautology'* as a 'verbal device which consists in defining like by like' (ibid, p. 151). Barthes approaches it as a stating of fact 'which verbally does what the gesture of rationality, but immediately abandons the latter'. The next mythological figure in Barthes list is the '*Neither-Norism'*, which consists in juxtaposing two opposite statements so as to reject them both. Radical differences between phenomena are refused by combining them into a kind of middle ground marked by immobility and permanence (ibid, p.153). '*The quantification of quality'* is a 'figure which is latent in all the preceding ones'. Barthes states that 'by reducing any quality to quantity, myth economizes intelligence: it understands reality more cheaply' (ibid, p.154). And the last figure stands for '*the statement of fact*' without explanation. Barthes links statement of fact with common sense and describes as 'the decorous equivalent of tautology' (ibid, 154).

These are the techniques and verbal constructions Barthes identifies as used to create cultural myths in his '*Mythologies*'. Taking them to build up the techniques of 'common unsaid' creation can face significant critique and taking Barthes as a starting point is not only possible way of approaching how the 'common unsaids' are constructed.

However, I found it helpful in this thesis to develop my concept on Barthes and Svetlana Boym, pushing her approach further.

The main state ideology behind creating a 'common unsaid' is to disconnect an event or a 'military landscape'[4] from a local or regional identity. The representation of region *krayevedeniye* is creating a gap between 'problematic' landscapes, people and historical events and region itself. Below, I use Barthes's list of mythmaking technologies as a basis for my analysis of the production of common unsaids in *krayevedeniye* and in its material form, *krayevedcheskiy* museums. In applying Barthes to the 'common unsaids', we find that in this case some of technologies overlap and others modify them. Starting, for example, with the museums' simple failure to present a certain topic, historical event or figure in its representation of a regional or locality (what I call 'blank spot'), we might understand this as a classic Barthian technique of "privation of history", "Neither-Norism" or a "statement of fact". The disconnection of events from their broader historical and societal context and providing no explanation about where they came from (what I in this thesis call 'bubbling') blends Barthes's 'privation of history', 'statement of fact', and 'identification'. It might relate to omitting the historical context, or neglecting to discuss the role of certain people and figures, or presenting a fact or event as disconnected from a region's nature and landscape. The 'common unsaid' in this case stands for the *processes*, excluding people or context that might be 'embarrassing' against the backdrop of a heroic history or economic success. Following Barthes's 'classical' understanding of *Inoculation*, 'common unsaids' often made to hide a 'great evil' behind an 'accidental evil' acknowledged by society. Later in this thesis I will test these rhetorical devices to investigate the predominant techniques 'common unsaids' use to make the disconnection.

[4] See below the discussion on 'military landscapes' and 'common unsaids'

The development of ‘common unsaids’ on a national level within the widest cultural network in the country was a challenging task. To do so, Soviet officials issued a range of strict guidelines for *krayevedeniye* and *krayevedcheskiy* museums. This centralised narrative, which should have been unified across the country, was then however transformed by regional and local *krayevedcheskiy* museums. In theory, museums could not implement their own agenda in expositions, but in practice many of them were criticized by the ‘centre’ for not following the ‘party line’. This could be seen as a conscious attempt to contest the central view, or simply as a failure to keep up with changing rules and guidelines. In the chapter that follows, I examine present museum exhibitions to determine whether, after the collapse of the USSR and the end of museums’ centralized governance, Soviet ‘common unsaids’ are still in force or are being contested.

In conclusion, I propose to use the term ‘common unsaid’ for a specific purpose in this thesis. I use ‘common unsaid’ as a negative form of ‘cultural myth’, meaning not only the total exclusion of a topic, name, or landscape from cultural representation, but also various methods of falsifying, misrepresenting, and detracting historical events, people, or environmental landscapes from local identities, created by *krayevedcheskiy* museums and embedded in post-Soviet identity. In the empirical part of this thesis I consider the ways these ‘common unsaids’ are produced in *krayevedcheskiy* museum expositions, and how they are thus erased from geographical imagination and identity. I attend to the means of their creation both on the conceptual level and on the level of representation. The first is mainly formed by *krayevedeniye*, with its blending of the theories and ideas of Soviet history, geography and ethnography; whilst the second deals with specific exposition methods and techniques used by museums.

To reveal those ‘common unsaids’ and understand which landscapes, people, or events tend to be excluded, I find it useful to use the theoretical framework of critical

military studies. In the next section I introduce the idea of the post-Soviet geographical imagination and its relationships to the theory of post-Soviet military landscapes, and show their strong connection with 'common unsaids'.

Military landscapes as 'common unsaids': geographical imagination in post-Soviet Russia

There are many approaches to geographical imaginations, the way they are constructed, and how they correspond with the 'real world'. Initially introduced as 'a persistent and universal instinct of [humankind]' by Hugh Prince (Prince, 1962), and taken forward by Harvey (Harvey, 1973), geographical imaginations have become a standard element of academic discourse. Debates around geographical imagination and the conceptual space that arise between different philosophical and theoretical traditions (Gregory, 1994) are connected with the notion of *geographical knowledge* that are not confined to the formalization of the academy. Geographical imagination can be powerful; Gregory claims the idea of imaginative geographies has called into question the boundaries of geography itself as a discipline. He further argues that geographical imaginations, conveyed through travel writings or mobilized in popular culture and politics, are deployed to wage war (Pred, 2000).

In this thesis, I argue that in the USSR, and even in contemporary Russia, geographical imagination has been and continued to be formed differently from in 'Western' countries. First, this was because of the sheer size of the country and the lack of mobility which meant that the development of Soviet geographical imagination among its citizens - had to depend upon a variety of different types of representation. Secondly, almost all institutions that represented the country's geography were controlled by the state. Central authorities issued specific guidelines and rules for representation intended to ensure institutions kept to the party line. The guidelines were the source of official discourse. Thus, Soviet geographical imagination was influenced by what the governmentally-

backed cultural institutions showed in their displays, and what the CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union) of approved.

Another factor influencing Soviet representations is the fact that geographical knowledge in Soviet academia had begun to develop in a specific way, within the frames of positivism, Marxism-Leninism, and the absence of free debate. Soviet academics had a specific view of their own territory and regions, which was produced by a range of governmental institutions and based on specific Soviet geographical knowledge. The level of control and influence of these representations formed a favourable environment for creating pro-governmental images of Russia's territories—and, therefore, the 'common unsaids' encoded by government and ideology. In contemporary Russia the level of control of academia and the media has changed again: at least until recently, cultural and academic institutions in Russia enjoyed a certain level of freedom and could receive independent funding. Yet, many institutions (even if not all of them) still echo the views of those in charge in their visual depiction of regions.[5] However, the focus of this thesis is *krayevedcheskiy* museums, and the image of places they create; the financial and institutional state in contemporary Russia will be examined in Chapter 3.

Subsequent chapters will introduce *krayevedcheskiy* museums as a particular government institution and explore how they influence the geographical imaginations of regional populations. Before then, however, we should consider the notion of 'military landscapes' as—I argue—these are the ones which we would expect to be consistently silenced or excluded from government-affiliated representations. In other words, I want to introduce an overarching, wide definition of 'military landscape', which accounts for nearly all 'common unsaids'.[6] By this, I do not in any way imply that I approach the Soviet

[5] See, for example, the media productions of the 'Russian Geographical Society', photo contests like 'The Best of Russia' or 'Pristine Russia' which rely almost totally upon government funding.

[6] I intend to continue exploring the misrepresentations of Russian regions by various government institutions in later research.

Union or Russia as a military state; 'military landscapes', as used in this work, refer to problematic and conflict areas, which, while frequently excluded from popular geographical imagination, are otherwise somehow characteristic of the country's regime.

The presence or absence of different places in popular geographical imagination is socially and politically constructed. By this I mean that the type of place excluded or included in geographical imaginations depends on many social and political factors in each individual place and time, as well as its physical appearance and architecture in reality. The same conclusion can be drawn from critical military studies, which I have found helpful in exploring certain Soviet-specific 'blank spots'. Critical military studies is a scholarly paradigm which prioritizes an understanding of military processes and practices as the outcome of social life and political contestation, rather than as a given, functional category. Prioritizing the visual and the experiential, and focusing on 'military' as a social phenomenon, there is much in current military landscape studies indicating their utility in unpacking the category of 'military' (Woodward, 2014, p. 51). Yet at the same time there is no doubt that almost all different types of excluded places are associated in some way with, or defined as, 'military landscapes'. The most obvious and widely ranging understanding of military landscapes lies in their constitution and expression of the imprint of military activities, militarism, and militarization (ibid, p. 41). Even without close analysis we can safely assume that this would represent a significant Soviet and post-Soviet 'common unsaid', identified in almost every representation produced by government authorities. For more than 300 years, Russian national identity was closely connected with the national potency as a military and political power, capable of protecting Russian interests, territories, and population far beyond the country's official boundaries. Yet, military zones, objects, border areas, closed military cities, and other objects of military infrastructure were always top secret and hidden or misrepresented even on maps. It is

obvious that these territories and landscapes will be absent from various cultural representations produced by official discourse.

There are also other approaches to the definition of ‘military landscapes’. For example, Pearson (Pearson, 2012) introduces an understanding of military landscapes as a process-derived typology organized around different military and related activities, and Muir (Muir, 1999) presents them more broadly as a functional idea of conflict. Furthermore, some authors include in their concept of military landscapes not only the landscapes of armed conflict but also those relating to other types of conflict (Woodward, 2014, p. 43).

I intend to take this approach even further, and apply the term ‘post-Soviet military landscapes’ to a range of other conflicts, including the conflicts caused by Russians and indigenous people, Russians and Northern minority groups, and other nationalities. Such conflicts were triggered by the enormous expansion of Russians and Soviets into Siberia and the Far East, beginning in the late 18th century with the Kamchatka expeditions and ending with the Soviet affairs on Chukotka in the 1960s. In this work I therefore include, within the category of ‘military landscapes’, possible areas of past or present ethnic and national conflicts, as they tend to be excluded from official representation.

The most significant progression in military landscape debates in recent years comes from a critical mass of studies exploring the range of the effects of military action, and militarization more generally, in the production of landscapes of human settlement (ibid, p. 42). Examples include accounts of the militarized landscapes of Nicosia and Cyprus as a consequence of the histories of peacekeeping and border stabilization, and the multi-faceted militarization of space in Okinawa, Japan, dominated by US defence forces since the end of World War II because of US military ambitions in the region (ibid, p. 730). The director of research agency of Forensic architecture, professor Eyal Weizman further unpacks military landscapes as the complex architecture of military

occupation in Israel/Palestine (Weizman, 2007). This thesis opens up the existing borders of 'military landscapes' by introducing the zones of Russian and Soviet colonial expansion to this growing list.

Landscapes of mourning and remembrance for past military events can also be understood as military landscapes (Woodward, 2014, p. 43). The way in which a society produces memoryscapes, and how people consume these concepts, reflects state policy on particular historical events. In the case of Russia, it is interesting that World War II memorials predominate over memorials for the victims of Stalin's repression. Another recent case, reflecting the Putin regime's policy on historical events, is the redesigning of the only museum in Russia dedicated to Gulag victims (Perm'-36) into a museum of the technical means used to keep prisoners detained—it now focuses more on the guards than the inmates[7]. These facts reflect a state policy glorifying the Soviet victory, while deflecting focus away from the millions of victims in Stalin's camps. The geography of places where memorials are situated and the way in which people are able to physically approach them tells us even more about state policy. Gulag camps that were not abandoned and left to 'sink into the ground' very often became a base for correctional facilities in the reforms that followed Stalin's death and have only rarely been open to the public.

Summing up, I introduce a particular type of 'post-Soviet military landscape', By 'post-Soviet military landscape', I understand a wide range of '-scapes', including those with problematic histories, zones of traumatic past or present ethic tension, and military and border zones, which tend to be consistently excluded in Soviet and post-Soviet official representations. However, 'post-Soviet military landscapes' might also include the

[7] The current governmental policy on commemoration of the victims of Stalin repression is quite controversial. On one hand, the existing program includes range of monuments (i.e. in Moscow) and museum programs (Gulag History museum in Moscow). But, on the other it faces a lot of critique – it still fails to be implemented on the national level, do not include any school educational elements for schools and universities.

ones, which are glorified by government – the places of battles during Great Patriotic War, for example.

One of the most important concerns in the research of military landscapes is the possibility for investigation itself and the access to sites, materials, and people as research subjects. There are significant and serious access issues which limit the possibilities for research and explain why the body of military landscape research looks the way it does—very often taking the form of limited field observations lacking visual evidence. (Woodward, 2005, p. 732). This is particularly relevant to Gulag landscapes, which may be inaccessible for many reasons and in more than one sense. Many Gulag sites are in distant places and their exact locations are forgotten or lost, while some have become contemporary prisons and so are visible to a particular subset of the population. The Russian government also makes Gulag sites inaccessible in other ways, by not opening NKVD and FSB archives to the public.[8]

That which sets the study of military landscapes apart from others, is the origin of these sites. What we understand military landscapes to be, and how we choose to look at them, is fundamentally shaped by the fact that these landscapes involve engagement with state capacities; the very nature of military landscapes shapes how they might be investigated and constrains the facts that we are allowed to know (Woodward, 2014, p. 43). Access to military landscapes in Russia is highly restricted. There are physical and conceptual filters, which regulate information and represent this information in public discourse in a certain way. The condition of Russian transport infrastructure causes mobility constraints and increases the problem of access to military landscapes, which are mainly situated in distant and remote places. Thus, the question of physical access to military landscapes in Russia becomes more important than in many other countries.

[8] NKVD: *Narodnyy komissariat vnutrennikh del SSSR*, the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs; FSB – The federal security service of Russian Federation

In general, the notion of visibility is critical in establishing the possibilities of militarily landscape investigation. It is very common in some states and political regimes for the authorities themselves to produce images of military landscapes, if they do at all (Pearson, 2012). The issue of physical presence in the military landscape becomes more important when we consider the fact that many modern approaches to landscapes frequently implicate individual, personal experience at the core of explorations of the sensual and affective constitution of landscapes. In the next section, outlining my research design, methodology, and case study selection, I will also describe how I have overcome the research difficulties inherent in studying these landscapes.

The framework of critical military studies is thus helpful to analyse which landscapes might be consciously omitted from official representations, and specifically from the *krayevedeniye* narrative and *krayevedcheskiy* museums. As my main goal is to reveal whether 'common unsaids' undergo change, I selected museums representing regions with 'military landscapes' to examine whether—and if so, how—such landscapes are represented.

Diachronic and geographical analysis: introduction of case studies

This thesis studies how 'common unsaids' are created around Soviet and post-Soviet 'military landscapes'. As my main goal is to prove or contest the unchangeable character of a 'common unsaid' from the USSR in modern Russia, I intend to use two separate types of data, each more suitable for one of the two different time periods involved, and to analyse the groups of data with correspondingly appropriate techniques.

My first reference time period is the period of centralization and sovietization of *krayevedeniye*, during which the majority of government orders and guidelines for expositions were issued (1917–1955).[9] After 1955, *krayevedeniye* ceased to be

[9] In fact, I will trace the intellectual history of *krayevedeniye* from the late 19th century, but only as part of a historical account of how *krayevedeniye* and museums were developing.

developed as a Soviet knowledge production system and, until recently, was neglected. For data on this period, I use primary archival data concerning *krayevedeniye* and *krayevedcheskiy* museums. These documents, mainly issued by central authorities, enable me to reconstruct *krayevedeniye*'s intellectual history and track the evolution of 'common unsaids' written by the Centre.

My second reference time period is post-Soviet Russia, particularly – now (2014–2016), when I conducted fieldwork in museums. As *krayevedeniye* has disappeared in contemporary Russian academia, it is not possible to track its intellectual history up to the present day, so I am encoding the 'common unsaids' in regional and local museums to examine whether today's representations reveal and fill the Soviet 'common unsaids', or simply repeat them.

The choice of this timeframe will allow me to make broad conclusions about how the cultural tradition of creating 'common unsaids' has changed against the backdrop of massive changes in Russian society. These timeframes also, however, impose restrictions on the data and methodology that I can use.

To trace the intellectual history of *krayevedeniye* and *krayevedcheskiy* museums and reveal the metanarrative constructed by Soviet authorities, I study primary and secondary data sources to reconstruct the narratives *krayevedcheskiy* museums were supposed to show and the means by which it should be done. These include guidelines, orders, and plans for museum permanent displays, produced by the Central Bureau of *Krayevedeniye* and other governing authorities during Soviet times. I have conducted archival research in the Central Russian Governmental Archive in Moscow, and also in regional archives, including the Central Archive in Yakutsk and museum archives in Perm' and Tomsk. I approach the analysis of the archival data from the perspective of critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2003), paying attention not only to the data itself but also to the context of its production. By this, I mean that I reconstruct the intellectual history of

krayevedeniye, as constructed by Soviet governmental organizations, while paying attention to these organizations' loyalty to the party line. These materials are necessary to reconstruct historical changes in *krayevedeniye* as a knowledge production system, the way it was influenced by Soviet politics, and how permanent displays in *krayevedcheskiy* museums ought to look. In other words, these documents construct *krayevedeniye* as it was perceived and approached from the political centre. It was absolutely thrilling feeling to work with the archival documents, that, according to the archive's record, has not been yet taken before me. In the State Archive of Russian Federation (GARF) I was working with the official letters, methodological articles, reports from the conferences which could help me to build up the 'official' history of (pre-) Soviet *krayevedeniye*. The regional archives helped me to understand the patterns of the development of *krayevedeniye* in a particular place.

The contemporary permanent displays found in case study museums are the second type of data I used. I approach them, broadly, as cultural visual products, and study them using the methods of critical visual analysis, which includes analysis of the visual products themselves, as well as other texts relating to them. Discourse analysis used in this thesis will include not only an analysis of the background of exhibition production, but also the correspondence of exhibitions with regional and local history, building environment, and national diversity.

When studying *krayevedcheskiy* museums in the broader social context, and specific exhibitions in particular, in order to deconstruct the narrative encoded in them, I find it useful to follow the methodological recommendations of Stephanie Moser (Moser, 2010). Moser proposes to address range of structural elements and approached when researching museums. Firstly – architecture, location, and setting of a museum. Moser quotes 'The Manual of Museum exhibitions', that visitor's experience ''begins as the visitor approaches and enters the museum" (Lord and Piacente, 2014, p. 69), and

underlines the importance of setting and environment around the museum. Such an analysis in case of this thesis can help to restore the role of *krayevedcheskiy* museums in Soviet and post-Soviet societies. By analysing a museum's space – not only in the sense of physical space, but also as how visitors are guided (ibid, p. 24) – I am analysing visitors' experiences and overall set of exhibition material. The design, colour, light, and overall display style (in other words, the 'look' (ibid, p.24) or 'design quality' of the exhibition) is a significant factor of research in my thesis. I aim to analyse the extent to which today's *krayevedcheskiy* museums reproduce Soviet design and aesthetic, and the extent to which they use various contemporary styles. The subject, message, and text in the displays are the most important components to be addressed in this work, alongside exhibition layout**.** I will address particular artefacts and objects, as well as how they are placed together within the exposition's overall structure. I approach texts to see how curators explain the objects and groupings displayed.

The analysis of structural elements listed above will lead me to an understanding of the exposition types in permanent displays and will allow me to decode their narratives and reveal any 'common unsaids' they create. There are many approaches to defining exposition types, including Tony Bennett (1995), Michael Ames (Weber and Ames, 1996), and Hooper-Greenhill (1992). I make use of various frameworks and methods of decoding each particular department of a *krayevedcheskiy museum* (nature, history, and society), as scholarly approaches to each subject differ. In fact, this difference is one element that makes this work methodologically challenging—*krayevedcheskiy* museums unite in one building various museum traditions and approaches, which require the use of various frameworks in order to be properly decoded.

I will illustrate my empirical chapters with photographs of particular exhibitions, though these images cannot, of course, be perceived as purely 'objective illustrations', but translate my own gaze.

My case study selection was determined by an attempt to identify museums situated within the 'post-Soviet military landscapes', to examine the extent to which such landscapes are included in museum expositions. In other words, I selected case study museums from territories where 'blank spots' could potentially be found during Soviet times in order to examine whether they still exist today. This transregional approach has allowed me to compare representations in museums of very different regions – culturally, socially and geographically. If we assume that *krayevedcheskiy* museums created a 'portrait' of *kray*, then representations should differ dramatically from one region to another and that is what I was trying to discover.

In each of a region listed below I conducted research in the central (regional) museum. These museums, located in their regional capital, were designed to represent the region as a whole, and reflect its history and geography. I additionally conducted research in several local museums. These local museums helped me to analyse 'regional-local' relationships to discover how representation varied across different spatial levels, and whether 'blank spots' migrate from one scale to another. But at the same time it gives us a centre – periphery perspective: the first timeframe is much more dedicated to the governmental idea on representations, while the second refers to particular examples on regions.

I will now introduce my case study regions, explaining why they have been chosen. Their location is shown in figure 1.1:

1) Chukotka: the border region of the Russian Far East, which faces the USA, is one of the most economically depressed regions, the furthest from the center, and has a predominantly Chukcha and Eskimo population, which was colonized by Soviets in the mid-20th century. I have chosen the museums in Anadyr' (the capital), and in Lavrentiya, and Provideniya, two small settlements relatively far from Anadyr'.

2) The Yakutia Republic: situated in Eastern Siberia, this is one of the largest administrative units in the world, and ethnically diverse. The region was rich in Gulag camps and has long history of taking in political exiles. Apart from that, Yakutia has a complex ethnical mixture of small-numbered people of the North, Yakutian and Russians which I was interested to explore. I have chosen to work in Yakutsk (regional capital) and in Tomtor, which I was not able to visit because of the logistics issues.
3) Tomskaya region: located in Western Siberia, this region was also affected by exiles and forcibly relocated people during Stalin's repressions. I included in my analysis museums in the regional capital (Tomsk), as well as in several settlements where exiles were placed –Parabel', Kolpahevo and Narym (village with longest history of exile in Russia).
4) Perm' Kray: this is one of the Ural industrial regions, also with a long penitentiary history. I was conduction research in several regional and local museums in industrial cities (Solikamsk, Berezniki), in areas of former Gulag camps, and in the forested areas (Krasnovishersk, Cherdyn') as well as in Perm'.
5) The Republic of Tatarstan: This is a Muslim republic situated on the Volga River, in central Russian, which was trying to get independence in 1990-s but failed.
6) Finally, for reference, I conducted research in several museums of central Russian region, Tver' Oblast', located and on the Moscow–Saint Petersburg axis.



Figure.1.1 Map of Russia with case study museum locations highlighted in red, Open Street Map, created by author.

I am not attempting in my diachronic and geographical analysis to arrive at generalizations. The network of *krayevedcheskiy* museums is one of the broadest cultural networks in Russia and my research focuses on just a handful of case studies to examine current permanent expositions. My aim is to reconstruct the 'common unsaids' of *krayevedeniye* and permanent displays in museums 'written by the Centre'—created by the Soviet government—and trace how they may have changed today, in current regional examples, to see whether Soviet 'common unsaids' have changed dramatically since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Research into this diverse set of *krayevedcheskiy* museums will help to reveal whether Russian society today has inherited the same silences as were prevalent in Soviet times, or whether it has developed a language to speak about Soviet problematic –scapes. In other words, I will show whether Russian society, and its national, regional,

and local geographical imagination, is built upon the same ‘blank spots’ which were created by Soviet guidelines.

Chapter 2. *Krayevedeniye*: A Soviet knowledge production project

Introduction

Debates about nomadic and non-Western (and especially post-Socialist) knowledge have recently become an academic trend (Müller, 2019; Koch, 2016; Murawski, 2018), with a separate focus on systems produced in different societal and economical regimes. Within this trend, Soviet academic knowledge and its system of thought has been conceptualized and analysed from various perspectives. However, these works of analysis have usually attempted to fit non-Western knowledge only into the existing Western discipline system, and to compare them from this angle. Such an approach, however, leaves aside or distorts any systems of thought that Western academia cannot easily classify and fit within its boundaries. Emily D. Johnson, one of the most important scholars of *krayevedeniye,* was the first to move beyond this approach. In her study *How St. Petersburg Learned to Study Itself: The Russian Idea of Krayevedeniye* (2006), Johnson, refuses to define *krayevedeniye* through the perspective of a western discipline and describes it as a unique 'intellectual inquiry' (ibid, p. 4; discussed further below). I do not fully agree with Johnson, as *krayevedeniye* was changing dramatically through the time and so its position in society vary. I will take Johnson's discussion further, revealing both the theoretical and methodological uniqueness of *krayevedeniye* and its institutional structure of knowledge production, which was spread throughout the former USSR.

The history of the rise and fall of *krayevedeniye* is, as I see it, the story of local intellectual activities that were united, centralized, and aligned to the party agenda and needs during the Soviet regime, and have subsequently been neglected up to the present day. Equally, however, it is the story of the people involved—academics and governors

in the centre, and *krayevedy* in the peripheries. Soviet authorities created a unique system of gathering data and local knowledge according to their needs and agendas and made museums the key institutional centres of this system. While in some regions the practice of *krayevedeniye* began in the late 19th century, in others it was only introduced as part of the 'Soviet package' of colonization in the mid-20th century. In what follows I will summarise the existing definitions of *krayevedeniye* and introduce the one I use throughout this thesis; then I will describe the main turning points in the development of *krayevedeniye*. This overview will enable us to understand the way in which 'common unsaids' are constructed within *krayevedeniye* itself, and what narratives they obscure.

This work explores 'common unsaids' in Russian geographical imaginations through expositions in *krayevedcheskiy* museums and how they have changed over the last few decades. I aim not just to reveal these 'common unsaids', but also to examine which of them are inseparable from *krayevedeniye* itself, and thus inevitably circulate in *krayevedcheskiy* museums as well. In order to do this, I need to introduce and unpack *krayevedeniye* as a specific Soviet and post-Soviet knowledge production system, and relate my own view of *krayevedeniye* to existing scholarly discussions.

What is *krayevedeniye*? Approaching a definition.

This thesis examines *krayevedeniye* as a specific knowledge production system and *krayevedcheskiy* museums as its key institutional centres. To analyse current permanent displays' policy in museums and the gaze they construct, we need to understand what the word *krayevedeniye* stands for, how it has been approached by Soviet, post-Soviet, and Western scholars, and what changes it underwent during the 20th century.

First of all, however, the concept of *krayevedeniye* itself needs to be introduced and explained. As I observed in the previous chapter, the Russian word *krayevedeniye* should be considered an untranslatable notion; there is no exact translation into English. Moreover, no attempt to fit *krayevedeniye* into Western academia has yet been successful. Some scholars try to locate *krayevedeniye* within the Western historical tradition and translate it as 'local history' (for example in Susan Smith-Peter, 2004 or in Kornilova and Magsumov's 'The Soviet Society in Focus of a *Regionalistika'* (Kornilova and Magsumov, 2015). I argue, however, that these translations reduce the meaning of *krayevedeniye* only to its historical dimension, and neglect to consider its essential 'ethnographical' and 'geographical' dimensions. Other scholars, including Catherine Evtuhov in her 'Voices from the region: *krayevedeniye* meets grand narrative' (Evtuhov, 2012), have translated *krayevedeniye* as 'local studies'. While the former translation limits *krayevedeniye* to purely historical studies, this latter, broader translation is closer to the meaning I use in this thesis. This wider understanding of *krayevedeniye* is also that adopted by Emily D. Johnson, who approaches *krayevedeniye* as 'the system of inquiry' (*ibid*, p. 4) and analyses it through a postcolonial perspective, criticizing the predominance of Western disciplines and modes of thinking over other, national ones.

In other studies, these less-than-ideal translations might suffice, but in this particular thesis, I claim, it is important to retain the word *krayevedeniye* itself. A number of Russian words relating to the particular cultural or social events of the Soviet and post-Soviet periods are already deeply embedded within the English language, for example: *perestroika*, *Bolshevik*, and even *babushka*. Boym, in her 'Common Places: Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia' (Boym, 1995), provides a list of such untranslatable words and organizes her research of everyday practices around them. The intimate relationship between these concepts and their cultural setting renders their full meaning impossible to convey in translation; any attempt to do so would obscure their significance in

Soviet/post-Soviet culture. The same thing, I argue, is true of the word *krayevedeniye*, which refers to the unique phenomena of knowledge production and representation in Soviet and post-Soviet societies. To preserve the full meaning inherent in the word *krayevedeniye*, it ought to be incorporated into the vocabulary of Russian studies alongside these other Russian terms.

First, however, the word requires a full explanatory definition, which is not an easy task. *Krayevedeniye* originates from two Russian words: *kray*, literally 'land, country, or administrative division of USSR' (The Oxford Russian-English Dictionary, 1972, p. 303) and *vedat'*, 'to learn/to manage' (The Oxford Russian-English Dictionary, 1972, p. 55). *Krayevedeniye*, then, has been defined as 'the study of local lore, history, and economy', with the related term *krayevedcheskiy* meaning 'museum', specifically 'museum of local lore, history, and economy' (The Oxford Russian-English Dictionary, 1972, p. 303).

The word *krayevedeniye* in Russian emerged only in the early 20th century, at the First All-Russian Conference of Scientific Societies for Studying Local *Kray*. This conference was held in 1921 (Johnson, 2006, p. 4) as the first step towards centralisation of the local activities it was supposed to describe, which had already been occurring for decades.[10] Before this moment there was no single word available to describe these activities. As Johnson points out, *krayevedeniye* is an almost literal translation of the German *Heimatkunde*, 'homeland studies', and was one of the three possible translations of this word—alongside *rodinovedeniye*, 'motherland studies', and *stranovedeniye,* 'country studies'—that were discussed at the conference (Johnson, 2006, p. 4). The word *kray* is a primarily administrative and territorial concept, but it also holds an intimate and personal meaning. *Kray* is usually connected with the term *malaya rodina* ('little

[10] As we will see later in this chapter, different scholars propose various periods of time as *krayevedeniye*'s actual starting point.

motherland'*),* and is used by Russians in informal and personal conversations to refer to a territory one has close connection with. Thus, *kray* in the word *krayevedeniye* does not necessarily refer to any spatial level of research, or a particular administrative unit. I believe, then, that there were numerous reasons why the word *krayevedeniye* was chosen at this stage, the very first step in the process of Sovietization and Centralization: first, the word *kray* allowed the term *krayevedeniye* to apply to research on different spatial scales, whereas 'country', 'region' or 'district' would have imposed spatial limits on the object of study. Secondly, *kray* provides that intimate sense of connection between a person and his or her 'little motherland', which Soviet authorities could later exploit to encourage wider participation and to connect *krayevedeniye* with patriotism and devotion to the Soviet government. The connection between 'knowing one's little motherland' and patriotism might sound controversial, but can be demonstrated by the following logic. In an issue of *Pravda*[11] from 25th May, 1940, several citations show the importance of *krayevedeniye* in relation to the good upbringing of a Soviet patriot: 'To know your *kray*, your region, as well as its history (…) its treasures (…) to know what is happening inside your home and to know its nature, and not only to know this, but to know how to use it for the wellbeing of the people, for social construction—what a powerful source of knowledge, what a source for the elevation of youth's inventiveness, curiosity, initiative … !' (*Pravda*, 25/V/1940, p. 5). This is shortly followed by a statement from M.I. Kalinin that a patriotic Soviet upbringing 'starts from the in-depth study of your motherland'. A.M. Gorky is then quoted, appealing to the Soviet people to study their land 'till the last atom', because quite apart from fulfilling practical needs, *krayevedeniye* gives 'moral satisfaction, which leads to a rapid growth of the feeling of human dignity, [and] prepossess us with a belief in the creative forces of our mind' (ibid, p. 5). These are just

[11] *Pravda* ('Truth') was the official voice of Soviet Communism and the Central Committee of the Communist Party between 1918 and 1991.

some examples of how the Soviet government presented *krayevedeniye* as an essential first step in Soviet patriotism. We can also see how the word *kray* is fundamental to this presentation; a purely formal administrative word such as '*rayon'* or 'oblast'' would not necessarily create the same intimate feeling of belonging.

Debates about *krayevedeniye* in the early stages of its formation resulted in more than 150 definitions in the period 1921–1930 alone (*Sovetskoye krayevedeniye*, 1932, p. 7). Marina Loskutova, one of the few critical Russian scholars of *krayevedeniye*, describes in detail (Loskutova, 2009; Loskutova, 2011) this flourishing period of academic debates and the establishment of *krayevedeniye*. Some of these details I will discuss later in this chapter. Of the numerous definitions proposed, the Soviet definitions are the most solid, though the level of practical inclination and alignment to governmental needs was increasing. Here are some examples:

> *Krayevedeniye is a method of complex scientific study of a relatively small area, which can be defined by administrative, political or economical criteria; the study is aligned with vital tasks and cultural needs of an area and is based on the production forces of a kray.*
>
> (A.P. Pinkevich in the VI session of Central Bureau of *krayevedeniye*, January 1926, cited by A. Bolshakov in Bolshakov, 1930, p. 8.)

> *Krayevedeniye is a form of the contribution of Soviet society to the social reconstruction of USSR in places through a complex and, we might say, dialectic study of a relatively small area; a study totally aligned with the needs of the tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat in general and to the special tasks of social construction in particular.*

(A.P. Pinkevich's definition in his 'What is krayevedeniye? A science, method, and social movement' talk in *Komakademia*, 17 January 1930, cited by A. Bolshakov in Bolshakov, 1930, p. 8.)

Krayevedeniye is a combination of works conducted on societal–voluntary basis to produce a complex study of a particular small area (Smidovich, 1930, p. 3).

Soviet krayevedeniye is a mass movement of the general Soviet populace of the all-round study of a kray, its forces of production and natural resources, history, economics, everyday life, and culture in order to help local planning organizations solve the tasks of the economical and cultural construction of a kray (Kryazhin, 1945, p. 5).

So, what exactly is *krayevedeniye*? A method? A mass movement? A science? The question of definition was also a field debated from within *krayevedeniye* itself, as well as by the scholars. I will unpack some of these discussions later in the chapter.

Later Soviet definitions tend to exclude pre-Revolutionary initiatives and, as I have said, the limited academic discussions of *krayevedeniye* now offer us little help when it comes to explaining the scope of my thesis. Thus, it is essential that I establish my own overarching definition of *krayevedeniye*, as well as highlight developments in historical understanding of *krayevedeniye* as we move through this chapter. Now that we have a general idea of *krayevedeniye*'s popular, semi-official, non-academic meaning, I turn to consider the word's origins and different interpretations within academia to create a definition that encompasses all the turbulence that has taken place within the knowledge production system over time.

Definition of krayevedeniye in the current work

In working out a solid definition, one of the key points to consider is whether we are indeed tracing the development of a united set of paradigms over time, rather than speaking about separate processes, divided, for example, into pre-Soviet intellectual activities, a Soviet knowledge production system, and practices of the late-Soviet and post-Soviet periods, decentralised and marginalised by academia. Both Marina Loskutova and Emily Johnson discuss the question of whether Soviet *krayevedeniye* can be seen as a new stage of the local activities begun in the 19th century; both agree that it can, and I am inclined to approach it through the same perspective. Yet in order to trace the history of *krayevedeniye* from this perspective, we cannot blindly accept definitions produced within *krayevedeniye* itself at any one period of time, as they frequently neglect its previous stages and are aligned to a political agenda. And again, as I have shown previously, there are no definitions produced in Western critical scholarship that could simply be adopted for the purposes of my work. For this reason, I will provide a new overarching definition of *krayevedeniye*, broad enough to include within it almost all existing definitions within the discipline and all the different developmental stages *krayevedeniye* passed through: *krayevedeniye* is best understood as a system of knowledge production in the territory of Russia that emerged from the regional and local activism of the 19th century and became, in the 20th century, a, large modernist Soviet project of regional data collection. One of the main defining traits of *krayevedeniye*, present throughout this time, is the contribution of the general populace, who were enrolled into *krayevedeniye* work at various levels. *Krayevedeniye* has no clear defined object of study apart from the *kray* in general, and was a mixture of Soviet geography, Soviet ethnography, and Soviet history, but expanded its focus depending on governmental need. *Krayevedeniye* had no clearly defined method, other than collecting data and artefacts that were considered representative of a *kray*.

This definition of *krayevedeniye* as a citizen science leaves much room for further discussion and critique, which I hope will appear in subsequent scholarship, but it provides a useful frame for what will be discussed in this thesis and for dealing with fluctuations in *krayevedeniye*'s theory, methodology, agenda, and network system through the 20th century.

Who is a krayeved?

While understandings of the concept of *krayevedeniye* and what it stood for changed throughout the 20th century, certain traits remained constant; one such characteristic of *krayevedeniye* was the large number of non-professionals (*krayevedy*) involved. However, the approach to these *krayevedy* and their role underwent significant change, just as the *krayeved*—a person who is conducting *krayevedcheskiy* work—was also changing.

The first (pre-Soviet) *krayevedy* were volunteers, and in some cases even political prisoners exiled to Siberia (see part 3.a in this chapter for Julia Fein's contribution on the role of political exiles in local activism). At this stage, it was they who conceptualized *krayevedeniye*, on the one hand, and who practiced *krayevedeniye* on the other. As political prisoners, they were a relatively marginalized community of intellectuals, collecting information about the place to which they had been exiled. While this does not mean that they alone initiated *krayevedeniye*, their efforts were certainly one of the most important intellectual activities which shaped *krayevedeniye*. Later, the division between the theoreticians of *krayevedeniye* and the practitioners (*krayevedy*) began to be more clearly articulated: the Soviet or Marxist *krayeved* came to be merely the person 'in the field', the practitioner gathering the data, rather the person conceptualising it. The previous 'old bourgeois' *krayevedy* were seen by the Soviets as the 'academics'[12] (Bolshakov, 1930, p. 30). Moreover, the 'old *krayevedy'* were 'in the best possible case

[12] *akademisty* (Russian)

researching the bourgeois archival–archaeological past' and 'in worst case were hiding socially-oppositional works' (Bolshakov, 1930 p. 15). The new Soviet *krayeved*, however, could be anyone. The project of *krayevedeniye* was designed to allow any Soviet citizen to contribute to the massive plan of data collection.

The difference between the 'old' amateurs and the 'new' representatives of the whole population, who were intended to participate in *krayevedeniye*, was never openly discussed. It seems that the Soviet critique of the old 'amateurs' was more part of a general attitude towards pre-Revolutionary society in general, rather than a criticism of the working methods of particular volunteers or the way *krayevedcheskiy* activities were organized. Despite changes to the *krayevedeniye* agenda, this 'new Soviet *krayevedeniye*' still fits within the frame of my initial definition. It still involved a mix of amateurs and professionals and moved from 'unsystematic' studies to more planned works of acquiring data for government needs. This shaped *krayevedeniye* on the methodological level and makes it possible to apply citizen science perspectives to it.

The engagement of amateurs or non-professional scientists has resulted in a range of conceptualization of this movement. Citizen science (or community science, crowd science, crowd-sourced science, civic science, volunteer monitoring, or networked science) has recently become a very popular concept and is defined in various ways. The term first appeared in the work of US researcher Rick Bonney (Bonney *et al*, 2009) and the work of UK researcher Alan Irwin (Irwin, 1995) and has since become widespread. According to the OED, CS is 'scientific work undertaken by members of the general public, often in collaboration with or under the direction of professional scientists and scientific institutions' ('Citizen science', added to the Oxford English Dictionary, 2014). The OED further defines a civil scientist as 'a scientist whose work is characterized by a sense of responsibility to serve the best interests of the wider community (now rare)' or 'a member of the general public who engages in scientific work, often in collaboration with

or under the direction of professional scientists and scientific institutions; an amateur scientist' (ibid, p.45). Thus *krayevedeniye* may be considered one of the first examples of citizen science or crowd-sourced science (CS). Despite a range of definitions and debates around the level of engagement of the general populace in CS, *krayevedeniye* fits well within the overall concept of CS. In other words, *krayevedeniye* may be approached as a form of pre-Web CS, developed and controlled by Soviet governing institutions. Moreover, at the later stages of Sovietization *krayevedeniye* was essentially employed as a response to governmental data needs, crowdsourced by non-professionals. Debates around citizen science usually apply to late 20th- and early 21st-century web-based projects, including those initiated by the Citizen Science Alliance.[13] But recent debates have begun to draw some parallels between citizen sceince and the scientific practices of other time periods (Könneker and Lugger, 2013; Bradley, 2009). Joseph Bradley, in his book *Voluntary Associations in Tsarist Russia: Science, Patriotism, and Civil Society* (Bradley, 2009), analysed the role of volunteering societies in science and posits ideas very close to my own argument, although referring to a different time period. It is important to note that despite popular attitudes to citizen science as 'democratic' and opposed to professional science, *krayevedeniye* was a very strict governmental project, developed under the autocratic regime in the USSR.

Central-peripheral relationships in krayevedeniye

The second core trait of *krayevedeniye* that remained in place despite of the turbulence the concept underwent is the idea of centre–periphery relationships; it is here that we come across post-colonial theory and its implementation in the USSR. As I mentioned above in my general definition, *krayevedeniye* began as a form of local

[13] for more on the Alliance, see Citizen Science Alliance [online] Available at: http://www.citizensciencealliance.org (Accessed 15 February 2017).

activism in different places, very often as an initiative from below. The idea of summing up local and regional, and often highly unsystematic, data into a bigger picture of Russia was *krayevedeniye*'s main methodological struggle. As the *Krayevedeniye* newspaper stated in the early stages of *krayevedeniye*'s formation, 'The goal of *krayevedeniye* is to study a *kray*. A kray is not the whole of Russia, but just a corner of Russia. And Russia consists of hundreds of these corners' (Bogdanov, 1921, p. 11). The task was both to control and govern *krayevedeniye* taking place in various distant parts of Russia, and to create a methodology that could have helped to unite that data.

The fact that these centre-periphery relationships are one of *krayevedeniye*'s key problems was noticed early in the stage of Soviet *krayevedeniye*. Nikolay Vladimirovskiy, an early theoretician of *krayevedeniye,* pointed out in 1924 that '*krayevedeniye* was born in the provinces… The centre should deal with a very important task: of understanding, of studying the *krayevedcheskoye* movement and of learning how to organize it. Success lies in the centre really coming to understand the province—its inquiry, ideas, and searchings' (Vladimirovskiy, 1924, p. 219). Vladimirovskiy sought to place the centralised governance of *krayevedeniye* into a dialogue with regional and local initiatives. Moreover, later in his article he describes *krayevedeniye* as the opposite of the central, 'official' science. Further, he describes the volunteers involved in krayevedeniye activities as provincial amateurs, saying that the inquiry of a *krayeved* 'lies in need of self-impression' and that '*krayevedeniye* creates, out of a provincial, uneducated person, an intellectual and a qualified specialist' (*ibid*, 221). As I will show in what follows, this attitude towards local initiative was completely destroyed in the period of 'Soviet *krayevedeniye*' and replaced by central guidelines. It was only after Stalin's death that *krayevedeniye* would be able to rise again as an alternative to official discourse in certain regions.

The centre-periphery bias of Soviet *krayevedeniye* is best understood as subject to a struggle between narratives implemented from the central governing authorities and

the tradition of local intellectual practices. This also applies to the 'common unsaids'—which can be approached as the product of central governance and those which are more likely to be specific, whether local or regional. In other words, some 'common unsaids' are developed on the national level and implemented widely across the country, while others are 'endemic' to specific places. This specific focus means that building up a detailed picture of *krayevedeniye* and its networks in every region is unnecessary and irrelevant. My analysis therefore concentrates on a detailed investigation of Soviet guidelines and instructions for carrying out *krayevedeniye* and the evidence of the Soviet authorities' *krayevedcheskiy* museums, since these, I will argue, still play a crucial role in the way museums function in post-Soviet Russia. I also argue that centralization of governance caused the main theoretical and institutional changes that happened in *krayevedeniye* in the 20th century. My analysis of Soviet principles in the creation of permanent displays in *krayevedcheskiy* museums offers an understanding of the continuity in exhibition policies up to the present day and examines the gaze they are constructing towards the regions. The overarching aim of this work is to analyse how regional and local 'common unsaids' are constructed, what they consist of and how they relate to one another. I describe how local *krayevedcheskiy* museums were, and still are, constructing alternative narratives and creating regional identities, and how the official gaze, guided from the centre, is contested by provincial initiatives. This first chapter documents the 'official history' of *krayevedeniye*: the development of *krayevedeniye* from the perspective of its governing institutions and issued guidelines. In other words, this chapter presents the history of *krayevedeniye* as written by the 'centre'. It reveals the techniques of creating those Soviet 'common unsaids' which become inseparable from *krayevedeniye*.

Existing approaches to *krayevedeniye*

Krayevedeniye has been studied by Soviet, post-Soviet, and Western historians, sociologists, and geographers. These scholars may be divided into two main groups**:**

The first group consists of Russian and Soviet scholars and authorities who wrote about *krayevedeniye* throughout the 20th and 21st century. They formed its theoretical core and defined the tasks and goals of *krayevedeniye*, and thus, in a certain sense, acted as policy-makers. They were not necessarily connected with academia, but directly imposed their views and ideas on the subject. The stand-out feature, and that which allows them to be placed together as a single group, is the fact that that under the Soviet regime there were no conditions for free scientific debates. This means that almost all academics and policy-makers were affiliated with governmental institutions and shared the party's point of view. Of course, this also included the party's view of *krayevedeniye*.

Later in this chapter, I map the common position of Soviet scholars on *krayevedeniye* across different time periods. At some points, especially in the beginning and in moments of radical change, there was a certain level of disagreement and debate, but it did not constitute a serious opposition to the party line opinion. More often these debates were simply critiques of a previously predominant discourse of *krayevedeniye*, which a new approach neglected.

It is therefore not surprising that we find a single solid position in almost all literature of the Soviet period, whether produced by scholars or policy-makers, concerning *krayevedeniye*. Considering the general pressure of the Soviet regime on social science, it becomes clear why *krayevedeniye* was hardly ever critically approached, either as a social phenomenon or as a branch of science. This group of writers therefore represents the voice of the Party and mostly refers to the 'period of centralization' of *krayevedeniye*.

The second group of scientists consists of Russian and Western scholars from the post–Soviet era who analyse *krayevedeniye* critically. Though *krayevedeniye* and

krayevedcheskiy museums appear in some of area studies scholarship, there are still only very few works fully dedicated to the phenomena of *krayevedeniye* and *krayevedcheskiy* museums. Rare exceptions include the works of Marina Loskutova (Loskutova, 2009, 2011), who studied the formation of *krayevedeniye* in its early stages, the role of regional scientific societies, and the relationship between academia and the *krayevedeniye* network; the study by E.D. Johnson, tracing the St. Petersburg branch of *krayevedeniye* (Johnson, 2006); and the aforementioned works of Catherine Evtuhov (Evtuhov, 2012), dedicated to the centre-periphery relationship in the Volga-Ural region. Victoria Donovan, in 'How well do you know your krai? The *krayevedeniye* revival and patriotic politics in late Khrushchev-era Russia', 2015, examines the revival of *krayevedeniye* under Khrushchev and its role in the second phase of de-Stalinization. She focuses on the role of *krayevedeniye* in patriotic politics (Donovan, 2015, p. 471) and the role of *krayevedcheskiy* museums in the process of the patriotic uprising in the 1960s. While she gives a brief overview of the history of *krayevedeniye*, her main focus is its role in society and how the authorities used it after Stalin's death. Finally, E. Melnikova discusses the role of the *krayevedcheskoye* movement in terms of the USSR's national politics in '*Sblizhaliss narody kraya, predstavetelem kotorogo yavlayus ya: krayevedcheskoye dvizheniye 1920–1930 i Sovetskaya natsionalnaya politika*'[14] (Melnikova, 2012). However, all these works are limited either by region, or by historical frame. None of them conceptualise *krayevedeniye* as a specific knowledge production system or place it within the broader context of non-Western academic systems.

Another way to approach *krayevedeniye* is through *krayevedcheskiy* museums, the main local and regional centres of *krayevedeniye*. *Krayevedcheskiy* museums have hardly ever been studied by Western scholars—except in a handful of works I will discuss

[14] Literally, 'Come closer, people of a *kray* which I represent: the *krayevedcheskoye* movement of 1920–1930'.

later—although they feature prominently in Russian discourse.[15] Despite the general Western lack of interest in *krayevedcheskiy* museums, one work of particular importance stands out for special mention: Julian Fein's thesis 'Cultural curators and provincial publics: local museums and social change in Siberia, 1887–1941' (Fein, 2012). Fein's research stands perhaps closest to this thesis in scope. He examines Siberian *krayevedcheskiy* museums (though he calls them 'local' museums) and traces the relationship between the two main centres of Moscow and St. Petersburg against the backdrop of the processes in Siberia up to the beginning of the Great Patriotic War. He examines the way museums were initially organized and the tendencies in exhibition policy towards different topics, including national minorities. Fein does not, however, analyse current *krayevedcheskiy* displays, nor any beyond Siberia. By contrast, my work is more comprehensive in scope and fills both these gaps.

Russian scholars discussing *krayevedcheskiy* museums frequently take a historiographical approach, tracing the rise and development of *krayevedeniye* in a particular region (Baranova, 2005; Chernyak, 2013; Stepanova, 2016). These historical overviews are often made by *krayevedcheskiy museum* workers. In these cases, *krayevedeniye* is often taken as it is, without any in-depth, critical analysis of its formation and of the role it has played for the Russian populace.

The question of what type of knowledge production model *krayevedeniye* belongs to, and whether it can unquestionably be defined as a 'scientific discipline', has hardly ever been debated. My argument is that understanding the underlying model, especially in the social and political context of the Soviet period, will enrich debates about society and science, popular science, and the way knowledge is formed in different societies. Johnson (2006, p.6) raised doubts about *krayevedeniye*'s status as an academic discipline arguing that *krayevedeniye* is a discipline specific to the Russian and Soviet

[15] For more on this, see the following chapter on *krayevedcheskiy* museums.

context, and places it in relation to 'identity disciplines' such as gender studies, gay and lesbian studies, and ethics studied in the United States. Johnson characterises identity studies as fields 'dominated by scholars who strongly identify with the subject of their scholarship, perceiving it as *self* rather than *other*, where the areas where the border between researchers and researched remain blurred'. According to Johnson, one of *krayevedeniye*'s traits, which allows us 'to define it as identity discipline, is that it allowed a large number of non-academic members to participate in the process of establishing the discipline and its penetration into other social institutions such as schools, academia, social and political activism' (Johnson, 2006, p.6). I can partly agree with this approach to *krayevedeniye* as an "identity discipline", because *krayevedeniye* is strongly connected with the creation of regional and local identity at certain point of its history. However, I still question the relevance of approaching *krayevedeniye* as an academic discipline, and argue that it played dramatically different roles in various periods of time and lacked the possibility of developing itself as independent academic discipline.

The general problem with *krayevedeniye* studies is that *krayevedeniye* had a very widespread institutional network across the county, and narratives constructed in individual regions sometimes differed significantly from the general idea proposed by central authorities. In other words, the idea of what *krayevedeniye* is, written by central authorities, and the idea revealed in local case studies, can be dramatically different. It is for this reason that studies of *krayevedeniye* often fall into an analysis of the history of *krayevedeniye* in a particular region. Such studies therefore present only a limited picture of what *krayevedeniye* is. I propose a different way of studying *krayevedeniye* in order to get a broader understanding of it across various time periods and regions: by tracing cases of the development of *krayevedeniye* and the formation of *krayevedcheskiy* museums across several regions where social conditions were quite different. This cross-regional approach will give a deeper understanding of *krayevedeniye* as a social

phenomenon and will highlight the significance of the process of its unification during Soviet times. In addition, this cross-regional and multi-spatial study into current museum policies will help to understand the basis of regional representation and, therefore, the formation of regional identity.

From regional initiatives to centralized governance: a turn towards 'Soviet *krayevedeniye'*

Pre-revolutionary activities and the 'golden age' of krayevedeniye

Local activism that would later be called *krayevedeniye* started to appear in the Russian periphery in different time periods. The early stage of *krayevedeniye* and the establishment of its institutional centres (museums) is really the history of local activism that developed in specific ways in different regions. It is impossible to define a single year or decade in which this local activism of gathering knowledge and artefacts about *kray* first emerged. Loskutova points out that in the period between 1890 and the First World War there was a rising interest in local activism across the country and that many local scientific societies emerged with different disciplinary specializations (Loskutova, 2011, p. 84). She picks three main reasons for this development: an increasing number of people involved in academia and education, changes in the geography of knowledge in Russia, and, finally, changes in the theory of geography (ibid, p. 84).

The easiest, but perhaps not the most precise, way to date the emergence of local activism in a region is by taking the date of the appearance of its *krayevedcheskiy* museum. These museums were, and would remain, the key institutional centres for *krayevedeniye*. According to the archives, one of the oldest *krayevedcheskiy* museums in Russia is situated in Irkutsk and dates back to 1782 (Ushakov, 1963). The mechanisms of *krayevedcheskiy* museums' appearance differed significantly, from being the initiative of political exiles in pre-Revolutionary Russia (like the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Yakutsk in 1890), to being part of Soviet cultural colonization in the 1930s (*krayevedeniye*

was used as a part of the 'cultural colonial package' in Chukotka). It is hard to prove a link between the establishment of *krayevedcheskiy* museums on the regional level and any social or economic factors, but nevertheless a few general patterns emerge. Moreover, the reasons and time period for the appearance of a museum depend on the spatial level being discussed. For example, the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Tatarstan's capital, Kazan', was established in 1895 from the personal collection of the scientist Andrey Fedorovich Likhachev, while some of the local museums in villages in the surrounding area only began to form their collections almost a hundred years later, in late Soviet times. By contrast, the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Perm' was founded in 1890, only ten years before the local museum in Cherdyn' opened its doors.

The museums in Siberia are usually relatively old and closely connected with the political exiles of the Tsar's time. While there are exceptions, such as the museum in Tomsk (which only opened in 1922; see Chernyak, 2003), *krayevedcheskiy* activities in the region had nonetheless been conducted over the course of several decades beforehand. On the other hand, the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Anadyr' (the capital of Chukotka) appeared only in 1931, though the *krayevedcheskiy* activities and collections of different items in the region surfaced earlier and were conducted by Russians.[16] The *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Anadyr' appears as a part of *Kultprosvet*,[17] the series of events promoted by Soviet authorities to enlighten the natives of distant regions.[18] So *krayevedcheskiy* museums in Chukotka were part of the cultural 'package' that Soviets brought to the region.[19] These examples show that there was no general pattern to how

[16] The history of collecting artefacts and forming collections in peripheries, and how this was connected with *krayevedeniye*, is discussed in Chapter 3, dedicated to *krayevedcheskiy* museums.
[17] *Kultprosvet* – was a Soviet governmental program of education and enlightening of populace
[18] See Chapter 6 for a discussion on 'the enlightenment of backwards people' and *krayevedeniye*.
[19] I will return to a fuller analysis of the social and economical reasons for the establishment of *krayevedcheskiy* museums in Chapter 3, which is dedicated to *krayevedcheskiy* museums in general.

the museums were the foundation of museums on regional and local levels and, therefore, we cannot easily date the appearance of *krayevedeniye* in a region simply through the network of museums.

Vladimir Karpych, one of the leading Soviet scholars of *krayevedeniye*, has even dated *krayevedeniye* to the 11th to 12th centuries and traced the roots of 'Soviet *krayevedeniye'* in monastery chronicles, describing them as the 'voluntary scientific feat of ancient chroniclers' (Karpych, 1946, p. 7). Karpych goes further, and also attempts to link all the exploration works conducted in Russia since the 11th century with the Soviet tradition of *krayevedeniye*, tracing it through the era of Ivan the Terrible ('*krayevedeniye* as justified state necessity') and the geographical explorations in Siberia, up to the first *krayevedcheskiy* societies in Siberia in the 18th century. He argues that these practices could be described as *krayevedeniye* because of the following traits: personal initiative from below, the recording of local events and everyday life, and 'little (small) science that then leads to "big science" and wide and deep conclusions' (Karpych*,* 1946, p. 9). I doubt his conclusion's relevance; it seems to be simply a way to justify the importance of *krayevedeniye* in Soviet times by highlighting its long history and deep cultural roots.

So local activism, involved in the production of knowledge about *kray,* developed across Russia, even before this activity was officially defined as *krayevedeniye*, established as a discipline, and institutionalized. However, it is not the case that this early activity was completely unguided, or ignored by all but local authorities. For example, in Yakutia before the Revolution in 1917, *krayevedcheskiy* societies and museums passed from the governance of local committee to the Society for Studying and Improving Siberian Lifestyle (*Obshchestvo po Izucheniyu Sibiri i Uluchsheniyu yego byta,* OIS). OIS was financed only by its members and was therefore financially independent from the government (Shumyatskiy, eds, p. 705). Thus, for a certain period of time *krayevedeniye* in Siberia was coordinated and financed by an independent societal organization, and

therefore came to represent a source of separate, independent knowledge, not directly under governmental line.

This brings our attention to another level in our discussion about centre and periphery. Sometimes in between the centre and periphery there were other cities and places that took a role in governing local activities. One such scientific centre in pre-Revolutionary Russian Siberia was Irkutsk, which, for a time, governed local activism in other Siberian regions. Additionally, activities on the local level were not independent, but guided from the regional centre. We are left with several pairs of 'centre-periphery' relationships, which include not only 'capital-province' pairs, but also 'regional-local' ones, and sometimes also relationships with the transitional 'centre' of a bigger region that holds a key role as a scientific centre.

These activities were not yet united under a Soviet *krayevedeniye* theoretical framework (whether or not it even existed), so we cannot determine whether they share any common patterns of thought and therefore formed the same 'common unsaids' concerning the way knowledge was gathered and represented. Presumably not. Certainly, there were some lacunas, which were programmed by the knowledge held by a *krayeved* and his ideas of the work he was doing. But these lacunas remain local and were not influenced by the central ideas of what *krayevedeniye* is, or by ideology.

We can assume that in regions where similar social triggers (e.g., political prisoners) led to *krayevedeniye*, the narrative and methods of *krayevedeniye* could be similar and therefore the 'common unsaids' could have been alike as well. But this assumption can be easily contested, as at this stage of *krayevedeniye*'s development the role of a single actor was far more important. The moment which is of particular significance for this thesis is the moment of the Sovietization of *krayevedeniye*, which will be described next.

The turn to centralization

Serious attempts to rethink the role of local activism by the centre, and to define, name, and centralize its governance, occurred for the first time at the First All-Russian Conference of Scientific Societies for Studying Local *Kray* held in 1921. The conference united academics, government officials, and representatives of local societies across the country to achieve two main goals: first, to define local studies as a discipline and therefore develop its theoretical core, and second, to set up a governmental agency to coordinate all *krayevedcheskiy* work in the country.[20] The history of *krayevedeniye* in the beginning of the 20th century is described in some detail by one of *krayevedeniye*'s leading scholars, Marina Loskutova. In several works on that period (Loskutova, 2011; Loskutova, 2009), Loskutova follows in detail the debates between academics and practitioners concerning the theory and method of *krayevedeniye*. First, as Loskutova points out, it was difficult to fit the new discipline into the relatively rigid structure of academic disciplines inspired by Western analogues. To define an emergent local activism as a new discipline, and one without any direct Western analogue, was a challenging task (Loskutova, 2011). It is important to develop her argument further and recognise that the fact that *krayevedeniye* was not universally accepted in academia at this stage resulted in its future uncertain development into a position somewhere in between state knowledge production system, identity institute, and academic discipline. Furthermore, after the Soviet centralized government came to an end, *krayevedeniye* failed to claim its place in the late Soviet and Russian academic system and was neglected. Today *krayevedeniye* remains outside Russian academia; I claim that the reason for this have their roots in the very beginning of its formation.[21]

[20] As mentioned earlier, prior to this point we can speak only of regional and local initiatives that occurred before the establishment of a centralized idea of Soviet *krayevedeniye*.
[21] For more detailed discussions on the relationship between academia and the establishment of *krayevedeniye*, see Loskutova (Loskutova, 2010).

The First All-Russian Conference of Scientific Societies for Studying Local *Kray* agreed on two points. Firstly, thanks to the efforts of academics, the scientific program for *krayevedcheskiy* activities remained fairly liberal, which is to say, following Loskutova, that it was still relatively open to debate, but not yet strictly controlled. The program was based on guidelines established in 1910–11 for studying the natural, cultural, and economic diversity of Russia. Secondly, the delegates agreed on the creation of the *Central Bureau of Krayevedeniye* (CBK) to coordinate the institutional network in the country. Yet unlike the original plan of *Narkompros* (*Narodnyy Komissariat Prosveshcheniya*, 'People's Commissariat for Enlightenment'), the CBK was formed as a part of the Academy of Science, rather than under *Narkompros*'s governance (Loskutova, 2011, p.103). At this point the CBK, especially its branch in St. Petersburg, held the functions of a theoretical and scientific centre, while its Moscow branch, along with *Narkompros*, was more of an administrative and organizational centre.

At this point *krayevedeniye* was trying to be seen by academics just as another scientific discipline, which had its own theories, methods, and practices. This period was one of the rare examples during which scientific debates about *krayevedeniye* took place, involving the Academy of Science and academics from different fields of study. It was from this point on that local provincial scientific societies and museums began to be called *krayevedcheskiy,* and that Soviet authorities formally acknowledged the provincial scientific public associations and began to develop the administrative structure that would control their activity.

From here, we can also start to trace the development of official ideas about *krayevedeniye,* the central narrative imposed by guidance structures, and the new regulations and orders that replaced the regional ones. In other words, we can start to reveal the 'cultural myths' and 'common unsaids' *krayevedeniye* started to form.

The period from 1917 until 1927 is usually described as the 'golden decade' of *krayevedeniye* by Soviet and post-Soviet historians alike (Shmidt, 1990, p. 8), but for different reasons. Soviet scholars describe the period as the beginning of the coming 'fundamental reorganization' and value it for the increase in institutional development; the number of museums in the country rose from 94 before the Revolution to 576 in 1927, and the number of scientific societies increased from 61 to 1,112 (Shmidt, 1990, pp. 11–27). Other, more critical and independent scholars refer to this period as the last liberal and independent years before Sovietization. At this stage the regional societies and museums were still independent and not yet formally governed by the CBK (*Otchet o deyatel'nosti tsentralnogo byuro krayevedeniya*, 1931) so they could work according to their own research agenda.

The process of forming an institutional base for *krayevedeniye* included the establishment of new organizations and networks as well as new implementation in existing ones: establishing a new school curriculum in *krayevedeniye*, allocating places in university undergraduate and graduate programs, founding the newspaper '*Krayevedeniye'* (then replaced by 'Soviet *krayevedeniye*') running 'educational clubs' in factories and so on (*Protokoly zasedaniy o deyatelnosti Tsentralnogo byuro krayevedeniya,* 1925). This represented a massive plan towards the inclusion of a new mode of thinking, approaching, and gathering data on various levels, ranging from academia to school curriculum. Such a thorough and widespread implementation of new knowledge and ways of thinking at various discursive levels shows the extent to which *krayevedeniye* was implemented in the cultural background of the Soviets. In other words, we can understand how deep shared 'cultural myths' ran and see why the 'unsaids' implemented by *krayevedeniye* were able to become truly 'common'.[22]

[22] For further discussion on *krayevedeniye* and its mode of knowledge production, as well as its institutional network, see the next part of this chapter.

Debates around *krayevedeniye* began to change after 1927. The first conferences held during the 'golden decade' still featured presentations and discussions about the core of *krayevedeniye* as a discipline, its methods, and disagreements between the Moscow and St. Petersburg schools. Later, almost all the academics who had been able to shape the subject and define *krayevedeniye*'s goals and tasks were replaced by government authorities. Consequently, the focus moved from the theory of *krayevedeniye* and its method to organizational and planning tasks. *Krayevedeniye* as an academic discipline began to be replaced by *krayevedeniye* as a state knowledge production system, and therefore the way in which 'common unsaids' were created also started to change. When it was still seen as an academic discipline, we can claim that *krayevedeniye* had the 'common unsaids' of any other discipline. And the ideological level involved in their creation was at this point no more significant than in any other academic discipline. However, when *krayevedeniye* began to be seen and developed by authorities as a specifically Soviet knowledge production project, the extent of ideological influence increased dramatically.

Scholars agree that the 'golden decade' ended in 1927 when, on 11 August, *Narkompros* issued the first guidelines produced by central authorities on how *krayevedcheskiy* activities should be produced (*Proyekt postanovleniya SNK o krayevedenii, 1927).* It is at this moment that 'common unsaids' started to appear and be developed by the government. According to these guidelines, all *krayevedcheskiy* works in the RSFSR were passed to the control of *Narkompros* RSFSR. The process of Sovietization was followed by a total change in the composition of the boards of directors of the CBK.

This was the first example of direct implementation of the central view on how local activities should be conducted, although it did not yet affect *krayevedcheskiy* museum expositions. It marks the moment when provincial freedom in producing data about

individual regions began to be controlled and a central narrative starting to be implemented. However, even several years before, we can notice a turn towards "sovietization" and stricter control. In 1924, the CBK was shifted from the governance of the Academy of Science to be placed directly under *Narkompros*, i.e., directly under governmental authorities. According to Loskutova (Loskutova, 2011, p. 116), it is clear that this decision was made according to the new political course on the part of the CPSU. In May 1924, the final resolution states the need for establishing new ideological-political governing from the Party in the activities of social organizations and the enforcement of their connections with governmental structures. The clear guideline on strengthening the connections between the *krayevedcheskoye* movement, the popularization of science, and the construction of socialism resulted, in practice, in massive changes. The III All-Russian Conference on *Krayevedeniye* on 11 December 1927 was opened in the middle of the XV Party Congress with Kalinin, Stalin, Lunacharskiy, Krupskaya, and Pokrovskiy in the honorary presidium.[23] It resulted in the resolution that 'all works related to *krayevedeniye* conducted on the territory of the RSFSR by scientific institutions affiliated with administrative divisions of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics are now subject to

[23] The pressure that *krayevedeniye* would face in next decades is similar to the processes that have faced many branches of Soviet Academia and particularly the Russian Academy of Science. Activists of the *krayevedeniye* movement suffered during the Repressions as authorities claimed they were a local clandestine counterrevolutionary monarchical organization. Arrests affected even the smallest cells of the *krayevedeniye* network. The academic purge of 1929–1931 led to the almost total destruction of *krayevedeniye* as a discipline. Moscow CBK created a strong vertical hierarchy of regional bureaus and local cells, all of which would now follow central planning directives (Johnson, 2006, p. 176). What is remarkable is that after CBK started to loose its scientific inclination there was an initiative to form another organization affiliated with the Academy of Science, which can be traced in the documents of 1925–1927 (to unite *krayevedcheskiy* activities at a national level, the plan for All-Russian conferences and conventions was issued). However, the new Central Institute of Methods of Krayevedcheskiy Works was instead established later, in 1932.

the approval of the People's Commissariat of Enlightenment of the RSFSR' (*Postanovleniye Soveta Narodnykh komissarov o poryadke proizvodstva krayevedcheskikh rabot na territorii RSFSR,* 1927). It is in this specific moment that we see the beginning of the period of centralization and predominance of central ideas over regional diversity.

In 1930 two important events in the history of *krayevedeniye* happened: the Fourth *Krayevedcheskaya* Conference and the First All-Russian Museum Symposium. The Symposium affected the agenda and exposition plans of *krayevedcheskiy* museums; and that will be discussed further in this thesis. The Conference resulted in the publication of even stricter resolutions about *krayevedeniye* and its role in the construction of Socialism. In the collected papers of the conference (*Chetvertaya Vserossiyskaya Konferentsiya po krayevedeniyu*, 1930), it was directly stated that all *krayevedcheskiy* works in the USSR should start to coordinate their activities with the plan for Socialist Construction and move away from 'the tradition of random amateurs' curiosity, which was so typical for *krayevedeniye* of former years' *(Chetvertaya Vserossiyskaya Konferentsiya po krayevedeniyu,* 1930, p. 10). Moreover, Soviet *krayevedeniye* was defining itself in contrast to the previous regional activities. In the final resolution of the conference it was also underlined that,

> *… the dictatorship of the proletariat and social construction do not tolerate the development of Soviet krayevedeniye as a goal in itself, solely for the contemplation of the kray and the changes within it. Soviet krayevedeniye is one of the forms of general mass participation in the Construction of Socialism… Soviet krayevedeniye should differ dramatically from the tradition of krayevedeniye in pre-revolutionary Russia and krayevedeniye in capitalist countries. The dictatorship of the proletariat and the Construction of Socialism demand that all workers of Soviet*

krayevedeniye be not apolitical, hold to the clear conduct of the party line of the proletariat, be active participants in the class struggle, and unwrap it in krayevedcheskiy works. Soviet krayevedeniye should study as its main object the network of phenomena of two categories in their relationship in dialectic development: nature and social life. Studying in general the networks of phenomena of the two categories listed above, Soviet krayevedeniye should be strictly scientific, which stands for dialectic as it does for the methods of research, but also for the methods of popularization and description. It is necessary in all networks of krayevedcheskiy works to pose the question of the development of the economy as basic for all ideological superstructures' (Chetvertaya Vserossiyskaya Konferentsiya po krayevedeniyu, 1930, p. 20).

This long citation actually says that *krayevedeniye* should cease forming its own research agenda, and become instead a pro-governmental knowledge-production system, based on the contributions of the general populace (civil science) which at the same time would produce educational and popular discourses. But it also introduces dialectic materialism as the predominant research method.

Thus, we clearly see that *krayevedeniye* developed from unsupervised local research activities into one of the modes of the construction of Socialism, and moreover was approached as a chance for mass populace participation in this construction, linking *krayevedeniye* with patriotism and love of your 'little motherland'. In 1930, the process of centralising power over local activities reached its peak. This process of centralisation and Sovietization of *krayevedeniye* dramatically influenced both the conceptual core of *krayevedeniye* and its institutional network and resulted in the implementation of a unified research agenda across all *krayevedcheskiy* units.

Although, as I will show below, that unified Soviet research agenda was still relatively vague, together with the overall pressure on science in the USSR, it created very favourable conditions for the generation of 'common unsaids', which could be controlled and programmed by the government. In other words, total control of the *krayevedeniye* narrative from the centre, established in the 1930s, left no room to contest the latter. So, I argue that aligning to the party course and the unification of narrative launched the conscious process of creating ideological 'common unsaids' on the national level, which, I claim, are still found in many *krayevedcheskiy* museums today.

New Soviet krayevedeniye: Science? Method? Mass Movement?

Each republic, region, district provides a unique piece for the curious minds of young people of our country… our motherland is endless in its variety. Subtropical flourishing gardens and the vast icy lands of the Arctic. Deserts, where, near the ruins of ancient cities, in the sands, oases of cotton appear… Museum-cities where factories of new techniques are found near old pre-revolutionary warehouses. It is a huge joy to study such a country. For a young Soviet it is not only to develop himself, but to love our motherland even more.

(*Sovetskoye krayevedeniye*, 1936 p. 1)

Government attempts to centralize *krayevedeniye* and plan its activities resulted in changes of *krayevedeniye* theory and practice, specifically in the nature of *krayevedeniye,* what type of data counted, and how people should collect it. The main difficulty in tracing/ exposing the intellectual history of Soviet *krayevedeniye* lies in its uncertain status between governmental knowledge production system and academic discipline. Before the process of Sovietization academic debates only took place for quite a short period to define the subject or method, or to produce any critical field around it.

As I will show below, Soviet government authorities also struggled later to define *krayevedeniye.*

In 1926, at the sixth session of the CBK, the idea of a 'new *krayevedeniye*', as opposed to the 'old academic *krayevedeniye*' was announced for the first time. At this session there was a clear public confrontation between two approaches to *krayevedeniye*: the old 'Academic' approach and a new approach, pushed by the Scientific Department of *Glavnauka*, *Narkompros*. Pinkevich, the leader of *Glavnauka*, insisted that *krayevedcheskiy* units across the country should concentrate on solving practical national economic tasks, which meant the investigation of regional economic and industrial potential. Pinkevich presented a paper on the first day of the conference claiming that *krayevedeniye* 'is not some kind of new discipline, but is a method for the scientific study of a certain, defined, comparatively small territory that is distinguished by an administrative-political, ethnic, or economic feature; a study that is subordinated to the life, cultural, or economical needs of the territory, and that has as its starting point the production forces of the *kray*. This study is conducted by collectives or separate individuals according to the directives of some organizations' (*VI sessiya - plenum Tsentralnogo byuro krayevedeniya,* 1926, p. 4). He almost directly claims that *krayevedeniye* is not a self-sufficient discipline, but a 'method of scientific study'—it is simply a method of collecting data—and he focuses *krayevedeniye* explicitly on *economical* and *industrial* tasks. Changes in the social role of *krayevedeniye* required alternative structures and different modes of organization. Despite the immediate protests of academics, Pinkevich prevailed: future development of the theoretical core of *krayevedeniye,* as well as its institutional network, would follow Pinkevich's direction for many years.

Soviet authorities thus sought to define the new Soviet *krayevedeniye* in relation to the 'old *krayevedeniye'*, even though the latter did not have any established scientific

tradition. The differences between the 'old *krayevedeniye*' and the 'new Soviet *krayevedeniye*' implemented from 1926 onwards, were widely described and discussed in Soviet literature and supported by Soviet scholars. Criticisms of the 'old *krayevedeniye*' were based on its subject, methodology, and organization. The 'old *krayevedeniye*' was too 'academic'; it was 'grave-digging' and 'historical-archaeological' (Yakovlev, 1936), built upon only the activities of enthusiasts, whether amateur or professional scientist. The 'new *krayevedeniye*', by contrast, involved the whole populace and was 'a description of natural history, history, and everyday life, archaeology, ethnography, anthropology and so on' (Kryazhin, 1945). The new 'Soviet *krayevedeniye'* was 'usually presented as involving the mass of the general populace and orientated towards government needs. In other words, 'Soviet *krayevedeniye'* differed from the 'old' one by focusing its agenda on government needs.

Kryazhin's relatively vague approach to the subject of 'new *krayevedeniye'* is actually the most precise definition of *krayevedeniye*'s subject: a blend of all possible branches of science in the description of a *kray*. In a sense the object, methodology, and metanarrative of Soviet *krayevedeniye* inherits those found in the disciplines it attempts to blend. To take this thought further, we could say that the 'common unsaids' of *krayevedeniye* are those found in the disciplines which *krayevedeniye* attempts to unite. For example, if Soviet geography was predominantly based on landscape studies and ignored human and cultural geographies, this same pattern will be found in *krayevedeniye*'s 'natural history' description of a *kray*. The myths and 'unsaids' found in the range of Soviet disciplines used to construct *krayevedeniye* are likewise the 'unsaids' in Soviet *krayevedeniye*.

In the 1930s a new definition of *krayevedeniye* was issued by the *krayevedcheskiy* sector of the Communist Academia: '*krayevedeniye* is a form of the participation of the mass populace in in the construction of Socialism in the USSR to aid the planning and

operating agencies of Soviet power by means of studying the local *kray* for its socialist transformation' (*Sovetskoye krayevedeniye,* 1930, p. 4). This definition makes it clear that *krayevedeniye* at this stage was neither approached as a branch of science by the Party, nor as a scientific discipline that could produce a specific type of knowledge. The definition brings us back to the idea of civil science—in fact, it is based upon this very idea—but says nothing about the theoretical core of *krayevedeniye*. It still refers to the main method of *krayevedeniye* as 'study of a *kray'* without unpacking it any further.

Moreover '*Sovetskoye krayevedeniye'* in 1932 defines five principles of Soviet *krayevedeniye*:

1) The class nature of Soviet *krayevedeniye*, which is defined by the interests of the Revolution and the tasks of the construction of Socialism.
2) The massiveness of *krayevedeniye*, which aims to involve the working men in the study of a country.
3) The planned nature of *krayevedeniye,* in contrast to the amateur unplanned activities of bourgeois academic *krayevedeniye*, which was conducted on collective initiatives.
4) The complex nature of the study, which includes the global study of the object or phenomena with all its interconnections.
5) The scientific nature of the study, which requires not just the technical knowledge of a *krayeved*, but also the direct Marxist-Leninism methodology of study.

(*Sovetskoye krayevedeniye,* 1932, p. 23).

The two main traits of *krayevedeniye,* which I introduced in the beginning, still remain after all these discussions: the involvement of the mass populace in the acquisition of knowledge and data, and a blurred, unclear disciplinary inclination. The transition of local activities into a planned system whereby the mass populace

accumulated knowledge to assist key government projects resulted in visible changes to the core of *krayevedeniye*. Despite the historical debates and changes discussed above, this does not provide an understanding of the actual methodology of *krayevedeniye* and how it changed. It would be false to suggest that these questions were not discussed at all, and that Soviet scholars and authorities simply neglected them, but nevertheless the subject is still blurred. Debates about the theory of *krayevedeniye* and its research methods continued to occur even during centralization, but they were now aligned according to the Party line. Further still, attempts to define how *krayevedeniye* works should be conducted and what sort of data should be collected can be traced through the documents, but a firm solution was not proposed. After the start of centralization, it seems that Soviet scholars tried to strike a balance between the implementation of 'successful examples' from one region to another, attempts to summarize the studies of different regions into an overall picture, and the need to explore the natural resources of the country, using the general populace.

The VI session of the *Tsentralnoye Byuro Krayevedeniya* resulted in the agreement that *krayevedeniye* is a method. At first, Pinkevich agreed. Later on, however, Pinkevich denied that *krayevedeniye* was a scientific discipline (because 'there is no specific field of knowledge'), or a method (because 'we can't say the method of what?') or even a mass movement (on the basis that it was not yet that widespread). Pinkevich refused to continue the discussion, stating that 'the endless debates about the essence of *krayevedeniye*—is it 'science', or 'method', or 'movement'? —should be cast aside as casuistic and taking our attention away from the tasks of reorganization the country' (Bolshakov, 130, p. 12).

Ivan Petrovich Kryazhin, the director of the Institute of Krayevedeniye and Museum work in 1942-1945, states that the particularities of the *krayevedcheskiy* research method are based on the local content of *krayevedcheskiy* studies, because of the necessity of conducting the research within the *kray* (Kryazhin, 1945). He distinguishes the theory of *krayevedeniye* as science, and not a particular narrow branch of one science, but a 'complex, synthetic science concerning the principles of knowing your *kray* and concerning the principles of the development of *krayevedeniye* as a social-scientific activity and a method of justifying local perspectives and approaches to the phenomena of local everyday life' (ibid, p. 45). That is to prove my earlier assumption, that *krayevedeniye*, as a complex science, fuses the narrative, myths, and 'unsaids' of various Soviet branches of science. Though Kryazhin attempts to speak about the methods of *krayevedeniye*, he remains vague. He fails to explain either any specific methods, or any further details about the core of *krayevedeniye* activities.

In 1946, Vasiliy Fedorovich Karpych, another influential Soviet scholar and policy-maker, who was the founder of the Society of *krayevedy*–marxists described the development of *krayevedeniye* as the formation of a discipline; he described the changes in methodology as turning from 'incomplete observations to the systematic' (Karpych, 1946*).* In his view, the object of *krayevedeniye* remained the same: the *kray*. This is interesting, because as I described earlier, a *kray* is a spatial unit of uncertain size and may equally refer to a village or to a very large administrative unit. It follows that if *krayevedeniye* is at least partly based on spatial sciences (as geography or landscapes studies) its methodological approach should vary at different spatial levels. But neither Karpych nor any other Soviet scholar goes any further in distinguishing *krayevedeniye* research methods at different spatial levels.

Karpych also distinguishes the practice of *krayevedeniye* from its theory. According to him, practice included the primary collection of data, scientific research, and

generalization. Karpych gives a list of features that define the theory of *krayevedeniye*. In particular, he speaks about 'understanding the *kray* in relation to the whole country', although does not suggest how that could be solved. In other words, at this point, there was still no consensus in *krayevedeniye* theory on how local data and knowledge should be put together into the bigger picture on the scale of the whole country.[24]

The turn from 'amateur, unsystematic' activities to a system that would produce knowledge for government tasks needed not only a change of focus from 'past' to 'present', and from archaeology and anthropology to different branches of science, but also a change in the way *krayevedcheskiy* works should be conducted. The fact that Soviet *krayevedeniye* used the general populace to collect data, and the level to which this practice was spread across the country and implemented in various institutions, from schools to factories, explains why almost everyone in the country was a *'krayeved'.* Moreover, this wide implementation made people familiar with *krayevedeniye* from childhood. Therefore, the knowledge that *krayevedeniye* represented and its associated 'unsaids' became widely spread across the country and shared by general populace.

To deal with the quantity of data and to ascertain how to combine it, different organizations implemented the guidelines of *krayevedcheskiy* works and standard forms for description of the *kray* in the form of 'passports' were developed. This can be seen in the guidelines on the production of *krayevedcheskiy* works, in the reports of the CBK and the Central Institute concerning the methods of *krayevedcheskiy* works, but even more so in the documents regulating the activities of *krayevedcheskiy* museums. This brings us back to the idea of *krayevedeniye* as a government prototype crowdsourcing project, as many of these implementing forms were meant to be filled in by participants from the

[24] As I will show in Chapter 3, this problem is still unsolved.

general populace. I argue that such a wide implementation of different guidelines was one Soviet method of controlling the activities.

The idea of gathering local knowledge into a bigger picture, and coordinating *krayevedcheskiy* works with local planning institutions, required a means of unifying data and the creation of a system that would help acquire the necessary data in the first place. Thus, on 11 August 1927 *Narkompros* RSFSR began to issue instructions and guidelines on *krayevedcheskiy* works and how they should be conducted. The implementation of the guidelines from the centre shows that from 'listening to the province' by Vladimirovskiy in 1924, *krayevedeniye* moved directly to the strict guidance of the province by the political centre. The guidelines usually took the form of a single, blanket version for all regions, but with the clarification that each region should only provide the data that it actually had. I want to pay specific attention to the fact that the central institutions issued guidelines for all spatial levels of studies, from local ('*volostnyye'*), to regional.

The method of creating forms and guidelines of varying strictness for obtaining research data brings us back to the comparison of *krayevedeniye* with contemporary crowdsourcing research projects. The differences though are obvious. *Krayevedy* were working on governmental tasks and needs, and the data they collected was only rarely critically evaluated. Nor was it assessed for potential risks and mistakes. Quite the contrary, the engagement with populace was introduced as a huge advantage of the true 'vernacular science', which followed Lenin's idea of the implementation of science and culture into the mass populace. The other fact that distinguishes *krayevedeniye* from today's crowdsourcing projects is that participation in *krayevedeniye* could hardly be described as freely-willed 'volunteering'. By this, I mean that although we lack evidence about prosecution of people who refused to participate, *krayevedeniye* was still implemented deeply in everyday Soviet practice and directed by the central authorities. Another important argument that I will briefly introduce here and develop further in

following chapters, is the fact that despite the involvement of the general populace, there were always curators and professionals who shaped the final product, which took the form of data or museum expositions.

Krayevedeniye and the five–year plan

As already stated, from 1930 onwards *krayevedcheskiy* works began to be shaped according to government objectives and developed by local planning organizations. In the *Sovet Narodnykh Komissariatov* (the main governing body in the country) directive of 30 March 1931, it is clearly stated that '*krayevedcheskiy* organizations should focus on the particular tasks of finding natural resources'. One example of a national *krayevedeniye* campaign was announced on 11 March 1932 by the Central Committee: 'a mass all-USSR *pokhod*[25] for studying the natural resources of the USSR'. In 1932, all *krayevedcheskiy e* works were concentrated around geological exploration, aligning to party needs. The academic Ivan Mikhaylovich Gubkin, one of the key organizers of Soviet petro-geology, announced in a 1932 radio speech that all *krayevedcheskiy* organizations should help the geological survey to 'fill in the white spots on geological maps' (Yakovlev, 1936). Several federal geological expeditions of *krayevedy* were organized and many articles and plans about geological works were issued (Yakovlev, 1936). This trigged a wave of publications such as 'Organization and practice of geological survey works for *krayevedy'* (Korobkov, Yakovlev) or 'Geohike for minerals' (Yakovlev, 1936). Later expeditions include *Geopokhod* in 1936 organised by the Western Siberian Bureau of Krayevedeniye, which resulted in the exploration of 150 new mineral deposits, including gold, iron, and coal. The Phyto–expedition of 1935–1936 resulted in finding the massive resources of fibrous plants (Kryazhin, 1945).

[25] *Pokhod* (Rus), here: 'expedition, research trip'.

The predominant criticism of the works conducted in the regions by central authorities at this stage was still focused on the fact that *krayevedcheskiy* works were 'too academic' in character and excluded the 'ordinary person', lacking specific knowledge, from full participation. At the same time there was the promotion of the idea that a *krayeved* should be a complex vernacular scientist, and therefore ought to participate in different types of expeditions.

Narkompros RSFSR's 1937 letter containing instructions about the organization and planning of *krayevedcheskiy* works explains the new course and agenda of *krayevedeniye*. The key argument in promoting *krayevedcheskiy* works was built around the fact that 'everyone dreams of knowing our Motherland, and *krayevedeniye* plays a significant role in encouraging Soviet patriotism and love of our Motherland.' The letter cites the newspaper 'Soviet museum' (*Sovetskiy muzey,* 1938, p. 25): 'Love of our motherland is not an abstract feeling. It finds its expression in deep attachment to the cities and villages, *kolkhozy* and factories, schools and museums of our country. Love of the Socialist Motherland will be much stronger if we know our country. Let us help people to know their country—the happiest country in the world.'

On the other hand, 'Soviet *krayevedeniye* should work according to the needs of socialist industry and agriculture' (*Postanovleniye narodnykh komissarov RSFSR o reorganizatsii krayevedcheskoy raboty na mestakh*, 1937). However, the changes introduced in 1937 mostly influenced the organization of *krayevedcheskiy* works and institutional infrastructure, rather than the theoretical core.

The absence of a detailed methodological program of *krayevedeniye* was a matter of criticism in the 'Policy Statement on scientific *krayevedcheskiy* works' of 1933 (*Polozheniye o krayevedcheskoy rabote, svedeniya o rabote Tsentralnogo byuro krayevedeniya, plan raboty*, 1933). Despite the wide and well-developed structure of *krayevedcheskiy* institutes' infrastructure (a matter of further study later in this thesis)

there was still no structure to, defined methodology for, or theory to assist regional centres. In other documents, we trace the narrative that the main theoretical organization should be that of 'studying the regional experience of conducting *krayevedcheskiy* works and implementing successful examples in other regions' (*Otchety o rabote krayevedcheskikh uchrezhdeniy, plany krayevedcheskoy raboty i dr. instruktivno-metodicheskiy material, 1932*).

Despite all the attempts to create a specific *krayevedcheskiy* method, I argue that in the context of data collection, *krayevedeniye* simply dissolves into the frames of existing scholastic disciplines. The 'program of the complex description of an administrative region', issued in 1939, consisted of 78 pages of detailed instructions on how to describe regions, and was divided into many topics: general data, physical geographical conditions, history, population, power industry, other industry, and handicraft industry, agriculture, forestry, other crafts, transport, communication system, trade, finances and credits, municipal services, social-cultural construction, government bodies and courts, non-government organizations, press, tourism, economic microregions and, finally, scientific, research and *krayevedcheskiy* works themselves (Plenkin, 1939). Put simply, the aim was to gather and collect all possible data, divided into pre-existing branches of knowledge, using the standard methods of those disciplines. The structure of the programme clearly shows that, despite all the attempts of central governing institutions, they did not create any method unique to *krayevedeniye,* apart from the method of putting together knowledge about the *kray* from various already existing and well-developed branches of science.

There were other developments in *krayevedeniye*, but none of them affected *krayevedeniye* and the functioning of its knowledge production system to the same degree as did the changes described above. *Krayevedeniye* developed in accordance with changes in the political and economic situation in a solid way, one that was shared

by all policy-makers and scholars. During the Great Patriotic War, all *krayevedcheskiy* works shifted to helping the front line, and *krayevedcheskiy* museums became the sites of mass propaganda. In late 1950, all *krayevedcheskiy* works and museums began the process of de-Stalinization.

The predominant approach to the scientific core of *krayevedeniye* changed dramatically within less than a decade, during 1920–1930. From being a product of environmental determinism applied to the Russian tradition of regional geography, with its focus mainly on the exploration of unknown regions, it became fully based on the Soviet Marxist approach to geography (see Chapter 4). By this I mean that if the 'old' *krayevedeniye* aimed to study *kray* in order to understand the differences between environments, and therefore between different cultures and ethnicities, as a base for administrative regions, the 'new' *krayevedeniye* aimed to describe the diversity of social relationships and forms of production in different *kray*. The 'new' *krayevedeniye,* along with almost all other social institutions, entered a phase of intense Soviet ideological pressure on the subject.

Oleg Sigizmundovich Shmidt, one of the most acknowledged theoreticians of *krayevedeniye* in Soviet times and today, emphasized that *krayevedcheskiy* museums must not be affected by 'the romantisation of the past', but must display all their sources, in order to enlighten the future of Socialism. Speaking about *krayevedeniye*, he states that *krayevedcheskiy* works should be conducted 'simultaneously in all the branches of science' (Schmidt, 1990, p. 17). Schmidt defines objects that should be in *krayevedcheskiy* museums as 'typical', and leading back to the role of the general populace, making *krayevedeniye* less a 'scientific' practice led by specialists, and more a popular social practice. Attempts to divide knowledge into 'scientific' and 'non-scientific' emerged in Europe mainly through Auguste Comte in the 19th century, and lead to the establishment of positivism as a philosophy and as a method of approaching the subject

in many fields of knowledge. In the USSR, attempts to specify *krayevedeniye* were often based on the opposition between 'science' and 'non-science', and were regulated by documents and state laws from the 1930s onwards. Furthermore, *krayevedeniye* at that time was approached as a discipline that was supposed to have a strong practical orientation, both in the promotion of Soviet ideology and in the discovery of natural resources. Such an approach also belongs to the legacy of positivism, when all scientific knowledge had in some sense to be useful and of practical application. On the other hand, *krayevedeniye*, which involved non-specialists, became less and less scientific, at least in strictly positivist terms.

Sovetskoe krayevedeniye, the newspaper devoted to Soviet *krayevedeniye*, provided a valuable source of advice for *krayevedy* in their research expeditions. Such advice included articles such as 'make yourself a backpack'— since 'there is nothing more awful than a suitcase on an expedition' (*Sovetskoye krayevedeniye*, 1936, p. 7); 'how to recognize a plant which can be used to make brushes' (ibid, p. 15); 'what to do with objects you find' (ibid, p. 27); 'how not to produce maps' (*Sovetskoye krayevedeniye*, 1933, p. 15) or 'the study of game animal change of coat' (*Sovetskoye krayevedeniye*, 1934, p. 20) and 'Black grouse is a valuable raw material' (*Sovetskoye* krayevedeniye, 1932, p. 29).

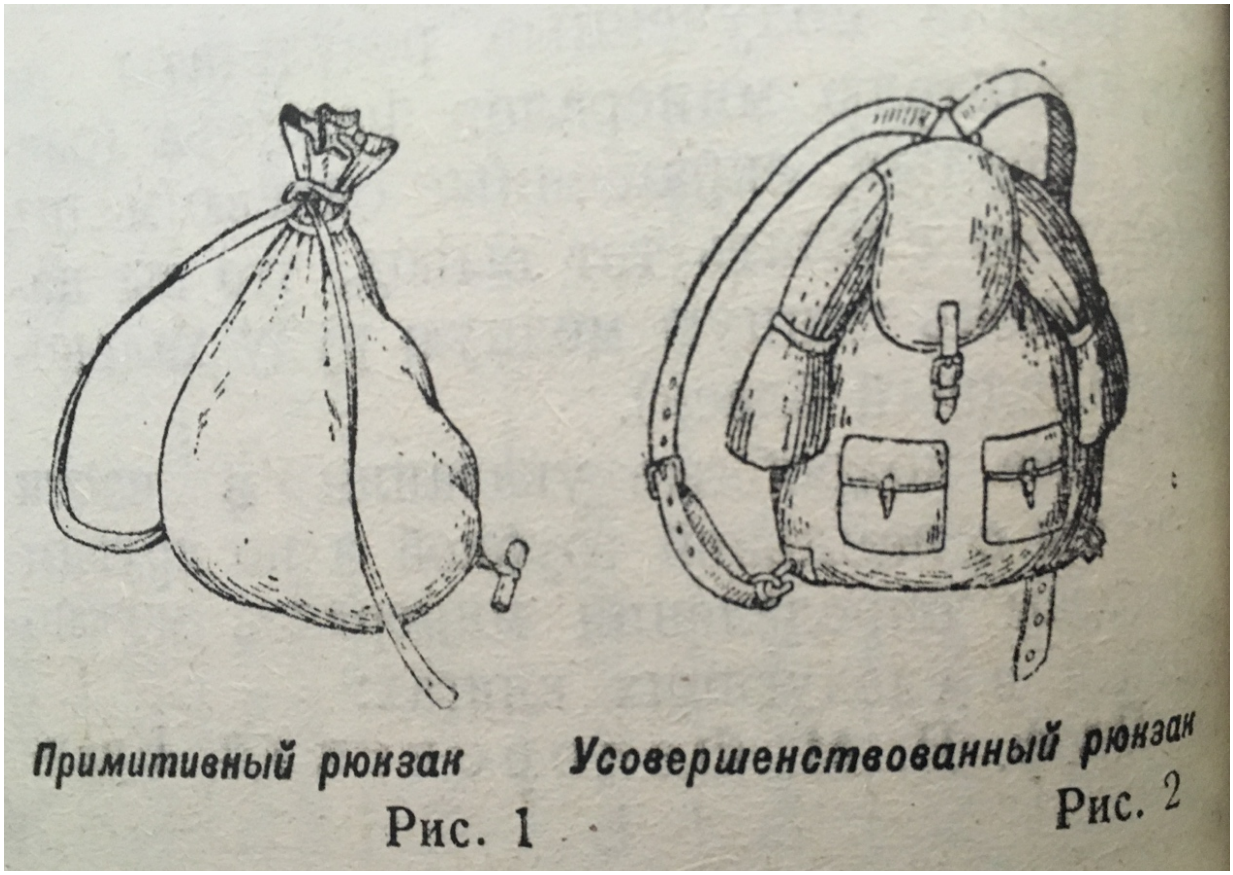


Figure 2.1 ‘Make yourself a backpack: the primitive one (on the left) and the upgraded one (one the right), *Sovetskoye krayevedeniye*, 1936, p. 7

Overall, I argue that if we approach *krayevedeniye* as a discipline, it has not succeeded in developing its own research method and theory. *Krayevedeniye* inherits methodological problems that were relevant to geography and landscape studies at the moment when *krayevedeniye* formed. The overall struggle was that of uniting data, highly variable in its subject and scale, and collected by non-professionals, into a bigger picture. While no resolution was found to the question of how to draw general conclusions from different pieces of data, and the problem of making ‘big science’ from ‘little science’, *krayevedeniye* did become a system of data collection carried out by the mass populace to solve pressing government tasks.

The institutional network of krayevedeniye

The task of building up a system involving the regional populace working 'voluntarily' for government knowledge production needs was challenging. Apart from encouraging people through propaganda, there was the need to develop an institutional network to coordinate the work of *krayevedy* in regions and enrol people in the process. In what follows I will provide a brief overview of the *krayevedcheskiy* institutional network system that was and still remains one of the broadest cultural networks in the country. The main subject of this work is the phenomenon of *krayevedcheskiy* museums, which were the key institution in the network. They will be introduced fully in the next chapter. Here, I only aim to give a snapshot picture that examines the country's broader network and the changes it faced during the process of sovietization. While the history of *krayevedcheskiy* institutions could be extended into the hundreds of local histories of particular regional *krayevedcheskiy* movements, I aim to present here the narrative created by the governing institution and the history of the rise and fall of the centralization of *krayevedcheskiy* activities on the institutional level.

The institutional network of *krayevedeniye* has several particularities that set it apart from various Western networks. The *krayevedeniye* network combines institutions for developing the theoretical core of *krayevedeniye* with units in different government organizations with a practical inclination for *krayevedcheskiy* activities, and museums themselves, as key centres. Although museums played a key role in the establishment of *krayevedeniye* in the country, and were present on different spatial scales, there was no *krayevedcheskiy* museum on the federal level. Thus, attempts to puzzle out and create a representation of the whole country were never undertaken. This fact could represent an interesting metaphor of the consistent attempts of the Soviet and then Russian government to develop and implement national identity, which has rarely succeeded. Just as an overarching *krayevedcheskiy* representation of the whole country was never

summed up in the central museums, in a similar way no 'national idea' was ever articulated.

The institutional network for *krayevedeniye* had a complex structure that changed throughout the century. Apart from changes in the way *krayevedcheskiy* works were organized in different regions, and how they replaced one another, another tricky aspect for consideration is that of the principles of central governance, and the way they shared functions. Regional *krayevedeniye* and *krayevedcheskiy* societies began to appear in different times, spontaneously and unsystematically. As stated earlier, in some regions the first *krayevedcheskiy* museums date back to 1725 (in Irkutsk), while in others they were implemented by Soviet authorities during Soviet times. In 1929, in the 'report concerning the *krayevedcheskoye* movement in national minorities' (*Protokoly, plany, tezisy dokladov o sostoyanii nauchno-issledovatelskoy raboty, partiynoy raboty, krayevedcheskogo dvizheniya sredi narodnostey Sovetskogo Soyuza*, 1929), the shortage of existing *krayevedcheskiy* units was stated, as well as the need to stimulate cultural propaganda. In Chukotka the first museums were set up only in the 1930s as a part of cultural colonization.

Before the Conference in 1921 there was no guidance concerning *krayevedcheskiy* works on the government level, or any kind of federal institution that might have coordinated all the *krayevedcheskiy* works in the country. All types of governance were only regional or pan-regional, chaotic, and in some cases even non-governmental.[26] Just to provide a sense of how this might have functioned in pre-Revolutionary times, let us take the example of Yakutia. Before the Revolution in 1917, Yakutia's *krayevedcheskiy* societies and museums passed from the governance of local Committees to the Society for Studying and Improving the Siberian Lifestyle. It was one

[26] For a broader discussion of *obshchestvennyye* (non-government) organizations, see Il'ina, I.N. (2000). *Obshchestvennyye organizatsii Rossii v 1920-e gody*. Moscow: Institut rossiyskoy istorii RAN.

of many societies across the country in this period to focus on complex regional studies. It was organized and directed by the outstanding German-Russian academic Vasilyi Vasilyevich Radlov (Izmaylova, 1926, p. 107). The Society for Studying and Improving the Siberian Lifestyle was a social, non-political organization, formed by Siberian and Far-East representatives in the Third Duma Convocation of 1907, and established at the beginning of 1908. It was also financed by its members alone, and therefore enjoyed a certain level of independence from the government (Shumyatskiy, 1932, p. 705). The head office of the Society for Studying and Improving the Siberian Lifestyle was based in St. Petersburg, but regional branches of the organization were established in many cities including Tomsk (1909), Chita (1910), Irkutsk (1911), and Yakutsk (1908). Soon afterwards, *krayevedcheskiy* museums and local branches passed under the control of branches of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society, and Society for Studying and Improving the Siberian Lifestyle was shut down.

Another institution that sought to help organize *krayevedeniye* in Yakutia was the Special Commission for Studying Yakutia, established by *Sovet Narodnykh Komissariatov* in 1925 (Izmaylova, 1926, pp. 170–171). Several expeditions from Moscow and St. Petersburg were sent to Yakutia with various scientific tasks, among others to 'develop and strengthen the network of *krayevedeniye* in the region' (ibid, pp. 170–171). The expeditions that the Yakutia Commission organized were interdisciplinary, and included ethnographers, zoologists, and geographers. The Commission conducted its studies in the region in cooperation with locals, and many of the objects and items founds were donated to the museum.

Another organization that conducted *krayevedcheskiy* –like research and helped the museum was *Saha Keskile* ('Yakutia Revival'). Yakutia Revival was a branch of the Society for Studying Ural, Siberia and the Far East (*Dokumenty (prikazy, otchety) obshchestva izucheniya YAACCR*. (1917 – 1932), established in 1924 in Moscow with

the goal of uniting people from the Far East and 'Northern Asia', who lived in Moscow and St. Petersburg (Kitova, 2007, p. 2). The society conducted expeditions in the Far East and influenced regional policy. It had a complex structure of regional branches and departments, including a 'human department', which united anthropology and ethnography as well as archaeology, art, medicine, and so on (ibid, p. 12). Though Yakutia Revival was part of a centrally based Society of Studying Ural, Siberia and the Far East, it also had its own branches, which were often led by students, and played the role of a community centre for Yakuts in other cities (*Dokumenty (prikazy, otchety) obshchestva izucheniya YAACCR*. (1917 – 1932).

Yakutia Revival and *Yakutskoye Krayevoye Geographical Society* were basically two centres of *krayevedcheskiy* works in the region. Yakutia Revival worked closely with the Special Commission for Studying Yakutia and participated in its expeditions. However, both organizations conducted similar works, so there were many debates about the practicability of maintaining both in the region *Dokumenty (prikazy, otchety) obshchestva izucheniya YAACCR*. (1917 – 1932). In 1930, the Special Commission for Studying Yakutia was shut down and Yakutia Revival merged with *Yakutskoye Krayevoye* Geographical Society to form the Society of Studying Yakutsk *Kray*, which, one year later, became the Regional Bureau of *Krayevedeniye* (1931–1934) (ibid, p.17).

The story of Yakutia is just one example of the diverse, and sometimes chaotic, governance of local and regional scientific activities before the beginning of centralization in 1921. One of the key decisions of the First Conference was to create a Central Bureau of *Krayevedeniye*, which would lead *krayevedcheskiy* works.

Thus, the first governmental institution that oversaw *krayevedcheskiy* works in the country was the Central Bureau for *Krayevedeniye*, which was originally divided into two branches (the Moscow branch, which was more organizational, and the St. Petersburg branch, which was more methodological), and which left the peripheral *krayevedcheskiy*

network officially independent. But the beginning of centralization affected not only the capital-regional scale. In 1924–1925 *Glavnauka* acknowledged all local societies to be branches of regional ones (*Protokoly zasedaniy o deyatelnosti Tsentralnogo byuro krayevedeniya, chast' 2,* 1925), and therefore determined the hierarchy of power in the *krayevedcheskiy* network. From 1924 to 1925 the main goal of the CBK was to create a methodological and ideological core of *krayevedeniye (ibid*). The 'regular' work of a *krayevedcheskiy* society was established as falling under three headings: natural-historical, cultural-historical, and economic.

This rather liberal period of the development of *krayevedeniye* ended in 1927, when all *krayevedcheskiy* works began to be fully controlled by *Narkompros* RSFSR. As stated earlier, the institutional network of *krayevedeniye* differed significantly from Western networks. The process of forming an institutional base for *krayevedeniye* included the establishment of a new organization and new networks, as well as implementation in the existing ones (educational, policy making, and practice-based), including establishing a new school curriculum for *krayevedeniye*, allocating places in universities in undergraduate and graduate programs, establishing a newspaper, and so on (*ibid*). This was the plan to make *krayevedeniye* truly vernacular and involve as many members of the populace as possible.

However, in 1928 a Methodological Department of *Krayevedcheskiy* works was created as part of the *Leningrad* Geographical Museum (*Protokoly zasedaniya metodicheskoy komissii po krayevedcheskim muzeyam*, 1928). The key task for the new department was to create a unique centre for the collection and comparative analysis of different artefacts, and to develop methodological literature on museum *krayevedcheskiy* works, bibliographies, and field exploration expeditions for the 'average *krayeved*— teacher, doctor, agriculturist'.

As I mentioned, the period from 1917 to 1927 was one of the most productive in terms of the number of *krayevedcheskiy* organizations such as museums and local scientific societies. From 1917 to 1921 the number of *krayevedcheskiy* organizations increased from 246 to 391 (*Protokoly zasedaniya metodicheskoy komissii po krayevedcheskim muzeyam,* 1928). The period of prosperity ended in 1927, when all *krayevedcheskiy* works began to be fully controlled by *Narkompros* RSFSR. In 1930, the two centres of *krayevedeniye* were united into one, based in Moscow, with primarily organizational and administrative tasks. The governance of *krayevedcheskiy* museums and *krayevedeniye* itself also began to be divided.

Though the Central Bureau for *Krayevedeniye* officially still existed and maintained ideological functions, new theoretical and conceptual centres were created which paralleled CBK's works. At this stage CBK had a number of different commissions, including, for example, agricultural, industrial, urban, and educational commissions, and a department for assisting defensive capacity (*Polozheniye o krayevedcheskoy rabote, svedeniya o rabote Tsentralnogo byuro krayevedeniya, plan raboty* , 1933). In 1929, a unit on *krayevedcheskiy* works was created as a part of the Communist Academy of the USSR's Central Executive Committee, which was reformed into a Commission on *krayevedeniye* studies in 1930, and then became a Society of *Krayevedy-Marksisty*,[27] while still being part of the Communist Academy. The Central Scientific Institution of the Methods of *Krayevedcheskiy* Works was established with the key goal of developing ideological methods (*Perepiska s Tsentralnym byuro krayevedeniya po administrativnym voprosam, plany raboty, protokoly zasedaniy byuro, chast' 2*, 1932). Later on, this goal was reformulated as an intention to 'study the experience of *krayevedcheskiy* works to develop new *krayevedcheskiy* methods based on the principles of Marxist *krayevedeniye*'

[27] *Krayevedy-Marksisty* (Rus), lit. 'Marxist *krayevedy*'.

(*Otchety o rabote krayevedcheskikh uchrezhdeniy, plany krayevedcheskoy raboty i dr. instruktivno-metodicheskiy material*, 1932).

While the number of *krayevedcheskiy* societies rose dramatically under the governance of the Central Bureau for *Krayevedeniye*, the network of scientific institutes for *krayevedeniye* also started to develop. Fourteen new scientific and research institutions dedicated to *krayevedeniye* were set up in 1932–1933, and several scientific sessions were implemented as part of Western Siberian and Far-Eastern Institutes and doctoral programs (*aspirantura*). The goal of these newly established research institutions was 'the complex study of questions, raised by governmental societal needs, of social construction through the Marxist-Leninist perspective' (*Polozheniye o krayevedcheskoy rabote, svedeniya o rabote Tsentralnogo byuro krayevedeniya, plan raboty,* 1933). This is further evidence of how an academic discipline shifted into a knowledge production system.

During the 1930s, *krayevedeniye* was mostly based on a system of regional societies and museums, governed by central authorities. The total number of *krayevedcheskiy* societies (excluding museums) in 1936 was about 2,000 organizations. Kryazhin describes 1936 as the last year of societal *krayevedeniye* (Kryazhin, 1945). 1937 was a turning point. First, the Central Bureau of *Krayevedeniye* was shut down. Soon afterwards all volunteer societies were also shut down, and the institutional network of *krayevedeniye* faced a wave of hard criticism. The key arguments in this criticism of the *krayevedcheskiy* societies focused on the fact that they were difficult to control and could harbour spies and revolutionary agents. The reorganization of the *krayevedcheskiy* network in 1937 resulted in the complete demolishing of *krayevedcheskiy* societies as independent institutions. Authorities stated that there was no need to create any specific organizations for *krayevedeniye*. *Krayevedcheskiy* works ought to be conducted under close supervision in the framework of general, existing institutions: schools, universities,

working clubs, cultural venues, and museums (although the role of museums is specific and of special importance). The liquidation of *krayevedcheskiy* societies, they argued, was rational because their organization was 'contrived'. The control and governance of all *krayevedcheskiy* works thus passed directly into the control of *Narkompros*, and the Central Scientific Institution of the Methods of *Krayevedeniye* was reorganized into the Institute of Museums and *Krayevedeniye*. One of the key decisions in 1937 was the official acknowledgement that *krayevedcheskiy* museums became the centres for *krayevedcheskiy* works (*ibid*). So *krayevedcheskiy* units were drawn into existing structures already controlled by the government, and *krayevedcheskiy* works officially became part of museum studies.

I trace the history of Soviet *krayevedeniye* as a government project only up to 1955, when the Institute of Museums and *Krayevedeniye* was reorganized into the Institute of Museum Works, and the guidance of *krayevedeniye* by central organizations formally came to an end. I do not claim that after 1955 the central governance ceased, but rather that governance of *krayevedcheskiy* works passed to different, non-specialized institutions. Centralized governance, aligned to Party needs, stopped playing a major role in shaping *krayevedeniye* and using it as a force of knowledge production as it had previously.

Today, *krayevedeniye* is more a matter of public non-academic discussions, and even art projects and art-programs. These include activities of the Nizhny Novgorod branch of the National Centre for Contemporary Art, and its program of 'New *krayevedeniye*', and a conference hosted by the Museum of Contemporary Art GARAZH in Moscow (15–17/06/2017) with a section on *krayevedcheskiy* museums and other projects. However, in post-Soviet Russia, *krayevedeniye* has not been rethought and is still concerned with old concepts and approaches. Moreover, as I will show in the next

chapter, the remains of the Soviet *krayevedeniye* network—*krayevedcheskiy* museums—still reproduce the "Soviet way" of representing regions.

Conclusions

Krayevedeniye developed a complex instructional infrastructure and underwent significant development though the 20th century, undergoing the same processes as many other disciplines in Soviet times. The main change in *krayevedeniye* was the transition from an 'old, academic' *krayevedeniye* to a 'new, Soviet' *krayevedeniye*, from studying the past to actually working on planning the future, and thereby to participating in the construction of Socialism. Attempts to create a unique methodology for *krayevedcheskiy* works failed. The Soviet government created a form of knowledge production from *krayevedeniye*, based on the contribution of local people, and therefore its guidelines, principles, and theoretical underpinnings were more common to the populace than in any other discipline or knowledge production institution. Moreover, *krayevedeniye* was implemented so widely across regions that its guidelines and methods were shared across many different social groups, ages, and locations. In other words, the concepts of *krayevedeniye* were known and shared by an extremely large number of people. It is also the case, therefore, that the silences *krayevedeniye* created were shared by a vast number of Soviet and even, as I will demonstrate later in my empirical chapters, post-Soviet people.

Those silences—the 'common unsaids'—in *krayevedeniye* were formed by those present, respectively, in the disciplines *krayevedeniye* was based on: history, geography, and ethnography. The predominant—and in the Soviet case, frequently the only—theory of a branch of these academic disciplines influenced the guidelines, rues, methods, and narratives of *krayevedeniye*.

The formation of 'commons unsaids' in *krayevedeniye* can be approached from two sides. Firstly, their presence and unity are due to the way *krayevedeniye* network

functioned in the USSR and the ideological pressure imposed on this knowledge production system. The process of centralization of various local and regional activities resulted in the implementation of strict guidelines of how *krayevedeniye* should function in any region, and therefore predefined the 'common unsaids' at a national level. Secondly, the method of *krayevedeniye* was hardly described in any manner other than as a blend of existing approaches from history, geography, and the construction of Socialism. Therefore, the narratives, myths and 'blank spots' from those disciplines were inherited by *krayevedeniye* and *krayevedcheskiy* museums. To reveal these 'common unsaids' and the techniques of their construction, I turn, in the next chapter, to *krayevedcheskiy* museums, first introducing them, and then unpacking the theoretical narratives their departments were built upon.

Chapter 3. *Krayevedcheskiy* museums

Introduction

Krayevedcheskiy museums were and remain the material form of *krayevedeniye*. On the one hand they were one of the main institutional centres of *krayevedeniye* and played the roles of research centres; on the other hand, they were and still are museums for representing a set of objects and artefacts introducing a *kray*. The gaze they construct, the zones of visibility and invisibility, and the 'common unsaids' are the result of these two conditions. Firstly, *krayevedcheskiy* museums inherit the theory of *krayevedeniye,* as branch of knowledge they represent. Secondly, they followed their own guidelines on how to represent a place. In mostly cases those two didn't have much difference, but they both shaped the way permanent displays were arranged.

In this chapter I want to introduce *krayevedcheskiy* as a unique museum type and trace the major changes in its development. This will, further, enable me to reveal how 'common unsaids' were constructed in Soviet times and which of them are still inherited by contemporary museums' permanent displays.

What is a *krayevedcheskiy* museum?

Krayevedcheskiy museums have rarely been discussed in the Western tradition of museum studies. While Soviet and post-Soviet scholars have engaged with *krayevedeniye* and *krayevedcheskiy* museums, they are not the best sources for a description of *krayevedcheskiy* museums in general. Just as Soviet scholars joined other authorities in an ideological struggle to shape the discipline of *krayevedeniye* itself, they also shaped the work of *krayevedcheskiy* museums and their policies, implementing guidelines and permanent display plans and defining the museums' agenda. While post-Soviet scholars have adopted a more critical approach to *krayevedeniye*, they are often limited by their focus on the description of a single museum.

This thesis is dedicated to the narratives constructed by *krayevedcheskiy* museums and the 'common unsaids' they promote in the post-Soviet period. In order to understand how this is done by contemporary permanent displays and to analyse their relevance to a modern Russian context, we need to consider the development of the system of creating permanent displays, determine the level of independence granted to museums to define their own exhibitions, and establish how constrained they were by guidelines issued by central governing organizations. We can approach *krayevedcheskiy* museums from two perspectives: understood as a specific type of museum, we can consider them from the perspective of museum studies in general, while as centres for the development of *krayevedeniye*, we can consider them from the angle of the theory of science and knowledge production. The first approach falls firmly into the field of cultural studies; the second deals with the representation of knowledge, enlightenment, and education.

In this chapter I will introduce ideas about *krayevedcheskiy* museums from both perspectives, approaching them from the angle of museum studies as centres for representing *krayevedeniye* as a specific knowledge system and tracing ideas and approaches developed by Soviet *krayevedeniye* scholars and policy makers. Ideas surrounding *krayevedcheskiy* museums, their position in society, their role, exposition plans, and guidelines, underwent significant changes over time, which echoed changes in the concept of *krayevedeniye*; from initially independent institutions they became part of a centralized and planned system of education and representation of regions and fell subject to a range of official guidelines.

My overarching interest is to reveal the post-Soviet 'common unsaids' in *krayevedcheskiy* museums and to analyse the extent to which they inherit Soviet ones. Thus, to analyse the narrative constructed by current museum displays it is necessary to place *krayevedcheskiy* museums within the broader context of museums in general. This

chapter brings together several theoretical approaches, including Michel Foucault's concept of govermentality (Foucault, 1979) and his ideas concerning the organization of knowledge (Foucault, 1970). In what follows I approach *krayevedcheskiy* museums as representing a particular structure of knowledge, following, in many key points, Hooper-Greenhill's "effective history" of museums (Hooper-Greenhill, 1992, p. 9). Hooper-Greenhill constructs her "effective history" upon Foucauldian epistemes—the unconscious, but positive and productive, set of relations within which knowledge is produced and rationally defined (Foucault, 1974, p. 191). Foucault suggests that what counts as 'knowing' is largely dependent on specific elements, including, among others, cultural, social, political, scientific elements (ibid, p. 53). He distinguishes between 'Renaissance', 'Classical', and 'Modern' epistemes, and Hooper-Greenhill traces how these epistemes can be seen in European museums. The 'Renaissance' episteme is based on interpretations of resemblance, of things having hidden relationships to each other. Magic and occult were an integral part of knowledge. Foucault describes the 'Renaissance' episteme as plethoric, but poverty-stricken: because resemblance was never stable, it was also limitless, and consisted of endless relationships. The 'Classical' episteme is a more restricted project. Its founding structure is that of order through measurement and the drawing-up of hierarchical series. Within this episteme, the classificatory table emerged as the basic structure of knowledge (Foucault, 1970, p. 74). Knowledge consisted not in putting things together but in setting them apart into distinct groups. In this table of classification, all natural things were arranged into families on the basis of their visible features. For example, animals were arranged in such a way to demonstrate their family relationships. Finally, the 'Modern' episteme does not treat natural objects or any other things purely superficially, simply according to how they appear on the surface, but strives to know why it is that things came to look as they do. Things are not simple visual pieces but are understood as organic structures with a variety

of different levels of complexity and various relationships (Hooper-Greenhill, 1992, p. 17). In my thesis, I apply this approach to *krayevedcheskiy* museums, which until now have not been analysed in this way.

Krayevedcheskiy museums aimed to represent *krayevedeniye* in a certain manner. As I showed in the previous chapter, *krayevedeniye* developed into an interdisciplinary knowledge production system concerned with the study and representation of local *kray*, based on crowdsourcing practices. *Krayevedcheskiy* museums, therefore, attempted to represent their *kray* through a range of objects, usually collected by the general populace. So *krayevedcheskiy* museums have always dealt with objects selected by ordinary people, and built their expositions upon such objects. E. Yaroslavskiy, one of the first directors of the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Yakutsk, noted that the donors of museum objects in Yakutsk included “a doctor, a merchant, a priest, a Russian, a Yakut, a bishop Meletyy, [and] a political exile” (Shishigin, 1978, pp. 112–15). This communal aspect of constructing museum collections gave people the possibility of participating in the formation of museum permanent displays, and allowed them to make their own individual memories and stories part of public memory. Hooper-Greenhill says that objects are used to construct identities on both a personal and a national level, and I argue that, in this sense, *krayevedcheskiy* museums represent an extreme case of self-impression and the possibility for the general populace to help create a representation of their region and *Malaya rodina* (“little motherland”).

Krayevedcheskiy museums were and remain the key institutional centres for *krayevedeniye.* Even today, when *krayevedeniye* as a knowledge production system has almost been demolished, these *krayevedcheskiy* museums still exist and receive governmental funding. Today, regional *krayevedcheskiy* museums in contemporary Russia are governed by regional ministers of culture. The local ones in some cases may be filial branches of the regional ones, or function independently.

While *krayevedcheskiy* museums were defined in numerous different ways according to the time period, these various definitions still show a certain amount of overlap. I will settle on using the relatively neutral modern definition provided by the Russian Museum Encyclopaedia (*Rossiyskaya Muzeynaya Entsyklopediya*, 2002) according to which *krayevedcheskiy* museums are complex museums, documenting the particularities of nature, history, culture, and everyday life of a certain territory or settlement (republic, *oblast'*, *rayon*, etc). The network of *krayevedcheskiy* museums in Russia is one of the broadest governmental cultural institutional networks in the country. According to the encyclopaedia, there are today more than 800 museums across the country. I believe this figure is an underestimation, but even if not, it still represents a large and well-distributed cultural system. The encyclopaedia further claims that *krayevedcheskiy* museums are a unique example of their kind and have no direct analogues abroad. The fact that, in official Russian contexts, *krayevedcheskiy* museums are defined as unique is important for understanding their role in shaping regional identity. While I agree with the official position, I do not share the same arguments about what makes *krayevedcheskiy* museums unique. Later in this chapter I will analyse possible Western analogues and distinguish a range of traits that contribute to *krayevedcheskiy* museums' unique status.

Krayevedcheskiy museums represent spaces of different scales and sizes. One museum may represent a small village, or even a subsection of it, while another may represent the largest region in the world (e.g., Yakutia Republic). During the 20th century the administrative borders of Russian regions changed, and led to subsequent changes in the institutional network of *krayevedeniye* as well. This led to a situation in which some museums held in their collection objects from neighbouring regions (and sometimes even separate countries), which in fact contradicted the general idea of such a museum—to

represent the *kray* it was situated in. As far as my research has shown, the transition of objects from one museum to another due to border changes was never carried out as part of museum policy.

As I showed in the previous chapter, *krayevedeniye* at its core was deeply interdisciplinary and was initially influenced by geography and natural sciences as well as archaeology and ethnography. For this reason, I will refer to some examples of ethnographical and natural history museums in my analysis of *krayevedcheskiy* museums. Apart from these museums, another close analogue to *krayevedcheskiy* museums is the German *Heimat* museums. As Emily Johnson (Johnson, 2006, p. 4) has shown, in 1921 the word *krayevedeniye* was one of several possible translations of German *Heimatkunde*, and Russian academics and authorities at least took this concept into account, even if they did not outright copy it. *Heimat* museums started to appear between 1880 and 1918, at the same time that many *krayevedcheskiy* museums emerged. Alon Confino states that "the pattern of *Heimat* museums' foundation reflected the production and reception of the concept of *Heimat* in Germany" (Confino, 1997, p. 134). And he also refers to a "Museum mania" (ibid) developing out of the *Heimat* idea in German society. Confino sees this 'systematic cultivation of local identity … closely connected to the national unification in 1871' (*ibid*). Confino addresses Roth (Roth, 1990) and argues that Roth sees these *Heimat* museums as a "connection link" between the "nationalistic museum politics in Germany" and the "Volkstum ideology of National Socialism", and has argued that *Heimat* museums in Imperial Germany were "a self-impression of a national-chauvinistic bourgeois culture". Indeed, there are many similarities between the way *Heimat* museums and *krayevedcheskiy* museums formed identities. However, since these lie in the field of museum policy and the formation of national identity, such parallels will be discussed more fully in the next chapter.

Overall, *krayevedcheskiy* museums went through a similar range of changes as *krayevedeniye* itself did, and shifted from relatively liberal centres with a free policy of exposition creation, to institutions under unified and strict Soviet-produced guidelines, whose influence is still visible in today's permanent displays. Establishing a proper *krayevedcheskiy* museum during Soviet times can also be viewed as a symbolic conquest, a legacy of Soviet power and cultural policy in a region, and the power to establish a certain pattern of forming regional identity. I argue that the establishment of a regional *krayevedcheskiy* museum and the adoption of the Soviet approach to permanent displays was a sign of a region's consolidation, and itself marked the beginning of the formation of a regional identity. Ultimately, Soviet *krayevedcheskiy* museums can almost be viewed as required institutions in all Soviet regions.

Krayevedcheskiy **museum within Western museum history**

The European history of museums usually identifies the 16th to 17th centuries as the period when museums first started to emerge as the private collections of rich military officials or explorers. Such initial 'cabinets of curiosities', 'closets of rarities', *Wunderkammern*, and *Kunstkameras* were usually associated with wealthy and rich monarchs or their military leaders. Later on, these collections were opened to the public. By the 18th to 19th centuries, these collections represented the power and wealth of Western Europe; their cultural representations supported imperial rule and proclaimed a global geography divided between regions of civilization and those of primitiveness. These types of museums inevitably attempted to define the relationship between an object's country of origin and the country where it was displayed. Later in this chapter, I will develop this idea to trace the relationship between central Russia and its peripheries.

In Russia, museums began to appear slightly later than they did in Europe. According to Oleg Neverov (Neverov, 1985, p. 71), the earliest collections of curiosities

date back to the Tsar Ivan the Terrible in the 16th century and to Tsar Alexius in the 17th century. Yet it was not until the 18th century that museums were created in earnest. It was only as a result of Peter the Great's efforts to westernize Russia that the first public museum in the country was established.[28] Peter I's first natural history collection was established in the Moscow Apothecary Department. Initially, "His Majesty's collection" was essentially private. At the time, the collection consisted of exotic animals, physical monstrosities, anatomical specimens, weapons, ambassadors' gifts, and ethnographic rarities. It is uncertain whether the collection contained any objects from Russia itself, or whether it was based predominantly on Western gifts and purchases. Thus, the focus and style of the collections places Russian museums was relatively close to Western analogues at this time. During Peter the Great's Great Embassy (1697–1698), during which he visited Holland and England, he observed many "cabinets of curiosities", and became fascinated with them. He even purchased parts of collections to bring back to Russia, and upon his return to St. Petersburg set up his own museum, the *Kunstkamera*. This museum opened to the public in 1714 and adopted a Western name, but was somewhat different from Western museums in terms of its social function and meaning. Western museums were usually built upon the collection of objects and artefacts found by representatives of the country and brought home as proofs; these physical objects were considered more powerful than texts. Yet as we see above, the impulse for establishing the *Kunstkamera* lay in the collection bought by Peter the Great, and not in collections gathered throughout the Russian Empire by explorers or military officers (Baird, 2008, p. 534). Later on, however, the *Kunstkamera* began to host objects from scientific expeditions conducted in Russia by explorers and natural scientists.

A process similar to that found in these early Russian museums can be seen occurring in American museums. Hinsley (Hinsley, 1991) noted that while European

[28] For more on this, see Olga A. Baird (Baird, 2008)

naturalists looked overseas for new specimens, Americans spent much of their time acquainting themselves with their own nation. Hinsley also extensively documents the close connections between collecting and national identity in the 19th-century United States, especially during the period when the country's western regions remained unexplored. Hinsley's comments are closely applicable to the Russian context we see here. As I demonstrate later in this chapter, Russian museums were more frequently filled with objects from distant regions of Russia than from abroad—especially in the period before many regions had been fully explored.

The importance of *krayevedeniye* in establishing Russian identity was described by Emily Johnson (Johnson, 2006). If we push further this approach to the museums as institutions of national identity, we come across the works of F.S. Kaplan. Kaplan states in the introduction to "Museums and the Making of Ourselves", nation-state formation frequently asserts the unique character of one or more ethic groups within such states (Kaplan, 1996, p. 10). The collection of case studies discussed in "Museums and the Making of Ourselves" deals with several regions: the Pacific, Africa, both Americas, the Caribbean, the Middle East, and Europe. I argue that *krayevedcheskiy* museums similarly played an important role, and even were directly used by the government, in the process of constructing Soviet identity. As we will see further in this chapter, Soviet authorities appealed quite often in official documentation for *krayevedcheskiy* museums to become centres for building patriotism, nation-building, and Soviet identities. The question that remains is how they were constructed it on the local and regional levels.

So, while Western museums filled their collections with artefacts from 'far away', 'strange' countries, Russia's museums were studying and exploring Russia itself and its geographical boundaries, setting up museums concerning places and regions. This feature is of particular importance when it comes to comparing *krayevedcheskiy*

museums with Western museums, and provides the grounds for us to analyse cultural relationships between central Russia and its peripheries.

Hooper-Greenhill describes 19th century Western ethnographical and natural history museums as a form of cartography—an attempt to draw together different parts of the world (Hooper-Greenhill, 1992, p. 18). The establishment of a collection is a form of symbolic conquest. One major function of museums during the modernist period was to map the world through the collection of artefacts. The picture that museums constructed was presented as a universal and complete world-view, with the home territory acting as the centre from which the world is viewed (ibid, p. 19). It is interesting to apply this idea to *krayevedcheskiy* museums, which were actually located in the region they represented. In a sense, *krayevedcheskiy* museums aimed to create a representation of a region from within; they thus functioned somewhat like a Russian nested *matryoshka* doll, holding within successively smaller images of itself.

In the previous chapter, I briefly showed that the process of establishing *krayevedcheskiy* museums in a region was almost inseparable from the activities of local scientific societies; these societies, accordingly, established their own local *krayevedcheskiy* museums in different ways. Thus, the mechanisms of developing a *krayevedcheskiy* museum's appearance varied wildly: it could reflect the initiative of political exiles, as was the case in pre-revolutionary Russia with the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Yakutsk in 1890, for example, or it could be part of Soviet cultural colonization in the 1930s, as in Chukotka. Here I will continue to analyse the way *krayevedcheskiy* museums emerged in different regions, but I shall approach it through the stories of the establishment of their collections.

As my research has shown, it is hard to pin the establishment of *krayevedcheskiy* museums at the regional level on any particular combination of social or economic factors; nevertheless, some general patterns can be noted. Moreover, the reasons behind

museums' creation depend on the spatial level under consideration. For example, the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Tatarstan's capital, Kazan', was established in 1895, and originated in the personal collection of the scientist Andrey Fedorovich Likhachev, while some of the local museums in the region's villages founded their collections only a hundred years later, in late Soviet times (*Natsionalnyy muzey respubliki Tatarstan, Istorii muzeya, 2019).* In Perm', however, the main *krayevedcheskiy* museum was founded in 1890, and it was only ten years later that the local museum in Cherdyn' opened its doors. There was no general pattern to how museum collections were organized at the level of regional-local space. Yet, as I noted previously, at a higher scale certain similar patterns of museum establishment can be discerned. For example, it was common for *krayevedcheskiy* museums to be named after their first director or someone who played a significant role in their establishment. Although *krayevedeniye* was, in a sense, a crowdsourcing project, the role of individual contributors was always acknowledged.

Another typical feature was the influence of the political exiles on *krayevedcheskiy* museums in Eastern and Northern regions. The role of political exiles in 19th-century Siberian scientific and cultural environments is the subject of J. Fein's work (Fein, 2012). Fein gives a detailed picture of "penal tourism" and the widespread geography of intellectual and political exiles in the *Tsar's ssylka*[29] (ibid, p. 124), and argues that thinking of a provincial region in this time as a "non-place" of "non-action" is questionable (Fein, 2012, p. 125). Moreover, many revolutionaries and intellectuals at the end of the 19th century contributed to the provincial intellectual scene, either being relocated there by the authorities or travelling there illegally. Exiled intellectuals needed a place to work, and very often they were offered a place in the local *krayevedcheskiy* museum, if one already existed, or else they triggered the process of its establishment (as happened in Yakutsk). The Siberian museums are therefore usually relatively old and are closely connected with

[29] *Tsar's ssylka* (Rus): exile during Tsarist Russia.

the political exiles during the Tsarist period. The museum in Tomsk emerged late in comparison to Siberia's other museums. There were several museums in Tomsk's universities and, in the Public Library, a "museum of applied knowledge", which as it was fully educational did not completely fit the mould of a *krayevedcheskiy* museum (Chernyak, 2003, p. 18). Thus, while the actual *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Tomsk appeared only in 1922, in a house that had formerly belonged to a gold worker's family, *krayevedcheskiy* works had been conducted in the region several decades prior to that.

In contrast to this, the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Anadyr', the capital of Chukotka, was founded only in 1931, though the *krayevedeniye* activities and collections of different items in the region occurred previously and were conducted by Russians. Anadyr''s *krayevedcheskiy* museum appears as a part of *Kultprosvet*,[30] the series of events promoted by Soviet authorities to enlighten the natives of distant regions. The *krayevedcheskiy* museums in Chukotka were a part of cultural 'package' that the Soviets brought to the region. Finally, another important subset of *krayevedcheskiy* museums consists of those established in schools, usually initiated by history teachers. I propose that these constitute a separate (but nevertheless significant) group of *krayevedcheskiy* initiatives that fall beyond the scope of this thesis; as they were excluded from the official *krayevedeniye* network, belonged to the educational system, and followed different rules than the formal *krayevedcheskiy* museums.

Krayevedcheskiy museums within city landscapes

The location of a museum in the city, its façade, and the building's size have always played an important role in displaying, to the populace, the museum's social role and power (The SAGE Handbook of Geographical Knowledge, 2011, p. 66). For this reason,

[30] *Kultprosvet*, in this context, is a series of cultural, propaganda, and educational events held by the Soviet government for the Far-North regions of the country.

the Soviet authorities tasked with developing the idea of Soviet *krayevedeniye* and Soviet *krayevedcheskiy* museums also discussed questions of museum architecture and location.

Before the process of centralization and unification, the location of *krayevedcheskiy* museums within cities, and the buildings which they occupied, was typically random. The museum could be located in a small room in a public library (as in the cases of the museums in Samara and Tomsk) or, as in the case of Yakutsk, in the *Gostinnyy Dvor*, the central shopping arcades typical of many Russian settlements. Some *krayevedcheskiy* museums were also located within ex-monasteries and churches, as in Kashin, Kalyazin (Tverskaya region) and Solikamsk (Perm' region). However, during Soviet times, the idea of designing a building specifically appropriate for *krayevedcheskiy* museums was widely discussed because, "the majority of museums in the country were not situated in specially designed buildings" (Mansurov, 1935, p. 7). Soviet scholars emphasized the uniqueness of *krayevedcheskiy* museums and therefore developed the particularities of such museums' construction in comparison with Western analogues. The main arguments made about the uniqueness of a *krayevedcheskiy* museum's building were based on the fact that they combined scientific activity with mass political education. It was also important to draw a distinction from Western museums (ibid, p. 10); museums in a socialist country should, be placed in a different, unique building, and be situated in different parts of the city, then those of a Capitalistic society. One of the main factors involved in selecting museum location was the possibility for future development: sites were favoured that were close to spare land, and that were located in favourable positions within the city. The museum's exterior was explained as the one thing that should not hinder inner planning and not prevent the possibility of future extension (ibid, p. 15).

In their research dedicated to the architecture of *krayevedcheskiy* museums, Soviet scholars analysed Western analogues, such as London's Natural History Museum,

the Museum galleries in Florence, or Munich Polytechnic Museum. Almost all such potential parallel museums were rejected, however; the researchers stated that *krayevedcheskiy* museums required a special type of building. Only a handful of Western examples were found suitable models for *krayevedcheskiy* expositions (ibid, p. 25):

- "Small museums, such as the Arsenal in Vienna or the *Alte Pinakothek* in Munich;
- Museums with elongate floor plans and side wings, such as the New Museum in Warsaw;
- Museums with a floorplan consisting of a continuous row around an inner yard, such as the *Glyptothek* in Munich, or the Art History Museum in Vienna."

In actual fact, plans for new, specially-designed *krayevedcheskiy* museum buildings designed along these lines were never realized. Soviet *krayevedcheskiy* museums were rarely situated in buildings specially created for them. Instead, the buildings that museums occupied were originally created for a whole range of other purposes, from private houses to churches and monasteries. In many of these buildings the conditions were far from ideal for museum purposes, and many objects were affected by constant relocation. The general pattern I wish to underline is that museums were commonly shifted into buildings that had lost their previous function as a result of Soviet policy, though in theory Soviet authorities were planning to develop specific types of buildings for *krayevedcheskiy* museums' purposes. For example, *krayevedcheskiy* museums were often established in churches, especially following anti-religious propaganda and Soviet pressure on the Church in general. Some museums remain in former church buildings to the present day. The other relatively common pattern is to

establish Soviet *krayevedcheskiy* museums in the de-*kulakized* house of a merchant, based on his private property. Here are some of the examples from my case study museums.

In Tverskaya *oblast'*, 20% of all local museums—those that are branches of the regional museum in Tver'—are situated in former church buildings.[31] It is quite obvious that the organization of *krayevedcheskiy* museums in churches was a gesture of the state power of reclamation and ability to change cultural discourse. The reclamation of these buildings and territories from the Church may have been understandable during Soviet times, but nowadays it simply looks like the forgotten artefact of anti-religious Soviet politics, and decreases the importance of the museums themselves. Moreover, many buildings still lack ideal museum conditions. The *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Kalyazin opened in 1920, when the Troitsk Makarevsky Monastery was shut down. In 1940, the museum was moved to the Church of the Holy Theophany, which remains its building today (figures 3.1–3.2).

[31] Nowadays in Russia the Church is recalling many buildings across the country. This has happened with Perm' *krayevedcheskiy* museum, where until recently the nature department was situated in the cathedral, although it has still not yet happened in Tver'.





Figure3.1–3.2. *Krayevedcheskiy* museums in Kalyazin (left) and Kashin (right), 2016

Another case study museum, in Tverskaya *oblast'*, was founded in 1918 and was originally situated in the building of the State Duma. In 1936 it was moved into the 18th-century building of a former church, where it is still situated in the present day.



Figure 3.3. View of the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Solikamsk. The museum is situated in the buildings of the monastery complex in the centre of the city, 2016.

The establishment of *krayevedcheskiy* museums in de-sanctified churches is not only a pattern found in central Russia. In Perm' *Kray* (figure 3.3) there are also several cases of using former church buildings for *krayevedcheskiy* expositions. Moreover, one of the branches of the local museum in Cherdyn', called the 'Museum of Faith', is situated in a former church building, and attempts to exactly reconstruct the interior of an Orthodox church (figure 3.4).



Figure 3.4. 'Museum of Faith' in Cherdyn', 2016.

It is very common to find *krayevedcheskiy* museums shifting from one building to another, in some cases because of the reason, and in some due to a range of circumstances. The *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Samara, for example, first began in several rooms of a merchant house, before moving, in the 1880s, into a building shared

with the public library. In 1933 it was moved again, this time into a palace that had belonged to the merchant Suroshnikov and had recently been appropriated by the state. Then, in 1941, the museum moved yet again, into the former building of a Polish Catholic church, where it remained until 1993. Finally, in 1994 it was moved to a new building, formerly a branch of the Central Lenin Museum.

It was therefore common for *krayevedcheskiy* museums to move into buildings that, at a certain point in the Soviet regime, lost their social value or function due to social and political policy changes. These buildings were not originally constructed with a museum function in mind, and rarely had the proper conservation conditions for collections. The Soviet idea of creating a special type of building in which to house *krayevedcheskiy* museums never actually happened, although later, in post-Soviet times, certain museums did move to specially designed buildings. For example, the "Chukotka's Heritage" Museum Centre (renamed in 2002 from Anadyr' *krayevedcheskiy* museum) is now situated in a special building (figure 3.5) designed in the form of a polar bear, and shares this space with various other cultural organizations.



Figure 3.5. "Chukotka's Heritage" Museum Centre, Anadyr', 2016.

The location of *krayevedcheskiy* museums within villages and small cities also varies and reflects, even more clearly, the museums' social role and importance to the local community. One local museum (Chusovoy in Perm' Kray, see figure 3.7) can be found on the ground floor of a residential building in the outskirts of a settlement, while another (Bolshaya Atnya in Tatarstan, see figure 3.6) became the richest and most noticeable building of the village. On the local level, various factors influencing the location of museums can be magnified. Setting up *krayevedcheskiy* museums in different kinds of building was, at the period of Soviet centralization, a method of establishing Soviet discourse and reclaiming power. However, the fact that *krayevedcheskiy* museums stayed in their adopted homes is a sign, on the one hand, of the abundance of those, and, on the other, of the shifting role of these museums in society: it shows that they were no longer being used as a method of propaganda. The Soviet plan to create an architectural project for *krayevedcheskiy* museums was developed in theory but never realized. However, this uncertain pattern of museum location within the city works on the image of a *krayevedcheskiy* museum as truly vernacular.



Figure. 3.6. *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Bolshaya Atnya, Tatarstan, 2016.



Figure 3.7. *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Chusovoy, Perm' Region, 2016.

Permanent displays of pre-Soviet krayevedcheskiy museums[32]

Before the Soviet centralization of *krayevedeniye* and the appearance of the first guidelines for *krayevedcheskiy* museums on the federal level, exposition design was left up to the groups of people in charge of museums. These people were not necessarily representatives of the local community (see the case of Yakutia), but their diversity still meant that each region had its own principles of permanent display creation. The way in which expositions were constructed depended on local directors' education levels, as well as their particular vision and ideas. Despite the fact that the general populace usually

[32] As in many museums, *krayevedcheskiy* expositions were divided into permanent and temporary ones. This thesis discusses only permanent displays, as they were the ones governed and controlled by central authorities.

participated in the gathering of objects for museum collections, the power to select which objects would be exhibited still lay in the hands of curators. In my case study museums, it is hard to find extensive visual evidence of expositions from before the Sovietisation period, especially on the local scale, but some written evidence remains. Thus, we are not able to analyse the permanent displays themselves, but only the concept and vision upon which they were based. In reality, the permanent displays could be quite different from such plans. Below, I use the example of the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Yakutia to discuss a pre-revolutionary permanent display in detail, tracing the changes that appeared after the government-implemented guidelines. Expositions of this earlier period, like that in Yakutia, would be heavily criticized in the Soviet period for consisting of simple 'expositions of things and objects' that looked to the past, rather than presenting ideas and concepts geared towards the future.

According to historians of the Yakutia region, in 1901 the museum's collection was divided into several sub-divisions. These were as follows:

Mineralogy and geology (consisting of minerals and rocks without reference to date and location where specimens were founded or extracted)

Palaeontology (predominantly bones of mammoths and prehistoric rhinoceroses)

Botanic (plant specimens, algae, ancient trees)

Zoology (stuffed and mounted dead birds and animals)

Anthropology (human jaws)

Archaeology (one bronze vase and two stone axes)

Ethnography (many objects of everyday use to Yakuts, but nothing about the region's minor ethnicities)

Industry (the models of ships navigating on the Lena River, rocks from Lena gold mining, and hunting weapons)

General educational department (random objects, including two Japanese vases)

(Mestnikova, 1966, pp. 21–22)

There is no direct evidence for any program or set of guidelines for structuring the collection or the way objects should be put together, so it seems the collection was arranged randomly, based on established disciplinary or knowledge boundaries and experience of the political exiles involved in the process. Kuznetsov was the first to design guidelines for establishing Yakutsk's permanent display; the 'Project of a program of Yakutsk Oblast' Museum' was accepted on 16 December 1911 on the first commission of the Yakutsk branch OIS (*Proyekt programmy Yakutskogo oblastnogo muzeya*, 1911, p. 49).

From official histories, it is unclear whether any particular scholars inspired Kuznetsov in the development of his program, or whether its structure was simply driven by the museum's existing collection of materials. Vinokurov describes the exposition as 'typical for the period, with a systematic approach to the subject' (Vinokurov, 1991, p. 21). However, the motivation for the systematization, classification, and assemblage of objects and material evidence into a specific order is the most typical characteristic of Foucault's "classical" episteme.

According to Kuznetsov's program, the exposition was divided into seven parts:

- **Natural history department**
    - *Minerals* (including the collection of minerals from the Yakutsk region, minerals from bore holes, a petrographic collection from the Yakutsk region, earth materials, and photographs of mountains)
    - *Botanic collection* (various herbaria and teratological collections of 'abnormalities', gnarls and others.)

- *Zoology* (stuffed animals and birds, skin specimens of different animals, skulls, bird eggs, fish, further ‘abnormalities’, and others)
- *Paleontology* (skulls, fossils, and others)

- **Anthropological department**
  - *Ethnography* (everyday objects of the Yakuty, Tungusy, Lamuty, Chukchi, Yukagiry, and Chuvantsy, as well as national costumes, ethnographic objects of early Russian settlers, weapons, medicinal materials, examples of food eaten by national minorities, paintings, and photographs on ethnographic themes)
  - *Anthropology* (skeletons and skulls from burial mounds, contemporary skeletons and skulls, and other objects)
- **Archeological department**
  - Pre-historic objects from stone, cooper, bronze, gold, silver, clay, glass, and iron
- **Industrial department**
  - Mining industry
  - Factories
  - Handicraft industries
- **Agriculture**
  - Farming
  - Land Management
  - Animal Farming
  - Poultry Farming
  - Forestry
- **Objects from elsewhere and abroad**
  - Natural-historical department

- Anthropology
- Archeology
- Industry
- Agriculture
- Numismatic

- **Department of textbooks**
  - Library
  - Study room

(Vinokurov, 1991, p. 25).

The appearance of a “natural history department” in the permanent display is a striking example of what Foucault describes as a sign of the rise of the “classical” episteme, when accounts based on description and words began to need material evidence, and to turn towards objects: “The documents of this new history are not other words, texts or records, but unencumbered spaces in which things are juxtaposed: herbariums, collections, gardens” (Foucault, 1970, p. 143). As M.P. Nikolaev (1912, pp. 1–3) describes, the exposition was divided into three parts. The first room was dedicated to the region’s natural heritage (minerals, plants, animals) and formed the museum’s natural history department. The exposition in the second room presented all the collected items from various indigenous peoples (Yakuty, Tungusy, Lamuty, Chukchi, Yukagiry, Chuvantsy) as well as from Russians. This room also included ‘everything that could help to define the race of a nation—skulls, skeletons’ (ibid), and thus formed a blend of anthropology, archaeology, and ethnography. The third room, finally, presented industry and agriculture. All objects in the collection were divided according to the program, catalogued, and labelled with the item’s name and place and date of acquisition (Nikolaev, 1912, pp. 1–3). Vinokurov argues that, whilst it was the first permanent display

of artefacts, the exposition did not constitute an *exhibition*, but was, rather, an unstructured storage for the objects (Vinokurov, 1991, p. 22). In 1912, the exposition saw a further remarkable change, with the opening of another department dedicated to political exiles (*Yakutskaya okraina,* 1912). Several points in this example ought to be emphasised. First, the exposition represented a mixture of 'curiosities' and items 'typical' of the region. At this stage the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Yakutsk still has traits of the *Kunstkamera*, displaying artefacts which were clearly from beyond the normal range, but presenting them in the overarching context of displaying the region's most common characteristics. It is precisely this trait that opened such pre-revolutionary museums to Soviet criticism: the fact that they shared a systematic approach to the subject, being both *Kunstkameras* and also showing regional antiquities. Second, it is remarkable that the museum makes no difference in the representation of Russians and indigenous people in the region. The ethnographic department was structured in such a way as to display everyday objects used by the indigenous people in the region as well as the first Russian settlers there. This means that the ethnographic department united all ethnicities in the region, including Russians—who were shown as dominant—into one place of representation. Though we lack the visual evidence needed to be completely certain, the structure of the materials and their description strongly suggests that Russians were approached and studied in the same way as national minorities. All the objects that could be used to study ethnographical diversity were gathered together in one sub-division—a fact that would later change dramatically, when "ethnography" came to be almost never applied to the study of Russians themselves. As we will see further on (in Chapter 6), approaches to representing indigenous people changed significantly during Soviet times, reflecting Stalin's policy on the "national question", and this change continues to exert its influence today.

The fact that Kuznetsov designed the program himself, and that it was accepted by the local scientific society with no need for further coordination with central authorities, shows that at this stage the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Yakutsk was quite independent from the centre and could create its displays without regulations from beyond the region. We can clearly see that Kuznetsov's program was based on knowledge brought to the region by Russian exiles and therefore inherited principles of 19th-century science. The program also clearly establishes a division between local indigenous people and Russians. However, Russians are not yet represented by their social and cultural institutions, but by agriculture and industry. There is no history department in the exposition structure, apart from archaeological objects, representing pre-historical period.

The *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Yakutsk was not the only one to have such a structured description of the permanent exposition and a systematic approach to ordering material. In 1910, the museum in Perm' consisted of ten departments, including: 1) mineralogy, geology, and palaeontology; 2) zoology; 3) archaeology and anthropology; 4) ethnography and history; 5) church history; 6) cartography; 7) portable museum and library; 8) numismatics; 9) art; and 10) photography. The permanent display in Perm' museum in 1925 (when there still were no governmental guidelines to be implemented) has an even more complex structure. The structure of the museum in 1925 consisted of five main departments, including the museum itself, the museum's art gallery and library, a zoological garden, and the Perm' Society of *Krayevedeniye*. The Museum therefore had the following departments: geological, palaeontological, mineralogical, botanic, zoological, ethnographical, archaeological, historical, labour unions, the history of revolution, peoples' education, public health services, mountain and metallurgic industry, chemical industry, forestry industry, crafts, local trade, and communal services (Baranova, 2005, p. 29). According to the regulations of the museum from 27 March 1901, Perm' Museum had the following goals: 1) "to collect items and collections as materials

of an all round study of nature, history, and life, mainly of Perm' *kray*" 2) "to familiarize the general public both with works on the collections and on the findings of the sciences in general" (*ibid*). This description is the perfect example of a pre-revolutionary *krayevedcheskiy* museum in comparison with later Soviet ones. The goals of the museums are scientific and educational rather than aligned to the party agenda, and are not yet concerned with the construction of socialism, as the socialist museums were.

Another example is the museum in Tomsk. Although the first exposition in Tomsk opened on 18 March 1922, it consisted of 7–8 halls, and the process of Soviet reshaping of *krayevedcheskiy* museums had not yet begun. The exposition included art and graphics of the architectural sights of Tomsk, a department dedicated to the Orient, several halls with paleontological, archaeological, and ethnographical collections that were united, systemized, and centred around the topic 'the development of humanity from ancient times up to the present day', and a range of other collections depicting interiors from different times. This museum was also not fully *krayevedcheskiy*; it was officially called a "Museum of art and antiquities". Only in 1923 did it begin to be reformed as a true *krayevedcheskiy* museum, and a decision was made to organize two more departments (natural history and societal-economical). The natural history department opened in 1925 and consisted of the sub-departments of botany, zoology, entomology, mineralogy, and palaeontology; it was followed, a year later, by the opening of the social and economic department. The permanent exposition faced several other changes over the next few years, including the organization of a "Corner of collectivization" in 1929 (Stashenkov, ed., 2011, pp. 9–15).

A similar pattern is found in the museum in Samara: in 1898 it had 12 departments, including archaeological, agricultural, arts and crafts, ethnographical, art, and others, which in the beginning of the 20th century merged into seven broader departments:

archaeology, the history of *kray*, ethnography, crafts (agriculture and handicrafts industry), zoology, geology and mineralogy, and an art department (ibid*,* p. 7).

Although in most cases we lack direct visual evidence for the first museum expositions, we can nonetheless gather quite a good understanding about the ideas that stood behind them. All such expositions had a relatively well-defined structure with numerous departments and sub-departments. This structure was usually developed by local enthusiasts and followed existing disciplinary divisions, though often also included departments reflecting local particularities. As mentioned before, this mania for classification is one of the signs of the 'classical' episteme, before shifting to the 'modern'. It is this structure and method of organizing knowledge and data that changed under the process of *krayevedeniye*'s centralization and unification during the Soviet period, to which I now turn.

'New Soviet' *krayevedcheskiy* museums

The first attempt to centralize local *krayevedeniye* activities and to define them took place at the First All-Russian Conference of Scientific Societies for Studying Local *Kray* held in 1921. It resulted in local activities being named "*krayevedcheskiy*", and changes to the network and governance of these activities, as well as the way in which *krayevedcheskiy* museum permanent displays started to be constructed. With this in mind, in this section I will demonstrate how the process of the centralization of governance and unification of *krayevedcheskiy* works resulted in the development of new, unified plans for museum expositions. I will analyse the gaze that was programmed by the Soviet authorities. This will be followed by an analysis of several contemporary permanent displays, which reveal the continued influence of Soviet policy.

Many scholars treat the first Soviet Museum Congress in 1930 as a key turning point in the history of museum constructions and exposition building. I propose that the rethinking of the role of *krayevedcheskiy* museums in fact began earlier, at least from the

perspective of *krayevedcheskiy* studies. The first federal guidelines for *krayevedcheskiy* museums following the 1917 Revolution were issued in 1928 and concerned expositions at the lowest possible spatial scale; these guidelines were found in, 'A methodological letter on the organization of local ("*volostnoy"*[33]*)* museums'. According to this document, the main goals of *volostnoy* museums were to organize scientific work conducted within a *volost'* in the aid of social construction, to showcase their results in expositions, and to involve the general populace in research into their *volost'*.

Natan Aleksandrovich Shneerson was among the first to introduce the new principles of Soviet *krayevedcheskiy* museums. Shneerson was an important scholar of *krayevedeniye*, and one of the directors of the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Istra, Moscow Region, which was set up in 1922 in the one of the monastery buildings. In 1935 Shneerson curated the "Social construction in the Moscow Region" exhibition in this museum, after which it was renamed as Moscow Regional *Krayevedcheskiy* Museum and became the model one for all regional museums. Shortly after this, he was executed in the great purge of 1937. Despite this, he is significant as the author of a range of important articles and presentations on Soviet *krayevedeniye*; in 1929, he gave a key speech in which he summed up the general principles of museum work. In his view, a *krayevedcheskiy* museum should carry out the tasks assigned to it by society, rather than simply follow its own interests. Museums were, he maintained, the centres of all research taking place in the *kray*, and involved the local *krayevedcheskoye* society, which was basically an organization of scientific volunteers (*Protokoly zasedaniya metodicheskoy komissii po krayevedeniyu,* 1930).

[33] *Volost'*: the lowest administrative-territorial division in Russia, 1926–1929.

Shneerson's basic ideas can be summarised as two main points:

1) *Krayevedcheskiy* museums are scientific and educational institutions whose activities are limited by territory. Their main task is the systematic and planned study of that territory.

2) *Krayevedcheskiy* museums should undertake these activities according to contemporary science, which is based on dialectic materialism. Museums' research should be useful for planning organizations. Thus, *krayevedcheskiy* museums should not follow their own interests and collect objects for their own expositions, but work on solving "actual economic and logistical problems". All museum forces should focus on solving planning and cultural-social tasks (ibid, p.56).

This "turn" that followed the changes that took place in the "discipline" of *krayevedeniye* itself, as a knowledge production system: *krayevedcheskiy* museums should not follow purely local agendas and plans, but work on planning and economic tasks. The distinction between the 'old' *krayevedeniye* and the 'new Soviet' *krayevedeniye* that was highlighted by Soviet scholars and policy makers (see Chapter 2) was also extrapolated to the concept of *krayevedcheskiy* museums. The first Museum Congress in 1930 was nevertheless also important: here, the role of museums in socialist society—and especially the role of *krayevedcheskiy* museums—was reconsidered. The main 'scientific task' allocated to *krayevedcheskiy* museums was to study the environment as a whole—past as well as present—with the help of dialectic materialism, which stood for the close study of all phenomena under investigation in their development, appearance, and destruction. The principle of studying the entire environment within a certain geographical area correlates with the idea, common to museums of the modern time, of constructing an image 'of the universe' or of 'the entire world' that might be classified as falling into Foucault's 'modern' episteme.

In the "Methodological letter about general guidelines of *krayevedcheskiy* museums' activities and tasks" (*Protokoly zasedaniya metodicheskoy komissii po krayevedeniyu*, 1930) *Glavnauka* stated that expositions should be based on the principles of dialectic materialism, meaning that phenomena could not be studied in isolation, but in relation to the particular conditions of place and time. The social relations generated by production should stand at the centre of those studies. 'Art is not the exhibition of things; instead, it should show which social and economic conditions influence people's art of a certain period.' The letter emphasises the role of the museum in the cultural revolution of villages: 'we need to know the contemporary village in order to be able to fight the vestiges (of capitalism)'. Yet the study of a village should not only be academic, but also concerned with social and economic factors, which lie behind the continued existence of these 'vestiges'. The same principle should be implemented in natural science: the distribution of vegetation can only be clear when studying the conditions of the soil types that gave rise to such vegetation.

After the 1930s many more documents issued guidelines on museum permanent displays. The shift from pre-revolutionary museums to Soviet museums was well described in official documents, and the differences between the two were clearly articulated. These differences included visual arrangement and order: from the pre-revolutionary *Kunstkamera* methods of displaying 'curiosities', Soviet museums moved to the building of difficult complexes in modern expositions; from the boring primitive graphics of early museums, the new Soviet expositions included cinema, dioramas, and animated posters. For example, in the 'Structure of a *krayevedcheskiy* museum's History Department', 1934 (*Struktura otdela istorii krayevedcheskogo muzeya*, 1934) we see that from 1917 onwards Soviet museums had considerable experience in the methodology and techniques of museum exposition. Among them, *krayevedcheskiy* museums were more complex than specialist museums. The content of *krayevedcheskiy* museums was

challenging because their content was so diversified. Central rules directed that dialectic materialism should constitute the base of a *krayevedheskyi* exposition, as it was, "the only correct method explaining the phenomena of nature, uncovering social relationships, the revolutionary reorganization of society, and changes in nature by the will and action of humans" (ibid). And again, "according to the principles of dialectic materialism we need to create such an exposition, so that it would represent the unique complex with an idea and thematic purpose, to show the step-by-step evolution of nature and the development of human society. Museum exposition is a weapon of propaganda" (ibid).

The reference to the *Kunstkamera* can be found not only in central documents but also in local ones. For example, in Perm' museum the governing body addressed necessary changes in the museum as early as 1899: "the new governing body has set a task to transfer the museum from "Kunstkamera" to 'peoples' university, public auditorium" (Baranova, 2005, p. 14)

Further differences between pre- and post-revolutionary museums were underlined in the different structure of their expositions. Pre-revolutionary museums had a "systematic form"—under which objects are collected according to their 'formal-logical' relationships, based on their superficial resemblance or difference abstracted from everyday use—and their expositions could be described as consisting "of things, not ideas". Soviet critics observed that interrelationships between artefacts and gathered objects displayed in museums failed to reveal anything about the class structure of social formations, class contradictions, or the development of the country's production forces. Old *krayevedcheskiy* museums were described as archaic, showing 'antiquities, curiosities, speaking about the past, but not about the future' (ibid, p.15*).* Despite this, it was agreed that the systematic approach (although subsumed into a broader, complex approach) ought to remain in *krayevedcheskiy* museums. It could be used to show, for example, biological, mineralogical, and other natural objects, collected together by a

geographical or other natural principle. Some of the archaeological artefacts could, thus, remain in a historical display. Yet the new museums should not be purely 'systematic' in this way; rather, they should be created to follow a new, complex form—to produce an exposition in which a variety of different objects are shown in their natural relations to one another, connected with each other in time and space, and reflecting a particular idea or thought. Visitors should not simply see "an object for its own sake". This approach was used, for example, to create the interior of an *izba* or house, or in showing bio-groups in dioramas (ibid*, p.15*).

The new Soviet authorities therefore basically tried to implement a shift from the 'classical' episteme to a 'modern' one. The principles introduced by Soviet authorities can be understood as an attempt to create a typical modernist museum. A modernist museum, according to Hooper-Greenhill, is one that unifies, rationalizes, pictures, and presents relationships. It works through a combination of words and objects, where text explains the way in which objects should be viewed. Relationships between people, nations, and ideas are produced through the selection of objects, their method of display, and the relationships between them. Modernity, according to Pearce (Pearce, 1992, p. 2), was concerned with the development of meta-narratives, overarching discourses through which objective realities and eternal truths could be defined and expressed. Linnaeus's scheme of taxonomy or Darwin's theory of evolution were typical meta-narratives of this time and parallel what we see in *krayevedcheskiy* museums, even today. The historical discourse was the child of ideas about the nature of scientific evidence translated into human historical material and of a belief in the essential individual. Linking all these propositions was the idea of progress, in which the process of history lies in the great rational grip on objective knowledge harnessed to technological improvement. Different meta-narratives subsequently grew out of that idea, including those of Rousseau, British utilitarianists, and—in the Soviet case—Marx.

Thus, the process of the unification of *krayevedcheskiy* museums' permanent displays was enforced by Soviet authorities as part of the Soviet policy in culture, and implemented a turn from the 'classical' episteme to that of the modern museum. This unification of the theoretical underpinnings of departments, exposition methods, and structure, regardless of museum location, resulted in quite similar expositions being developed in every Russian region.[34] In later chapters I show how these uniformed and predefined narratives resulted in an alignment of 'common unsaids', formed by the sub-departments of krayevedcheskiy museums. .

Permanent displays in Soviet krayevedcheskiy *museums*

The peak of centralized governance over *krayevedcheskiy* museums does not correlate exactly with the period of centralization of *krayevedeniye* in general. The Sovietisation of *krayevedeniye* is usually considered to have taken place in the period from 1921 to 1955, but in analysing the Soviet centralization of *krayevedcheskiy* museums it is more relevant to address the period between 1928/1930 and the 1960s. Initiatives for guiding *krayevedcheskiy* works and rules for exposition-making in fact began in pre-Soviet times. While there was a range of pre-revolutionary programs for arranging data and materials, the majority of these initiatives were implemented on the regional level—such as those introduced by scientific authorities on 'unknown territories'—and a few others emerged from below. The initiatives were hardly ever applied on the federal level to the country as a whole, and usually referred to particular regions or even particular scientific expeditions.

A historian of ethnographical collections in Siberia and the Far East, L.B. Stepanova, in her book "*Muzeynoye sobiratel'stvo v Rossii: Yakutskiye etnograficheskiye*

[34] However, in practice museum expositions frequently continued to differ from the Soviet guidelines.

kollektsii (1865–1968"[35], provides a description and comparative analysis of the different programs for the investigations and explorations of that region. She follows in detail the story of several expeditions. She also depicts one of the first programs to be developed at the federal level. In 1886, the President of the St. Petersburg Society of Natural Scientists, A.N. Beketov, proposed to the Statistical Committees that local museums in every region should be formed. This proclamation was accompanied by the issuance of a range of programs on geological, zoological, botanical, soil, meteorological and agricultural collections, known as "Instructions for observations and forming collections". Stepanova points out that this initiative triggered a massive movement to establish local museums and organize natural history collections for university museums across the country. I agree that this was the case in some regions, but my evidence suggests that it did not apply across all regions. As I have shown, the economic and social reasons underpinning the establishment of *krayevedcheskiy* museums varied strongly between regions. However, it remains true that Beketov's program was the first initiative to attempt to unify all expeditions and expositions. The program initiated by Beketov was taken up by St. Petersburg's Society and provided detailed instructions for conducting research and creating exhibitions in geology, biology, botanics, meteorology, hydrology, and zoology. Each section of the program was designed by well-known academics including V. Dokuchayev, F. Levinson-Lessing, A. Voyeykov, and others. The program can be considered as the first clear set of exhibition guidelines, and was taken as a prototype for a range of other initiatives, including those on the local level.

The first guidelines for conducting *krayevedcheskiy* work (which in pre-revolutionary *krayevedeniye* basically meant the collection of artefacts) in Yakutia, known as the "Program for collecting objects for the museum, supposed to be developed under

[35] *Muzeynoye sobiratel'stvo v Rossii: Yakutskiye etnograficheskiye kollektsii (1865–1968)* (Rus): 'Museum collection in Russia: Yakutian Ethnographic collections (1865–1968)'.

the Yakutsk Statistical Committee", was designed soon after Beketov's program by the Committee's secretary A.I. Popov, who took the major principles for his new program from Beketov's. The Yakutsk version was published in 150 copies that were distributed throughout the region with an appeal to the general public for their cooperation (Nikolaev, 1912, pp. 4–5). The program aimed at collecting artefacts under the following headings: 1. Geography and History; 2. Archaeology; 3. Ethnography; 4. Handicrafts; and 5. Zoology (Vinokurov, 1991, p. 11), which echoed the structure of museum departments.

As mentioned above, the process of Soviet centralization of *krayevedeniye* began in 1921, but it was not until 1928–1930 that its impact on museum work began to appear. Since the changes took place in museums themselves, and the implementation of Soviet centralising policy often did not follow the new guidelines and programs very closely, programs of particular museums could differ and warrant investigation of the ideas behind them.

One of the first Soviet initiatives in 1928 was applied to the exposition in *volost'* (the local or 'county' level) museums, which should have provided "obvious impressions about the nature, economics, and lifestyle of an individual *sub-locality*". The initiative lists the following departments as essential parts of expositions:

1) An introductory *krayevedeniye* and geographical department, which should present the location of the *volost'* within the geographical and economic region of the USSR, and provide overall relief, hydrology, climate, and soil characteristics, as compared to other regions.

2) The (physical) nature of the *volost'*, including the characteristics of its territory and natural regions.

3) The *volost"*s population and economy (demography and economics), including:

   a. Industry

b. Agriculture

c. Crafts

d. Economic sub-regions of the *volost'*

e. Achievements and tasks of Soviet socialist economic development

4) Everyday life, demonstrating the distinction between the old (pre-Soviet) and the new (Soviet) lifestyles.

(*Protokoly zasedaniya metodicheskoy komissii po krayevedcheskim muzeyam,* 1928)

Shneerson, in 1929, was one of the first to propose a certain structure for *krayevedcheskiy* museum permanent displays on the regional level. His vision saw displays consisting of 4 departments:

1. Introductory: This department was to include the general characteristics of the *kray* in its general features (a '*passportization* of *kray'*), starting from its geographical location, climate, soils, hydrology, vegetation, natural resources, population, and agriculture, and ending with the *kray*'s social-cultural institutions.

2. Natural History: This department was based on the landscape approach, which is most suitable for the principles of dialectic materialism.

3. Historical-cultural: This department ought to include all the significant sites of material and intellectual culture up to the present day; the development of culture was always considered to be dominated by the question of tools of production

4. Contemporary national economic and cultural-social construction: This part of the museum aimed to provide a detailed analysis of each branch of the national economy and contemporary everyday life.

(Protokoly zasedaniya metodicheskoy komissii po krayevedeniyu, 1930)

Although this basic structure changed several times throughout the 20th century, I propose that there were no profound theoretical changes in the way regions were supposed to be represented. Tracing the construction of contemporary expositions, I will demonstrate that they still inherit the same method of organising materials.

Glavnauka, in the "Methodological letter about the general guidelines on krayevedcheskiy museums' activities and tasks", proposed the following structure for permanent displays:

1) Introductory Department
2) Natural History Department: Each landscape in the exposition should be characterized by its geology, vegetation, animals, and so on. The initial rooms should give an overview of the *kray*'s natural, geological, and paleontological collections.
3) Historical-cultural Department: This should map the development of social structures, especially their appearance and influence upon one another due to the basis of production's social relations. The connection between culture and production modes should be shown, because significant sites of culture lose their value if not shown within their specific social environments.
4) National economy and social-cultural evolution.

This structure faced several subsequent iterations. It was finally agreed by the *Glavnauka* that the introductory department should be done away with, and the resulting structure of permanent displays consisted of a threefold organisation into the departments of Nature, History, and Social Construction. This became the most popular and widely accepted structure, and, as I will show, it is still highly relevant in many Russian museums today.


КУЙБЫШЕВСКИЙ
ОБЛАСТНОЙ
МУЗЕЙ
КРАЕВЕДЕНИЯ

(Пионерская улица, дом № 22, телефон 12—21 и 20—64)

Открыт ежедневно, кроме вторников, с 10 ч. утра до 8 ч. 30 м. веч.

ОТКРЫТЫ ДЛЯ ОБОЗРЕНИЯ:

ОТДЕЛ ПРИРОДЫ

1. Геологическое прошлое.
2. Происхождение человека.
3. Физико-географические условия области.
4. Полезные ископаемые.
5. Растительный и животный мир.

ИСТОРИЧЕСКИЙ ОТДЕЛ

1. Первобытно-общинный строй (каменный и бронзовый века).
2. Кочевые племена Среднего Поволжья (скифы, сарматы и др.).
3. Государство Волжско-Камских булгар VIII—XIV века.
4. Поволжье под властью Золотой Орды—XIII—XV века.
5. Колонизация Поволжья Московским государством и основание г. Самары.
6. Крестьянское движение под руководством С. Разина.
7. Военно-бюрократическая империя Петра I.

ВЫСТАВКА „НАРОДНОЕ ХОЗЯЙСТВО ОБЛАСТИ"

ВЫСТАВКА ИМЕЕТ РАЗДЕЛЫ:

1. Промышленность. Транспорт водный и железнодорожный. „Второе Баку".
2. Социалистическое сельское хозяйство области.
3. Коммунальное хозяйство, торговля, связь.
4. Культура, искусство, здравоохранение.
5. Участие трудящихся в управлении государством. Защита социалистического отечества.

Вновь организована выставка изделий широкого потребления.

ФИЛИАЛ МУЗЕЯ—подвал (угол ул. Фрунзе и Красноармейской), сохранивший следы расправы белочехов над большевиками, рабочими и красноармейцами,—открыт ежедневно (кроме вторников) с 6 до 9 ч. веч. и по воскресениям с 10 час. утра до 6 час. вечера.

Экскурсии в музей обслуживаются квалифицированными экскурсоводами.

ДИРЕКЦИЯ

Figure 3.8. Poster from the Samara museum of its 1940 exposition, showing three departments, including Nature, History, and Economics.

The general comments on permanent displays included a note that expositions should be complex, but thematically orientated. Discussions about differences in museum expositions of varying scales and in distinct regions are also found later in the documents. Hence, in 1949, the differences between regional museums and local ones were explained in the "General instructions for the rebuilding of expositions of regional *krayevedcheskiy* museums" designed by Anna Ivanovna Mikhaylovskaya (*Osnovnyye polozheniya o perestroyke ekspozicii rayonnykh krayevedcheskikh muzeyev*, 1949).[36] The main distinction in this particular piece was based on the fact that local museums

[36] Mikhaylovskaya was a historian and theoretician of Soviet museums, and an associate of the Institute of Museum and *Krayevedeniye* Works from 1944. She is the author of many pieces on Soviet museum exposition techniques.

normally reflected a smaller and less diverse territory, and therefore had fewer exposition possibilities; hence the exposition's structure should differ as well. Local museums should not inherit the standard threefold division into the departments of Nature, History, and Social Construction. All materials concerning the *kray* should be concentrated around the topic of the *kray*'s social construction and its modification under Soviet power. Nature, natural resources, and their usage should be shown in a separate complex. The *kray*'s pre-revolutionary past should be represented in local museums as a class struggle, alongside the *kray*'s role in the fight of the Russian proletariat movement and peasantry, governed by the Party against capitalism and Tsarism (ibid, p. 30).

As well as differentiating expositions with regard to museums' spatial level, the 'General instructions' also suggest differences based on the various economic specializations of regions. Thus, Mikhaylovskaya distinguished agricultural, agricultural-industrial, and industrial-agricultural regions. Museums in regions falling into the latter category should focus their expositions on industry; for those in regions 'rich in cultural heritage' (mostly central Russia), culture should take priority (ibid, p. 30).

Thus, Mikhaylovskaya's proposed structure of local museums follows this general schematic:

1) Introduction
2) The *kray*'s history
    a. Pre-human
    b. Historical past before the Revolution
    c. The primitive communal system
    d. The *kray* in the period of feudalism
    e. The *kray* in the period of capitalism's early formation
    f. The *kray* in the period of imperialism as the ultimate stage of capitalism
    g. The history of the Soviet period

h. The contemporary state of the *kray*

3) Social economy and culture of the *kray*

a. Industry

b. Agriculture

c. Increasing the productive capacity of soils

d. Transformation of vegetation following Michurin's study

e. Transformation of animals

f. Culture and folk art

4) Perspectives on the *kray*'s development

As can be seen, Mikhaylovskaya's structure differs from the threefold structure that was widely implemented in regional *krayevedcheskiy* museums. Each department in the permanent display listed above also had further instructions concerning what it ought to contain against the backdrop of an overarching national historical narrative.

All this shows the massive changes implemented by Soviet authorities in the structure of museum expositions. From being initially organized into a disciplinary division they began to fall instead into overarching themes and represent certain ideas. By this, I mean that departments such as 'zoology' or 'botany' started to be encompassed by the 'nature' department, which aimed to promote and prove a certain set of ideas. This observation brings us back to the conclusion that, at least in theory, *krayevedcheskiy* museums were truly modern in their core design. Further discussion of the theories and ideologies behind each of the departments may be found below in Chapters 4, 5, and 6.

Despite the shifts in permanent display organisation that took place in the wake of subsequent political changes, the basic triple structure of departments has remained the same up to the present day.

Objects in *krayevedcheskiy* museums and cultural colonization

> Material culture is that segment of man's physical environment which is purposely shaped by him according to a culturally dictated plan. (Deetz, 1977, p. 7)

Krayevedcheskiy museums were and remain a unique type of museum, which differs from any Western analogue. Situated in almost every possible village, they formed expositions out of the typical objects belonging in their particular location. However, the role of these objects is not as obvious as might first appear.

Alongside the many debates about objects and their role in museums, new approaches to material cultural have recently emerged. Material Culture Studies engage with the complex theoretical positions of structuralism, post-structuralism, and hermeneutics (Tilley, 1991). This field was influenced by archaeologists and anthropologists, such as those from the Cambridge School (Shanks and Tilley, 1987; Hodder, 1989;), and scholars within Museum Studies (Pearce, 1994). Further, the approach to objects as commodities is the focus of the new Consumption Studies (Bocock, 1993; Miller, 1995).

In the case of *krayevedcheskiy* museums, objects in expositions unite two different theoretical shifts. The first is connected with the crowdsourcing core of *krayevedcheskiy* collections, and the second lies in the geography of artefacts.

Hooper-Greenhill proposes that objects are used to construct identities on both a personal and national level—and, in our case, also on a regional and a local level. Objects can express allegiance to specific ideologies, visions, or histories. Personal experiences can be encoded in artefacts so that the object represents the memory, the significance, and the emotional power of those experiences. Objects can therefore be used to express a sense of self and a feeling of cultural affiliation (Hooper-Greenhill, 1992, p. 109). At the very heart of *krayevedcheskiy* museums lies the idea of crowdsourcing artefacts to represent the region. *Krayevedcheskiy* museums are therefore perhaps the ultimate

example of self-expression in constructing regional or local representations by the general populace. They offer a direct instrument to build up local and, subsequently, regional identities by donating personal or family possessions to museums to become part of expositions. This core mechanism of forming collections still operates through a range of open calls and the tradition of donating objects to museums.

For our purposes, the most important thing in understanding the role of objects in museums is the fact that objects change their meaning when they are shifted from one environment to another. According to Pearce, objects may shift from being simple items of everyday use—or even pieces of nature—to being a significant part of material culture (Pearce, 1994, p. 5). They begin to possess different meanings, form a narrative, and stand for certain ideas. When they are transferred from families to a museum, objects are assigned additional meaning, becoming 'typical' for the region and slotting into an overarching narrative exposition.[37] This is one example of how personal histories begin to form larger narratives. The process of donating family items to museums also silences the stories of the people who possessed them; they become depersonalized. While there are cases in which museums preserve the name of the family who donated the object, this is very rare. In many cases, museums, especially in central Russia, were formed on the private family collections of rich merchants, de-*kulakized* during Soviet times, though this was rarely being mentioned in Soviet *krayevedcheskiy* museums.

Not all objects donated were included as part of the expositions; some ended up in storage. Consequentially, the act of participating in the creation of regional identity had more to do with the act of including part of family history in a larger narrative, than in these families actually seeing their donation used in a final exposition. In other words, the process was more important than the result. I argue that this tradition of including personal

[37] Despite the role of the general populace, of course, *krayevedcheskiy* expositions were still designed by curators and, in certain periods, their arrangement was subject to strict rules.

items in the bigger story of regional history is one of the key methods of creating patriotic feelings towards one's 'little motherland' and including personal stories in regional narratives.

As the objects in *krayevedcheskiy* museum expositions and collections came from local families who donated them, these items became part of the overarching narrative, rarely shaping or contesting it, but serving rather as 'proof' of the general historical or social discourse. They lose their origin. This process of donating family objects became significant for people, who felt that, through their donations, they belonged to the process of establishing their region's representation. The objects' actual exposition in the museum was, however, a secondary concern; their donations were more significant as a reflection of how the exposition's frame and narrative was designed from above.

The changing geography of objects is the second significant shift that occurs with objects in *krayevedcheskiy* museums. The action of transferring objects to new places can also be seen other contexts. Moving objects acted as proof of the conquest or incorporation of faraway places, as well as serving as hard evidence of different natural environments and cultures; as such, the act of moving objects can be understood within the framework of colonization discourse. It recalls the tendency of Europeans to remove and take home material artefacts from their colonies to their home capital. Colonization discourse, therefore, gives us the possibility of analysing the relationship between regions on the basis of objects possessed, and of regional-orientated collections. The relationships between cultural centres, the capital, and peripheral regions were far from equal. Thus, we can adopt those principles to understand the relationship between those places where objects and artefacts were found and those places where they were subsequently exhibited. As mentioned above, *krayevedcheskiy* museums represented their own local region and therefore, in a first approximation, we can state that objects in the discipline of *krayevedeniye* remain in the places to which they originally belonged.

However, the story is somewhat complicated; there are at least three different spatial levels involved in creating additional cultural value in *krayevedeniye* objects.

The first spatial level, or layer, appears while shifting an object or artefact from its original place to a museum, to be a part of an exposition. This is a layer that every museum faces, including *krayevedcheskiy* museums. The meaning, and sometimes the sacred value, of an object can be changed dramatically by this movement, and sometimes even become a matter of cross-cultural misunderstanding.

The second spatial level concerns local–regional relationships. While the first spatial shift is quite common for all museums and stands for the basic process in "museumification", this layer is much more specific to the *krayevedcheskiy* network in general. Local museums, whether or not they were smaller branches of regional museums, did not always possess the most culturally 'valuable' objects—even if these objects were found in their territory—as such objects were often claimed by the larger regional museum. While it is difficult to make general conclusions about the principles behind regional–local museum coordination, it seems that if a local museum was a branch of regional one, there was a higher chance that desirable objects would be sent to the regional museum. This might be not so crucial if the region was small, but in some eastern and northern regions of Russia, like Yakutia or Chukotka, where territories differed dramatically, this shift meant a lot. Moreover, in certain cases this movement continues to enact colonial relationships between Russians and the minority northern people of various ethnicities, whose objects of everyday use became part of museum exhibitions in the region's capital, dominated by Russians, rather than staying in the local district itself. In Chukotka, local inhabitants tend to complain (off the record) that Russians destroy the graves of their relatives and their sacred places in order to study them, and bring objects back to the museum in Anadyr'.

There are also, however, examples of local *krayevedcheskiy* museums retaining unique objects in their collections. The *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Lavrentiya, a small town in Chukotka with 1,500 inhabitants, is independent, not simply a local branch of the regional museum in Anadyr', and has in its collection a unique toggling harpoon topped with a 'flying creature'. It is one of the rarest examples of a full complex Eskimo harpoon in the world—indeed, locals argue that it is completely unique (figure 3.9).



Figure 3.9. Harpoon with 'flying object' from Lavrentiya museum.

However, the object was not actually found in Lavrentiya itself, but in one of the indigenous villages nearby. Thus, there is always a certain amount of approximation when we speak about the territory *krayevedcheskiy* museums represent: the borders of that territory are often quite blurred.

It is not a common trait or rule to specify objects' place of origin, even in such vast regions as Yakutia. The exposition is organized according to the 'landscape approach' that I discuss in chapter 4, giving a basic idea of where objects belong, but frequently the actual name of the places where objects were found is absent. I argue that this is not due

to the absence of information, but rather due to the ideological method of showing the object as part of a broader discourse.

The third spatial level involves the cultural colonial relationship between central Russia and other regions. I want to trace several histories of objects' possession and collection formation in my case-study museums. The stories of objects shifting from one museum to another—and therefore from one place to another—can reveal a lot about the relationships between these regions, and cultural policy. In some cases, as I will show below, the possession of certain objects and artefacts in central museums implied colonial ideas towards particular Northern and Eastern regions. The moment when objects began to be accumulated in their own region of origin, and formed into *krayevedcheskiy* museum collections, in a sense marked the cultural admission of a region's legacy and autonomous existence. Other cases do not share this history, and objects stayed in the region they were found.

Before collected objects, data, and artefacts started to accumulate in their original regions, they sometimes followed a complicated route through different collections. We can trace the stories of several objects as they moved through different museum collections for a sense of the kind of administrative and cultural relationships they passed through, and therefore what changes the object underwent in terms of role.

We begin with the example of Chukotka, where some of my case-study museums are situated. Russia acquired its first set of scientific data (including historical and ethnographical materials) from Chukotka during the First and Second Kamchatka Expeditions (1725–1730 and 1733–1743 respectively) under V. Bering (Efimov, 1949, pp. 121–26). According to Irina Romanova, a historian of the *krayevedcheskiy* movement in Anadyr', it is not easy to trace the route of the objects contained in the expedition collections (Romanova, 2005). A portion of these objects went to form departments in Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Vladivostok museum collections and were displayed as

‘curiosities from far away’. Romanova states that in those days there was only one collection that used its materials for the purposes of scientific research: in Vladivostok’s Primorskiy Governmental United Museum, named after V.K. Arsen’yev. These objects were never taken back to Chukotka or exhibited there. The formation of museum collections in Chukotka began after it became an independent administrative unit within the Russian Empire in Primorskiy *kray*, in 1888. The first head of Anadyr’skyi *okrug* (region), L.F. Grinesevskiy, was ordered by the governor general of Primorskiy *kray* to ‘collect the materials and objects concerning life in the *okrug*’. But these objects were also taken to Vladivostok, at that time capital of the region to which Chukotka belonged. This brings us back to the idea of cultural centre–periphery relationships, not only in the sense of capital–periphery but also in the sense that certain cities, such as Irkutsk in Siberia, occupied ‘transitional’ spaces between the capital and the periphery. Objects collected from Chukotka in this initial phase were ultimately returned back to Anadyr’ and Chukotskiy Museum in 1939–1940 when the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Anadyr’ was established. The *krayevedcheskaya* network itself formed before the museum in Anadyr’ was established; the first *krayevedcheskiy* institutions appeared as part of the *Kultprosvet* Soviet project in 1931.

In a sense, the founding of this museum can be seen as an act of cultural colonization by the Soviet government, and also an acknowledgment of Chukotka as a self-sufficient region in the USSR. This is Romanova’s argument, and she further links the formation of the museum in Anadyr’ with the administrative reforms of 1930, when northern national regions were founded (Dikov, 1989, p. 170). Thus, objects from this relatively new region of Russia—as Chukotka was one of the latest regions to become part of Russian territory—were initially taken to several cities, including cities as far away as New York, where they were included in ethnographical collections. Subsequently, at least some of these objects began to remain in the region itself and form local museum

collections. The way in which objects are currently formed into expositions in today's museums, and how they represent native communities, will be discussed in subsequent chapters.

Yakutsk museum has a similar history. The first Russian scientific expeditions and collections of cultural and material objects in Yakutia began with the Second Kamchatka Expedition (1733–1743) (Vinokurov, 1991, p. 8). Initially, all the collected artefacts relating to the material culture of indigenous people in the region were brought to the *Kunstkamera* in St. Petersburg to form a special 'Yakutia Department'. These first objects brought to St. Petersburg were clearly intended to be 'curiosities': objects of magical cults, material everyday objects used by Yakutia's indigenous people, and mammoth skeletons (Ivanov, 1981, pp. 39–42) There were numerous subsequent expeditions in the region, organized by the Imperial Russian Geographical Society (IRGS) and the Russian Academy of Science, and all data collected and objects found were again brought out of the region, either to St. Petersburg's *Kunstkamera* or to academic institutions (Vinokurov, 1991, p. 9). So many objects were brought to the *Kunstkamera* from Yakutia that a special collection had to be formed (ibid, p. 10). Though at this time St. Petersburg was the Russian capital and main intellectual centre, many Yakutian objects were also brought to Irkutsk, one of three cities, alongside Omsk and Tomsk, with pretensions to be cultural and scientific centres of Siberia. Objects from Yakutia were taken to several All-Russia exhibitions: an ethnographical exhibition in Moscow (1867), an industrial exhibition in Irkutsk (1869), a polytechnic exhibition in Moscow (1872), as well as international ones in Vienna (1873) and Paris (1878) (Mestnikova, 1966, pp. 50–53).

According to historians from Yakutia, in 1886 local people found a buffalo skull, which was sent to the Statistical Committee by Semen Yegorov, headman of Yakutia's Chychuyskiy district (Vinokurov, 1991, p. 9). This led the Yakutsk Statistical Committee to issue, on 20 February 1887, a regulation that all objects of material and natural culture

from the region should stay in Yakutsk to form a museum. The Statistical Committee emphasised that the goal was to 'collect and preserve in the region more or less valuable natural and human products in the Yakutsk region for local people to learn their nature and culture, and eventually for scientific purposes' (Vinokurov, 1991, pp. 4–5).

The colonial relationship of St. Petersburg–Irkutsk–Yakutsk began to be replicated by a similar attitude from the Russians in Yakutsk towards the rest of Yakutia. Yakutsk, shifting to become a cultural and social centre with respect to its own distant areas, gradually gained the power to represent them.

Thus, we return again to the colonial relationship between central Russia and its peripheries. It is remarkable that not only did St. Petersburg, the formal national capital, played the role of the centre, but that Irkutsk also became a 'centre', taking the role of the cultural and administrative heart of Siberia. The resulting, more complex relationship is also reflected in governmental policy, for it created an in-between power centre in Siberia, and as we will see later in this chapter, influenced museum agenda and policy. It should be noted here that even today in the permanent display in Yakutsk, some objects are replaced by photographs, since the original items were transferred to St. Petersburg or Irkutsk and have not been returned**.**

What makes these two cases stand in parallel is the fact that both Yakutia and Chukotka were clearly approached by Russians of the ecumene as vast, poorly-known regions inhabited by 'natives'—territories yet to be properly discovered. Yet objects' stories can be quite different from in other regions. In many museums of central Russia and the Volga regions, the first objects or collections in museums were from varied private collections.

The museum in Kashin (Tverskaya *oblast'*) was formed out of the private collection of the merchant Iosif Yakovlevich Kunkin, and other collections from the houses of landholders. In fact, the museum was actually situated in the house formerly belonging

to Kunkin. Kashin's museum was opened in 1918 and it is clear that Kunkin's collection was appropriated and became the basis for the state's collection. Because Kashin is one of the oldest cities of central Russia, the majority of documents and artefacts resided in private collections, and so actually rarely left the region their region of origin.

In Kazan' and Samara, museums were opened in 1895 and 1890 respectively. The museum in Kazan' was initiated by Russian academics from the Imperial Kazan' University: Nikolay Pavlocich Zagoskin, Aleksander Antonovich Stukenberg, Nikolay Fedorovich Vysotskiy, and others. The museum took the basis of its collection from the private collection of Andrey Fedorovich Likhachev and objects from the Science and Technology exhibition on Kazan' in 1890. Likhachev's collection contained 40,000 objects, mostly archaeological, and was not limited by regional borders.

There are several examples of *krayevedcheskiy* museums that include objects from other countries in their expositions. In the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Provideniya (Chukotka) the whole exposition is based on the representation of the 'Beringia nation'—people who live on both sides of the Bering Strait. Therefore, the exposition includes some objects from outside Russia, namely from Alaska (Figure 3.10).



Figure 3.10. Objects from Alaska in Provideniya museum with accompanying text.

Another example of objects from abroad can be found in Tomsk. Apparently, Tomsk lay on the tea trade route from China and thus, as a part of its 'Tea exposition' objects from Japan and China were displayed. In the exposition in Yakutsk before the Soviet unification of expositions there was a special department dedicated to 'objects from other countries'. In Kazan', according to the archives, there were objects from ancient Greece and ancient Egypt, and even objects from Peruvian indigenous people dating from between one to eight centuries ago (*Natsionalnyy muzey respubliki Tatarstan, Istorii muzeya, 2019*). An interesting point about the examples from Tomsk and Provideniya is the fact that both of the expositions including objects from abroad are placed and displayed in such a way as to show the role they play in the narrative of the region's representation. The objects found in the Tomsk museum refer to the tea trade route and were obtained through trade with other countries. The objects in Provideniya show the common routes and close cultural connections with national minorities across the Bering Strait in the USA. Nevertheless, such examples are rare. In the majority of museums only regionally-specific objects could be found. This aligns with the idea behind *krayevedcheskiy* museums in general: that they are Soviet museums whose main goal is to represent a specific, local part of Soviet territory.

Objects in *krayevedcheskiy* museums do represent a certain part of this territory, but the borders of these objects' places of origin remains uncertain. Such borders do not necessarily correspond to the administrative borders of an administrative unit.

Another interesting notion appears when we trace the histories of objects in the case studies discussed. As mentioned earlier, objects change their cultural values and meaning when shifted from one environment to another. This change occurs not only during the shift from 'natural environment' to the museum context, but also during the shift to subsequent museums or museum contexts in other places. Objects from Yakutia and Chukotka in central museums such as the *Kunstkamera* share the colonial notion

common to Western museums and were perceived as ‘abnormalities’ and ‘curiosities’ from unknown territories. The fact that at some point objects were no longer taken to the ‘centre’ and presented as ‘curiosities’ but were collected in their own regional museums as a base for scientific research, changes their status again. From ‘curiosities’ they become ‘valuable objects of local study’, as stated in the program for *krayevedcheskiy* works in Yakutia.

This idea that objects in *krayevedcheskiy* museums display common traits and form into patterns typical for each region (e.g. into the historical, natural-historical, or social categories) makes them profoundly different from Western ‘cabinets of curiosities’ and ethnographical museums, which were initially intended purely to present abnormalities and unfamiliar objects from other countries, which, placed in a different cultural environment, lost all meaning except as ‘curiosities’.

Conclusions

The Soviet initiative of creating *krayevedcheskiy* museums was an attempt to create a modernist cultural project that would represent regions, and therefore it included regulations on permanent displays and educational policy, as well as on museums’ social and cultural value. Soviet authorities attempted to emphasise the importance of *krayevedcheskiy* museums by discussing their role in the construction of socialism, evoking peoples’ patriotism, and setting them apart from Western museums. The Soviet authorities designed common guidelines for how museums should represent their regions, which proposed three main departments (Nature, History, and Society) that local museums ought to fill with their own objects, often brought to the museum by members of the general populace. The act of donating objects to the local museum was the way in which locals participated in shaping regional and local identities. The proposed guidelines set in stone what a Soviet *krayevedcheskiy* museum was, the overarching structure of its permanent expositions, and the structures of each of its departments. They provided

detailed instructions on the exposition plan and therefore predefined what was to be shown and presented, as well as the hidden and underlying theory behind every department. In other words, centralisation implemented sets of 'common unsaids' which were aligned with the predominant Party discourse and the ideology of Marxism-Leninism.

The 'common unsaids' in *krayevedcheskiy* museums have a more complex structure than the ones created by *krayevedeniye* in general. Certainly, the ones in museums are in the first instance the material forms of those inseparable from the national ones in *krayevedeniye*. They are formed by the core of the discipline itself (a mixture of landscape studies, ethnography, and history) and by the ideological pressure of Soviet governance. *Krayevedcheskiy* museums showed them in their expositions in various ways, which will be further discussed below. Regional and local museums today, after the end of the process of centralization, may or may not attempt to contest these inherited Soviet silences, or to include new, regional ones in their expositions. It is to this question that we turn in the next chapters.

Chapter 4. Representing Nature in *krayevedcheskiy* museums

Introduction

Previous chapters have familiarized us with the concept of the Russia-specific knowledge production system known as *krayevedeniye* (Chapter 2), and with the history and main traits of *krayevedeniye*'s key institutional centres, the *krayevedcheskiy* museums (Chapter 3). In this chapter and those following I explore empirical findings about the representations of place in krayevedcheskiy museums, beginning with the representation of nature, the natural world, and nature–human relationships. It is based on my claim that geography is the academic discipline lying at the heart of *krayevedcheskiy* museum 'nature' departments. Thus, in order to understand and unpack contemporary 'nature' departments in *krayevedcheskiy* museums, we need to understand the main principles of Russian geographical thought, and how the Soviet geographical school influenced *krayevedeniye*. This will allow us to examine the principles underlying the formation of 'nature' departments, and reveal their influence in contemporary exhibitions. An analysis of (post-)Soviet geographical thought will guide us to an understanding of which landscapes have been found 'problematic' for official representation. These are the landscapes that I described as 'military landscapes' in Chapter 1 that are primary candidates for the construction of 'common unsaids' in *krayevedcheskiy* museums' of the Soviet era. As I will show, these representations have been inherited by current museum expositions. At the same time, I show how the Soviet approach to the permanent displays in 'nature departments' has formed specific 'Soviet taxonomy' of nature.

In the first part of the chapter I will outline the traits of the Soviet geographical school, and interrogate the extent to which *krayevedeniye's* approach to nature-society relations was influenced by Soviet geographers. In the second part, I will introduce the

principles of 'nature' department construction associated with Soviet centralization, and reveal what I call the 'Soviet taxonomy' underlying exposition organisation, by which nature is represented in a manner that supports and follows the ideals of the Soviet state. I will show that a key part of this 'taxonomy' is the presentation of nature only in terms of its 'use' in constructing socialism and its role in a *kray*'s economy. Finally, I will analyse selected case study museums to see whether—and if so, how—they have inherited this Soviet approach in their representation of their *kray*'s natural environment. In the conclusion, I will summarise the 'common unsaids' created by 'Nature' departments.

Among the case study museums there are a number of institutions that have temporarily or permanently excluded a 'nature' department from the exposition. These include local museums in *Tverskaya* region (in Kaliasin and Kashin), the regional museum in Perm and in Berezniki, and some of the local museums in Yakutia.

Soviet geographical thought and *krayevedeniye*

As I showed in Chapter 2, *krayevedeniye* developed from a combination of several disciplines, and employed a mixture of methods and theories. Rather than being informed by a coherent scientific perspective, the expositions in *krayevedcheskiy* museums aimed to represent the totality of a specific region, and drew from - multiple disciplines in the physical and social sciences, history and culture. This was unlike the more disciplinary-based or specialised museums that developed from the 19th century in the "west". The concept of the 'nature' department in *krayevedeniye* was predominantly influenced by physical geography and it contained exhibits commonly found in a natural history museum. Accordingly, this chapter will analyse 'nature' departments in comparison with Western natural history museums, which are their closest analogues.

Understanding the major patterns of Soviet geographical thought is essential for our study because Soviet geographers influenced the theory of *krayevedeniye* at an early stage in its development; as a result, *krayevedeniye* shares some of geography's basic

concepts. Consequentially, and of particular relevance for this chapter, Soviet geography became the theoretical base which determined the construction of 'nature' departments in *krayevedcheskiy* museums. This fact leads us to expect 'common unsaids' from Soviet geography to be inherited by and implemented in the guidelines on museum expositions.

Soviet geography and its development are still under discussion by many Western scholars. Among others, the works of such scholars as David Hooson (1964), Leslie Dienes (2005, 2002), John Oldfield and Denis Shaw (2015, 2007) have addressed the particularities of the Soviet tradition of geographical thought and highlighted its traces in post-Soviet academia. I am applying some of these findings to reveal some of the traits of Soviet geography in contemporary *krayevedcheskiy* museums.

Russian literature in this field, however, is dominated by the work of the Soviet scholars who introduced and implemented ideas during Soviet times, and by several Russian scholars who reproduce the same ideas today. The Russian School of Geography is still largely uncritical to itself in that it is unwilling to reflect the extent to which it inherits Soviet tradition. The free academic debate and criticism, which Karl Popper describes as one of the most crucial conditions for a flourishing atmosphere in science (Popper, 1945, 1986) was not possible under the centralized Soviet regime. One of the leading historians of geographical thought, Geoffrey Martin, in *All Possible Worlds: A History of Geographical Tradition, 2005* writes about the influence of the October Revolution on the production of geographical knowledge in Russia. He underlines that 'only those scholars who were able to bring their ideas into line with the concepts of Marx, Engels and Lenin' were able to work and publish under Soviet governance (Martin, 2005, p. 258). The fact that Marxism-Leninism occupied the ideological core of all Soviet sciences, and offered the only possible explanation for phenomena, was also adopted as basic background theory for *krayevedeniye*. I will describe, therefore, the sole set of concepts for geographical thought approved by the Soviet government, and which

shaped *krayevedcheskiy* museums' 'nature' departments. This single ideology implemented from above makes it clear why these 'nature' departments in museums were so alike. Moreover, the Soviet geographical school preprogramed a certain gaze onto the environment of a *kray* and 'common unsaids' in a *kray's* representation. My aim is to reveal whether 'nature' departments today are still the same.

The discipline of geography in Europe went through a period of redefining itself between the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th. The Russian 'national school' of professional geography can be dated back to 1884, when the first geography departments began to appear in universities across the country (Hooson, 1968, p. 250–72). However, Russia's own geographical tradition can arguably be traced back to 1725, when Peter the Great founded the Academy of Science (Hooson, 1968; Shaw, 1996, p. 160–76). Divided into different national schools, Soviet emergent geography turned towards approaching 'the real world' as a mosaic of different regions with natural borders (Loskutova, 2011, p. 94). This approach led to the questioning of political borders within Europe and administrative regions in the RSFSR. Of these different national strains, Russian geographical thought was mostly influenced by the German school, especially by the works of Alfred Hettner, Friedrich Ratzel and Ferdinand von Richthofen. Their ideas of natural regions of different scales were adopted and developed by geographers at Moscow State University, especially Lev Semenovich Berg and Alexander Kruber, who presented their work in the Conference in 1921 (see Chapter 1 for broader discussions about the meaning of the conference for *krayevedeniye*). Kruber was the first Russian scientist to define geography as a specific branch of science and a discipline in its own right; in 1907 he proposed the scheme of dividing the Russian Empire on the basis of natural factors, because 'we can claim that basic natural regions correlate with physical and geographical conditions, with the nature of the country: a man adjusting his lifestyle to nature, and pre-cultural particularities of the country which are not well enough hidden

to avoid being depicted' (Loskutova, 2011, p. 95). His later paper in the conference, however, appealed to the study of different aspects of material culture because: 'the correlation with physical-geographical conditions can be traced in them and they are fixed in the landscape of a region' (ibid, p.95). Similar ideas, but broader in scope, can be found in the works of Dmitry Nikolaevich Anuchin, one of the founders of Russian soil studies. He was passionate about involving provincial scientific organizations in accumulating data for scientific research and promoted this idea in his articles even before the appearance of *krayevedeniye*. Inspired by the idea of uniting scholars into a single organization, Anuchin also proposed to establish an association of scientists, following the examples of the British, which was founded in 1831.

This thesis will rely on the analysis of Soviet Geography by Denis Shaw and John Oldfield (2007, 2015), who outline three characteristics of the Soviet geographical school as it began to emerge from the 1880s onwards: 'an emphasis on fieldwork and exploration, a bias towards the physical rather than the human side of the discipline (and consequently geography's growing proximity to cognate sciences like geology, soil science and meteorology), and the significant role played by the state as reflected in the importance frequently (but not always) accorded to the applied and policy-oriented aspects of research' (Shaw and Oldfield, 2015, p. 3). The other trait identified by Shaw and Oldfield is the predominance of a landscape approach (*landshaftovedenie*) in Soviet geography. The concept needs further explanation in this study. Geoffrey Martin (Martin, 2005) also picks up these traits; he claims that Soviet geography remained a natural science rather than a social discipline up to the 1980s, and was strongly oriented towards serving the practical needs of the economy.[38]

[38] Martin appeals to Roger Brunet's analysis of *Directory of Soviet Geography*. According to the latter, 68% of living geographers in 1987 were specialists in physical geography, against 26% in human geography.

The idea of ‘landscapes’ is certainly not unique to Soviet geography, but in ‘Landscape science: a Russian geographical tradition’ Shaw and Oldfield distinguish the Western attitude towards landscapes and the Soviet one. While the Western English-speaking world ‘has typically focused on landscapes as moulded by humanity or as understood, perceived, and represented in different ways’, they write, ‘the Russian approach has generally emphasized landscape's biophysical characteristics and its potential for utilization or transformation by humanity’ (Shaw and Oldfield, 2007, p. 2). This is the most important trait of Soviet geographical thought that provides a clue to understanding the ‘nature’ departments of *krayevedcheskiy* museums, both in the Soviet era and today. While Western scholarship, influenced by social and critical theory, sees landscapes as social constructions and as individually perceived, Russian (and Soviet) geography still very much approaches landscapes from a positivistic perspective. In other words, Russian geographical thought believes landscapes to be part of objective reality that exists and can be defined with a range of parameters. Shaw and Oldfield thus introduce Lev Semenovich Berg, a Soviet professor and author of landscape studies, and his definition of a ‘landscape’, which I will also be adopting in this chapter, since Berg not only introduced the landscape approach to geography, but also strongly influenced the practice and theory of *krayevedeniye*. Berg understood landscape as ‘law governed, repetitive groupings not only of forms of relief, but also of other objects and phenomena at the earth’s surface. A geographical landscape is that combination of groupings of objects and phenomena in which the peculiarities of relief, climate, water, soil, vegetation and fauna, and—to a certain degree—human activity, blend into a single harmonious whole, typically repeated over the extent of the given zone of the earth’ (Berg, 1947, p. 5, quoted by Shaw and Oldfield, p. 113). The extent to which human activities were explained by natural phenomena varied and was in some cases pushed to the limit of environmental determinism.

The absence of urban studies, in the Western understanding, was described by Martin as well, who pointed out that in the 1920s and 1930s the research studies 'were mostly devoted to problems in physical and regional geography' and 'until the Great Patriotic War we see almost no studies of cities at all, and after the war, interest in such studies increased only slightly' (Martin, 2005, p. 267). Martin sums up the works of Soviet geographers of the late-Soviet time and refers to the Asian urban specialist Roland Fuchs to address the developing of post-war urban studies as for 'practical purposes of providing the background for planning purposes' (ibid, p.268).[39]

The other traits of Soviet geography described by Shaw and Oldfield are the 'policy-oriented aspects of research'. These aspects are highlighted by other researchers of the Soviet geographies as well. For example, Martin (Martin, 2005) speaks about the same tendencies in Soviet geographical thought. He distinguishes 'constructive geography' which is 'geography applied to the practical purposes of building the socialist economy' (Martin, 2005, p. 266). Applied studies far outweighed theoretical ones (ibid, p. 269), and most studies were undertaken for the practical purpose of providing background for planning and construction project. Constructivist geography, according to Martin, 'must use' the knowledge about landscapes 'for the effective transformations of nature' (Martin, 2005, p. 269). Constructivist geography is based on Marxism-Leninism applied to early Soviet geography. Some of the most important works in geography that contributed to Marxist ideology were those of Georgii Plekhanov, Russian revolutionary and one of the first Marxist theoreticians, especially on the 'Fundamental Problem of Marxism'. Plekhanov emphasises the importance of geography in determining production forces, which, according to him, shape economic development and, therefore, the development of all other social relations: 'We know now that the development of the

[39] For more on the development of urban studies in post-war USSR, see C.D. Harris, 1970 Cities of Soviet Union, Size, Density and Growth. Chicago: Rand McNally.

production force, which, for its part, ultimately determines the development of all social relations, itself primarily depends upon the peculiarities of the geographical environment' (Plekhanov, 1967, p. 134). Stalin, in his dialectic and historical materialism, referred to Plekhanov's notion of the importance of geography as 'geographical deviation', relying for its over-reliance on environmental determinism. The Soviet regime continued to hold Stalin's view on these questions though Lenin, an economic determinist, was against any suggestion that nature might shape human destiny (Martin, 2005, p. 258). However, approaching 'nature' as an explanation for cultural and social relations was to a certain extent widely accepted by the Soviet school of geography and anthropology.[40]

The influence of geographers on *krayevedeniye* in the early stages of its formation has been discussed by Loskutova (Loskutova, 2011). In her view, academics presenting at the First Conference in 1921 attempted to approach *krayevedeniye* as synonymous with *landshaftovedenie* (landscape studies) and stated that local research initiatives should be used to study and describe 'natural regions'. Geographers from Moscow State University went further and tried to define natural–cultural territorial complexes as the basis for 'natural boundaries' inside the country. For this endeavour they sought to collect not only 'scientific' data, but also 'human data'. The question of the correlation of administrative borders with the borders of 'natural regions' was discussed in the Conference from two points of view. On the one hand, as stated above, *krayevedeniye* could lead to a new approach to border definition. On the other hand, individual *kray* could be defined within existing administrative borders and the goal of *krayevedeniye* would therefore be 'to study consistently all objects and phenomena within [a *kray*]'s borders'. The second approach was based on the idea that increased knowledge of regions would help increase knowledge about the country in general, after which administrative regions could be adapted to follow natural borders (Bogdanov, 1921 pp. 10–11). The practical

[40] See Chapter 6 for discussion of Soviet ethnography.

aspect of *krayevedeniye* was defined, therefore, as the investigation of all natural and cultural phenomena in the country by local self-organized scientific communities, in order to better understand the country's diversity. This knowledge, in turn, could help to define regions and lead to more effective governance.

As I described in Chapter 2, the first conference on *krayevedeniye* was the only meeting which seriously discussed the core of *krayevedeniye*, its methods, and its theory. Subsequent discussions were of a more administrative and institutional character. The influence that geographers had on *krayevedeniye* as a discipline, though limited to the initial stages of discussion, certainly did not disappear in *krayevedeniye's* later development. The concepts and knowledge that shaped the first discussions about *krayevedeniye* were never strongly contested.

The other aspect of human–nature relationships, which is specific to Soviet geography, and which have its roots in pre-revolutionary Russian geographical thought, is the attitude towards conservation of nature and ecology. The approach is summarised and analysed in the book *Models of Nature: Ecology, Conservation, and Cultural Revolution in Soviet Russia* (Weiner, 2000). Douglas R. Weiner underlines the reasoning for nature conservation in pre-revolutionary Russia, which might be placed in three categories: 'utilitarian, cultural-aesthetic-ethical, and scientific' (Weiner, 2000, p. 10). All three approaches are based on a relatively utilitarian relationship with nature. Weiner dates the utilitarian tradition of nature protection back to the hunting law of 1852, which 'allowed' the hunting of 'harmful' animals all year round without restrictions and therefore created a hierarchy of animals. The cultural-aesthetical approach is contrasted with the utilitarian one. Weiner links it with the 'neo-romantic mood' on the backdrop of modernism, industrialism and the German school of geography, which even 'provided key terms' for Russian conservation: the Russian '*pamyatniki prirody'* is an almost literal translation of the German *Naturdenkmal* ('natural monument' in German). In Weiner's view, however,

the Soviet Union went through ‘first the success and then the subsequent collapse of ecological conservation’. The Soviet approach to conservation was predominantly based on the ecological (‘scientific’) pre-revolutionary approach. However, Weiner underlines that the conservation mission was always trying to balance itself against the utilitarian view of nature imposed by the Soviet government; sometimes ecological conservatists found themselves almost in confrontation with governmental economic plans.

The Soviet geographical school thus saw ‘nature’ as an objective reality, which could be studied, described by sets of laws, and then used for the construction of socialist purposes. These traits—the predominance of physical geography and the landscape approach, the utilitarian view of nature and the lack of conservation practices in the school of Soviet geography—in turn trickled down to the ‘geographical part’ of *krayevedeniye* and therefore influenced the human–nature and human–animal relationship in this knowledge production system. These tendencies formed specific ‘common unsaids’ on the national level, which were influenced by ideological pressures on the theory and practice of Soviet geography. Such ‘common unsaids’, respectively, include the absence of human-made landscapes, the utilitarian approach towards nature, and the lack of ecological issues. They were represented against the backdrop of an overall landscape approach and the predominance of Marxist-Leninist ideology, which has formed their ideological level.

In what follows, I offer an analysis of the guidelines for expositions of natural history departments in *krayevedcheskiy* museums and reveal how these geographical ‘common unsaids’ were pre-defined in expositions. In the second part of the chapter I will analyse my case study museums to determine whether Soviet ‘common unsaids’ can be still traced in contemporary expositions.

However, prior to this it is important to provide context for both *krayevedcheskiy* museums and their departments in terms of the background of Western discussions of

natural history museum studies. This brief overview will help locate *krayevedcheskiy* museums in the broader museum context and place their 'nature' departments alongside other traditions of representing the environment in museums.

The Nature in natural history museums

This chapter focuses on the nature departments of contemporary *krayevedcheskiy* museums. In order to discuss the extent to which they inherited Soviet traditions, and to examine their representation of nature–human relationships, we must place *krayevedcheskiy* museums in the broader context of museum studies. As part of this background study, I will sketch an overview of Western natural history museums, which represent the closest analogues to the 'nature' departments of Russian *krayevedcheskiy* museums. I will start by outlining the main discussions in natural history museum studies and their methods of approaching expositions concerning nature. I have already discussed the relationship between science and museums (see Chapter 2), but now I will unpack some of the particularities of natural history museums to show how these characteristics apply to contemporary Russian *kraevedchesky* museums, and what type of knowledge they reveal in Soviet and Russian contexts. I will follow certain approaches presented by Stephen T. Asma in his book *Stuffed Animals and Pickled Heads* (Asma, 2001). Asma analyses the history of natural history museums and traces their origin from 'cabinets of curiosities' to contemporary 'post-modern' museums. He approaches natural history museums in a manner similar to Hooper-Greenhill (1992, 2000) and sees exhibition specimens presented like words that change their meaning depending on context. Asma insists that the significance of collected objects is always socially and theoretically constructed (Asma, 2001, p. 13). In this sense, the nature collections of *krayevedcheskiy* museums are interesting for the fact that they were always put together with the help of the general population: the initial cultural value and meaning assigned to

specimens in *krayevedcheskiy* museums was given, not by curators, but by ordinary people themselves. During Soviet times, this element of *krayevedeniye* was widely promoted, in Lenin's terms, as the participation of the general public and a democratization of science. But we should not be fooled; while ordinary people were allowed to choose and collect objects, decisions concerning final expositions remained in the hands of curators, who were influenced by state policy. If we try to understand the role played by the general populace, we may, in a certain respect, say that they were merely slotting words into sentences predesigned by government authorities.

Asma stresses the importance of the classification of collected objects and the creation of a certain taxonomy, which reveals both the predominant modes of thinking and the ideology of a certain exposition. From a philosophical perspective, it is hard—even, says Asma, impossible—not to classify (Asma, 2001, p. 83), since 'language and thought relentlessly follow some basic rules of logic and logic is systematic'. Without wishing to stray into a full-blown study of semantics, I would nonetheless like to analyse the *particular* classification and taxonomic order created during the Soviet period in *krayevedcheskiy* museums as a grand project of modernity. Museums have the power to create and either reinforce or challenge these ordering frameworks (Asma, 2001, p. 85).

Asma traces the evolution of taxonomy in European museology, from cabinets of curiosities that were changed by the scientific revolution, and from the 'spiritual organising' of the materials, to empirical encyclopaedia projects in the 16–17th centuries, to the present day. He describes the predominant taxonomic order and classifications of each time period. He starts with the pre-Renaissance habit of organizing animals and plants according to their common use, which, following the table of taxonomic relations, reflected only the usefulness of organisms to human beings. He even includes some almost anecdotal cases of organisation following alphabetic order (Asma, 2001, p. 98).

The word ‘taxonomy’ is derived from two Greek words: *taxis*, ‘arrangement’, and *nomos*, ‘law’ (Asma, 2001, p. 85). Arranging things is a basic practice of human beings. The development of modern museum collecting follows the evolution of European classification. Taxonomic systems changed over time and adjusted to social and intellectual developments; taxonomy is therefore not theoretically neutral, and specimens are often accompanied by an explanation that links the perception of the object with some broader concept (Asma, 2001, p. 77). Bearing in mind the isolation of Soviet academia and museum studies, and the particularities of post-revolutionary thought, we can therefore speak about a ‘Soviet’ classification and ‘Soviet’ taxonomy. The reason I do not include Russia in the European tradition of taxonomy is that, as I will show, the Russian tradition of nature–human relationships, as well as the Russian school of geography, differed significantly from the European, and therefore Russian methods of organising objects also differed substantially from those employed in the West.

In answering the question of how Soviet taxonomy can be characterised, in what follows, I will in fact introduce several taxonomies and theories that are particularly relevant. Together they constitute what I call a ‘Soviet’ taxonomy: the order of representing nature as a whole, and specific nature–human relationships, according to the needs and ideals of the Soviet state.

Soviet taxonomies grew out of one of the most basic 18th-century European taxonomies, that was introduced by the two outstanding French philosophers of natural science, Jean Baptiste Lamarck and Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon (Asma, 2001, p. 124). Their classification represented a highly anthropocentric way of organising the natural world. Buffon proposed a system based on classifying animals and plants according to their relative use for mankind. Buffon and Lamarck admitted that while this might not be ‘nature’s true structure’, it is at least the order of organising things most relevant for and natural to ‘us’. They believed that the most natural way to classify

animals, for example, was to divide them into groups; ‘those that are most necessary’ to humanity, and most ‘useful’, such as horses and dogs, would ‘occupy the first rank’, followed next by wild animals, and then by animals from foreign countries. As for objects, Buffon argued that it would be better to arrange them according to how they are normally found, rather than forcing them together ‘unnaturally’. Asma describes this anthropocentric method of classifying nature as ‘naive’ compared to the postmodern perspective, and the kind of thinking that leads to objectifying prejudices through classifying, for example, snakes and spiders as ‘bad’ and rabbits and dogs as ‘good’. I certainly agree with Asma, but, as I intend to show, many *krayevedcheskiy* museums in Russia still use such a classification in their museums today. Even moreso, Buffon and Lamarck’s classification represents just one strand of an anthropocentric narrative created by *krayevedcheskiy* museums. Another aspect of the narrative, to be addressed later in further detail, is objectification: the creation of reproductions of ‘scenes from wildlife’ that are intended to represent ‘genuine’ animal behaviour.



Экспозиция отдела природы. 1955 г.

Figure 4.1. Exposition of the nature department in the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Berezniki, northern Perm' region, in 1955. (Varnakova, 2015)

'Soviet taxonomy': natural history departments in Soviet *krayevedcheskiy* museums

As we saw in Chapter 3, Soviet governance of *krayevedcheskiy* museums mostly consisted of designing and producing a range of guidelines concerning museum expositions. These guidelines were an instrument to design and implementing the 'Soviet taxonomy' described above, though they differed from one another depending on their date of issue and on the spatial level they referred to. The period of Soviet centralization of the governance of *krayevedcheskiy* museums was characterized by sets of guidelines issued for the whole country, and marks one of the case study periods of this thesis. I claim that there is a continuity of approaches to *krayevedcheskiy* exposition from Soviet times to contemporary Russia.

I have already discussed how before the 1917 Revolution, the activities of *krayevedcheskiy* museums were guided to some extent by various societies (see Chapter 2), although often not on a federal level. Some of these regional, pre-Soviet instructions varied significantly one from another; in Yakutia, for example, guidelines stipulated the need for an 'anthropology' department (*Kontseptsiya razvitiya muzeya*, 2011), which was rare in other regions. By contrast, in the Perm' museum, the 'geography' department was separated from 'ethnography' and 'natural history' (Baranova, ed. 2005, p. 14). After 1917, in the Soviet era, guidelines gave direct and precise instructions for creating an exposition, with detailed information about the order of specimens and artefacts, their labelling, and the exhibition design. These concerns represented the roots of the emerging 'Soviet taxonomy'—defining the order of appearance of certain specimens in order to prove one or more of the Soviet concepts of nature–human relationships. The history of this 'Soviet taxonomy' differs from Western analogues quite obviously: if, in Europe, different taxonomic orders changed freely, depending on theoretical approaches

adopted in an atmosphere of free academic debates, in the USSR guidelines were issued from above and faced almost no changes. In other words, defining a relevant taxonomy was a matter for Soviet authorities to decide, rather than for academic debates or rolling theories.

The most important guidelines regarding the representation of 'nature' and 'human–nature' relationships in *krayevedcheskiy* museums were issued on 15 April 1934 by the Scientific and Model Museum division of *Narkompross*. The guidelines were then mentioned in the later document 'How to represent nature?' by A.A. Yakovlev, A.S. Giller, and A.A. Shiriamov A.A (Yakovlev, Giller, and Shiriamov, 1939).

According to this document, the structure of nature departments of regional *krayevedcheskiy* museums, should be the following:

1) A geographical introduction, including the position of the *kray* on Earth, the country's administrative division, and its population.
2) Geology, including the history of its development and general geological information, the history of earth and life on earth within the *kray*'s territory, and its natural resources.
3) Geomorphology, including the contemporary terrain of the *kray*, and the external forces influencing this terrain.
4) Hydrography, including surface waters (rivers, lakes, swamps, etc.) and the usage of water by humans, how water is connected with geology and terrain, the *kray*'s water supply and, in particular, the water supply of the *kray*'s cities; a further discussion of mineral waters.
5) Climate: the climatic particularities of the region as a part of the USSR, and the region's phenology.

6) Soils, including general information about regional soils, types of soils, and the genesis of the region's soils, as well as sections on agricultural soils and the reclamation of virgin lands.

7) Vegetation of the region, including general information about vegetation zones across the USSR, as well as general information about regional wild vegetation (types of forests, swamps, fruit-bearing bushes and trees, etc.), the region's main agricultural vegetation, and the protection of vegetation.

8) Fauna: general information about wild and game animals, animals as non-permanent inhabitants of the region, poisonous animals and pests, useful animals whose populations should be increased, domestic animals with agricultural value, and the protection of animals.

9) Geographical landscape, with specification that 'there are non-universal principles, the main idea is to show the interconnectedness of everything'.

10) Population and human economic activity, including general information about the economy, and transport and trade routes.

(Yakovlev, Giller and Shiriamov,1939, p. 14).

Even at a brief glance, we can see that the structure itself, as well as the classification and language employed, takes us back to the main traits of the Soviet geographical school described earlier. The overarching idea in the guidelines is to present the main characters and basic common traits of each discipline within the department. The predominance of physical geography (8 out of 10 departments) and 'cognate sciences' (Oldfield and Shaw, 2007) such as geology, meteorology, and soil sciences. Each section features a discussion of how it is 'useful' to humans, to articulate

the practical value of ‘nature’ and animals. However, landscapes are shown in a separate section, not yet as a universal principle of the ‘nature’ department as a whole.

The guidelines not only laid out the detailed structure of the exposition, but also featured the main theoretical concepts of Marxist geography that were to be reflected in the exposition. The guidelines mention the ‘supremacy of a man over nature’ which has various forms depending on ‘social interactions’ (Yakovlev, Giller and Shiriamov, 1939, p. 7). Moreover, the document sees the main goal of studying ‘nature’ as ‘to use it and change it in the interests of socialistic society’ and underlines that ‘practice’ is the final goal of a research. Therefore, a *krayevedcheskiy* museum exposition should provide information concerning the practical use of nature in the construction of socialism (*ibid*, p. 9). The dialectic method should be preserved in the exposition by ‘not putting apart the historical development of a human from its impact on nature’, followed by a citation of Engels from ‘*Nemetskya ideologia’*.

Further instructions directly imply the importance of showing ‘the changes to nature in the *kray* caused by humans as a result of various usages of nature’. (ibid, p. 15). The section was to include:

- Forms of modification of the *kray’s* nature due to various forms of its utilization
- Residential areas of humans and natural prerequisites for their development; the domestic and wild flora and fauna ‘accompanying’ human settlements and their origin.
- Cultural and economic human activity, aimed at modifying the natural environment for use; the main directions of human agricultural and other activity (Yakovlev, Giller and Shiriamov, 1939, p. 17).

Through the above examples, we can clearly see how the theories and concepts of Soviet geography were present in the practical guidelines for *krayevedcheskiy* museums of the 1930s. In the same way, whether deliberately or not, the 'common unsaids' of Soviet geography were also present. The guidelines above exclude human-made landscapes, approach environment and nature as an 'objective reality', and are focused on the practical, utilitarian side of 'nature'. Additionally, they pay no attention to issues of ecology or conservation.

While they were implemented from the centre, these conceptions and views also began to dominate in the periphery, in the more remote regions of the USSR. In Yakutsk the nature department program from 1941 directly stated that the department's main aim was to 'familiarize visitors with the history of the development of the natural sciences and with the objective laws of nature's development in the context of a dialectic understanding of Nature' (Metsnikova, 1966, p.60) The structure of the 'Nature' department was proposed as:

1. The famous founders of Marxism-Leninism
2. The Universe
3. The Earth's formation and the development of life on Earth
4. The laws of the development of the organic world (Darwinism)
5. The Ancestry of Man
6. A geological chronicle of Yakutia and its natural resources
7. Yakutia's geographical characteristics
    a. General information
    b. Geomorphology
    c. Hydrology

d. Climate
e. Soils

8. Vegetation and flora
9. Fauna
10. Landscapes

(Metsnikova, 1966, p.67)

Comparing these new Yakutian guidelines with the central ones discussed above, we see there is much in common, including the presence of Marxist-Leninist ideology, the approach to landscapes, and representing 'nature' through subdivisions. As the emphasis on geoscience and geology lead naturally to fossil fuels, useful mineral deposits also came to dominate the exposition. These tendencies bring us back to the key concepts of Soviet geography. The fact that both regional (where they still existed) and national guidelines feature the landscape approach, Marxist ideology, and an emphasis on the practical needs of a *kray* shows us the extent to which nature departments relied on Soviet geography at this time.

Moreover, the principles behind exposition construction in the central guidelines of 1934 remained almost the same sixteen years later in 1950, although with a slightly increased inclination towards the landscape approach. In the 'General instructions for the rebuilding of expositions of regional *krayevedcheskiy* museums' (*Osnovnyye polozheniya o perestroyke ekspozicii rayonnykh krayevedcheskikh muzeyev*, 1949) already discussed above, Mikhalovskaya proposed that the structure of local museums follow this general schematic:

1) Geographical introduction
    a. The position of the *kray* on Earth

b. Administrative zoning

c. Population

2) Geology (with history of evolution)

a. General geological introduction

b. Basic history of Earth's core

c. Minerals

3) Geomorphology

a. Contemporary relief

b. External forces, influencing the relief of the *oblast*

4) Hydrology

a. Terrestrial waters (rivers, lakes, swamps)

b. Usage of water sources by humans (water supply of cities, the connection of water with geology and relief, mineral waters)

5) Climate

a. Climate particularities as part of the USSR

b. Phenology of the *oblast*

6) Soils

a. General information (the position of the *oblast* in soil areas, genesis of the *oblast*'s soils, different types of soils)

b. Reclamation of lands

7) Vegetation

a. General information about vegetation zones in the USSR

b. General information about wild vegetation (forests, swamps, meadows, wild vegetation, horticultural, and cultural vegetation of the *oblast* and the protection of that nature)

8) Animals

a. General introduction (main animals and game animals, animals as migrating inhabitants, vermin, useful animals that ought to be popularized)
b. Domestic animals with agricultural value
c. Animal protection

9) Geographical landscapes (no universal approach, but the essential point is to show the interconnections between different landscape elements)
10) Population and its activities, including general data on economy
    a. Economy
    b. Transportation and trading routes of the *oblast*

(Osnovnyye polozheniya o perestroyke ekspozicii rayonnykh krayevedcheskikh muzeyev, 1949, p.45)

Apart from the repetitive structure of the department as a whole, we see some sections which clearly recall established Soviet geographical thought: the inclination towards the practical usage of nature in almost in every division, the classification of animals into 'useful' and 'game', and so on.

The same structure is proposed in the guidelines of 1946 on the exposition of the nature department. According to this document, the department should be created according to this landscape approach and consist of the following sub-divisions:

1. Short introductory section on the geographical characteristics of the *kray*
2. Geology and terrain of the *kray* (note: the origin of humanity should be included in this department)
3. Natural resources
4. Climate

5. Hydrology
6. Soils (note: before Flora and Fauna divisions, the 'Fundamental principles of Darwinism' should be introduced)
7. Flora
8. Fauna
9. Landscapes of the *kray*

(Plavilshikov, Giller and Yakovlev, 1946, pp. 8–10)[41]

Comparing these two central documents, we can see that there were almost no changes over this period. Again, 'nature' departments were to consist of different subdivisions aiming to cover specific, 'objectified' characteristics of a *kray*. Geology and natural resources were still separated out into a special section, and no trace of other human–nature relationship is discussed; the geography presented is 'constructive'.

Aside from describing a general structure to be implemented, guidelines were also often annotated by supporting texts to underline the overarching narratives and ideas that departments should adopt. Thus, in the 1939 document *Kak pokazat' prirodu?* (Yakovlev, Giller, and Shiriamov, 1939), direct links to Friedrich Engels' 'Dialectics of Nature' are provided, with the citation that 'our supremacy over nature, unlike other living creatures, is that we are able to comprehend and apply its laws'. One of the main tasks of nature departments, according to the authors, was to 'reveal those objective laws of nature and help a viewer not only to understand them correctly, but also provide a way of using them in their practice of socialism'. Moreover, 'we study nature to use it and change it according to the interests of socialist society… The dialectic method obliges us not to separate

[41] The mysterious N.N. Plavilshikov haw written a lot about representation of animals and zoo collections in the museums, which I wish to explore separately. Among his works are 'Darvinism in the krayevedcheskiy museums', 'guidelines on the creation of zoo artefacts' and 'scientific – antireligious propaganda'

nature from man and humanity's historical development' (Yakovlev, Giller, and Shiriamov, 1939, p. 4). These relatively straightforward guidelines on how nature should be perceived resulted in a range of anecdotal representations in today's museums, which will be discussed in greater detail later.

Separate attention is to be paid to those documents guiding the representation of human–animal relations. In 1944 Aleksander Fedorovich Kots, the founder and first director of Darwin Zoological Museum in Moscow, issued a recommendation not to use live animals in the exposition of *krayevedcheskiy* museums, on the grounds that they could 'start acting in an unplanned way and therefore distract a viewer from the exposition. The croaking of a frog or a beetle flying out of an aquarium might totally devalue the whole department by drawing people's attention to these unintended episodes and therefore ruining the overarching idea' (Kots, 1944, p.45). This was followed up later in the 1950s by a series of instructions on representations of stuffed animals (Plavilshikov, 1959). This document is entitled '*Poleznyye i vrednyye zhivotnyye'* ('useful and harmful animals'), and is a brilliant example of the continuity of the Soviet geographical school in *krayevedcheskiy* museum guidelines. In particular, we see again the familiar narrative that 'harmful animals' ought to be presented 'in the overarching propaganda narrative of pest control': 'The harm animals cause must be revealed and shown not only by numbers and data, but with the artefacts and exposition itself' (ibid, p. 38). This anthropocentric approach was pushed to the limit by stating that 'the wolf, for example, is well-known predator and its abolition is widely encouraged', but the museum should justify this statement by showing the precise ways in which way a wolf is harmful. Thus, the way in which all animals in *krayevedcheskiy* museums were supposed to be represented extended down even to the particular poses of specimens.

Special attention was paid to the 'propaganda of scientific atheism'. In 1942 *Michalchenkin in 'Rol cheloveka v izmeninee prirody SSSR'* (Michalchenkin, 1942) wrote that 'nature departments of *krayevedcheskiy* museums contained many possibilities for the purposes of propaganda of scientific atheism. The propaganda of scientific atheism should not be restricted, only revealing and explaining those phenomena that religion explains in its way. Propaganda should equally include a critique of superstitions that people have in their heads. This should be done by the exposition.' Further, he proposed several methods of how to show 'the falsity of legends about the role of the God in the creation of man'. Among others' methods, he proposes the following:

> *While choosing the artefacts for this topic one should not forget about rudimentary organs. They allow us to underline the absence of a sensible origin in nature or in a supreme intelligence (God). For example, the appendix, the remains of a muscle that makes an ear move, the remains of third eyelid, and many other rudimentary organs show the irrelevance of this* (Michalchenkin, 1942)

The principles I have exposed in this section formed what I call the 'Soviet taxonomy': a certain way of organizing materials against the background of Marxism-Leninism, which was implemented from above by Soviet authorities during the Soviet era. The analysis of exposition guidelines allows us to sum up the main traits of this 'Soviet taxonomy' as it was seen from the guiding authorities of *krayevedeniye.* These key traits are the predominance of physical geography over social and cultural geography, against the background of Marxism-Leninism, a landscape approach as the main method of organising the department's materials and data, anthropocentrism, and a policy- and practice-orientated science.

This ‘Soviet taxonomy’ has its own ‘common unsaids’, which were pre-defined by the state of Soviet geography, Soviet ideology, and the exposition principles described in the guidelines. Thus Soviet ‘common unsaids’ implemented by *krayevedcheskiy* museum guidelines were inherited from the Soviet school of geography. I will try to sum up some of these ‘common unsaids’ though the analysis of the Soviet guidelines. The ‘Soviet taxonomy’ left little room for the representation of human-influenced landscapes such as cities, ex-factory sites, ex-gulag sites, and sites of massive mineral deposits. It focused the perception of the environment of district landscapes on range of ‘objective’ characteristics and how they might be ‘useful’ for Socialist construction. Likewise, the ‘Soviet taxonomy’ divided all animals according their ‘harmfulness’ to Socialism, justifying particular modes of human behaviour to them. It programmes the way animals should be perceived through ‘typical’ scenes of their behaviour.

Nature–human relations in *krayevedcheskiy* museums today

> *The supremacy of man over Nature, which emerges in practice, is the result of objective reflection in man’s head of the phenomena and process of nature, and is the proof of the fact that this reflection (in the limits of what practice shows) is an objective, absolute, eternal Truth. (Lenin, p.156)*

There are several key points in my analysis of contemporary nature departments. This chapter’s main scope is now to demonstrate the continuity of the Soviet approach to nature expositions up to the present day, and reveal the main principles behind this approach. I will explain what is meant by ‘Soviet taxonomy’, unpack the principles of landscape approaches, reveal the underlying anthropocentric narrative, and, additionally, show how Darwin’s theory is the main ideological narrative behind the approach as a

whole. I will also show how methods of displaying material support the creation of such a 'Soviet taxonomy'. Finally, I will analyse recent attempts to contest the existing exposition approach.

Landscape approach in krayevedcheskiy museums

The landscape approach is the one used by the majority of the 'nature' departments in my case studies. I want to trace several examples to show the basic methods of the approach's construction and highlight the landscapes that are missing from this classification.

According to the positivist tradition of thought and the landscape approach underpinning the displays, each landscape can be described by a set of characteristics and represented, in the exposition, through symbols and artefacts. Stuffed mammals and birds are used to represent wildlife, herbariums indicate vegetation, soil samples show geology, and all these elements placed together, as interconnected, are intended to convey a unique and solid example of an environment. The resulting overall scene is supposed to show the unity and logical sequence of nature.

I will start by discussing the regional museum in Yakutsk, as it contains one of the clearest examples of a landscape approach. The 'human' and 'nature' departments of the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Yakutsk represent a good example of how landscape approach and the 'objective laws' they are built upon can be represented in museums. Though I will discuss the representation of national minorities, indigenous people, and Russians in more detail in the next chapter, in the case of Yakutsk's museum it is almost impossible to discuss the 'human' and 'nature' departments separately; in accordance with the Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist narrative, the two departments are not separated.

The museum's 'nature' department is situated on the first floor, and is dedicated to natural history, which, in the 'Conception of the Development of the Museum'

(*Kontseptsiya razvitiya muzeya*, 2011) falls under the heading 'Human and Nature'. The department consists of four rooms that, located in a row, create a consistent linear visual narrative for the viewer 'not to be distracted'. The rooms present differences between the region's North and South respectively, enrolling 'pre-historical' or primitive people (!) and animals in various landscapes to which they 'belong'. Thus, the exhibition design constructs a single, clear way of approaching the department that does not allow much space for alternate perspectives.

The second[42] room in the row is a tight corridor with two cyclorama displays, representing the far north of the region: Arctic landscapes of desert and tundra. Figures 4.2–4.3 below show how these 'Arctic landscapes' are presented in the museum. Figure 4.2 demonstrates how the installation consists of sets of artefacts such as stuffed animals and birds, soil dug-holes, and general photographs (visual images) of the landscapes, all organized in a table of 'correspondences and connections', and followed by display cases with scenes from wildlife. The installation is based on the classical 'landscapes approach'; it distinguishes and 'bubbles' a piece of the *kray* and describes it with sets of characteristics. The dioramas feature no settlements of the Yakutian arctic (such as strategic villages of the Russian Northern Sea Route, like *Tiksi*), nor do they address the ecological situation or speak of the oil and gas industry. This omission is predictable, if we recall Berg's approach to landscape study and the clear Soviet division of geography into 'physical' and 'economic' spheres, which rarely mix. Figure 4.3 shows details of one of the mounts, which presents connections within one particular landscape. Different lines show the 'types' of connection between animals and vegetation, but there is no clear explanation what the lines actually stand for. This scheme, containing stuffed animals,

[42] The first room in the series is dedicated to the region's pre-historic people, and will be discussed separately in Chapter 6.

photographs, and pieces of vegetation, aims to present the unique relationships between elements in the Yakutian Arctic.

What is even more significant in this room is the figure of a man placed opposite the displays pictured in figure 4.2. What is interesting about this installation, in the wider context of this thesis, is that the human figure—labelled as a member of the Evenk minority population—is placed opposite those displays dedicated to the flora and fauna of Yakutia's tundra and arctic desert landscapes—displays that are more obviously part of a 'nature' department than they relate to discussions of minority human populations. This room of the exposition therefore makes no significant distinction in its display of 'nature' and 'human' elements of the *kray*, showing an Evenk against the background of his 'natural' Northern landscape, alongside animals against the backdrop of their natural tundra landscapes. This is the first room to present indigenous people in the 'natural environment' as a part of nature–human relationships.[43]

[43] This case will be described in further detail in Chapter 6.



Figure 4.2. The representation of ‘Arctic landscapes’ in the Yakutsk *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2015. Overview.

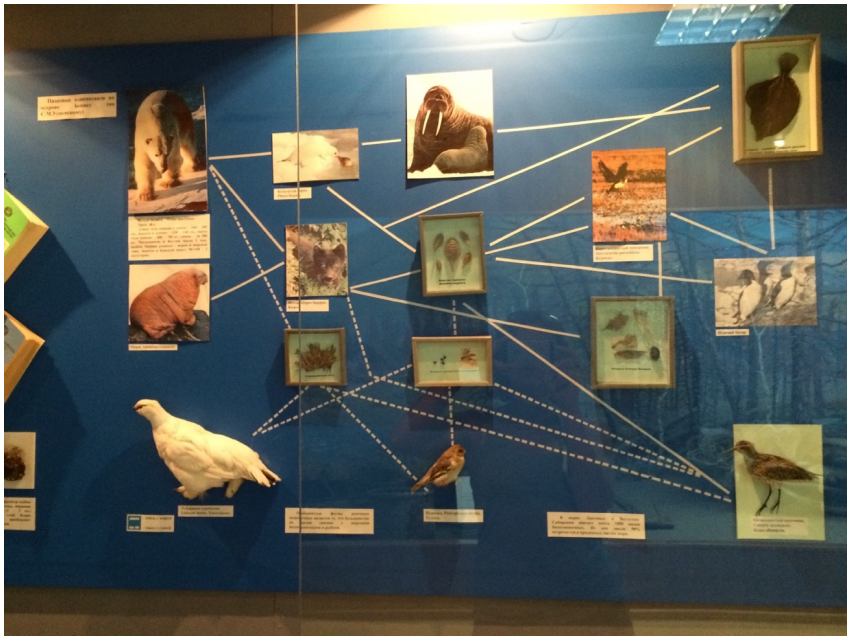


Figure 4.3. The representation of ‘Arctic landscapes’ in the Yakutsk *krayevedcheskiy* museum. Close up.

The third room in the department continues the series of Yakutian landscapes and is dedicated to mountain landscapes. Figure 4.4 shows the representation of the Aldan plateau landscape, which is laid out similarly to the representation of landscapes in the previous room. The landscape is characterised by soil dug-holes and plant samples from various height levels, against the backdrop of a height range profile of the plateau. This 'scientific' information is accompanied by several visual images of the landscape. Again, the mountains are seen as a landscape that may be described by sets of laws and interconnections. Apart from the display featured in Figure 4.4, the mountains are represented through a combination of stuffed animals 'typical' to that environment, and soils and herbariums ordered to represent the laws of altitudinal zonation. Different types of trees are shown through stubs with labels.

The 'mountain landscapes' exclude the presence of man, saying nothing about the influence, for example, of gold mining companies in Aldan or the area around it. Similarly, no information about the ecological problems of the *kray* is provided.

The final, and largest, room in the department is dedicated to central Yakutia and its lowlands. It continues the trend seen in the second room of melding the representation of the lifestyle of the people—in this case, the Yakuts—and the natural environment.



Figure 4.4. Display case on mountain regions. Yakutsk *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 'Nature' department.

We see, then, that the landscapes of various parts of Yakutia are shown by sets of objects presented as typical for these environments and aligned to specific laws of 'nature'. This method of arranging materials characteristic of landscapes, in schemes that stand for certain relationships, is very typical of the 'Classical' episteme described by Hooper-Greenhill (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000). An attempt to describe various processes in the environment by sets of laws and logical arrangements brings us once more back to

the theoretical core of Soviet geography. The presence of soil dug holes underlines the key role of Dokuchaev and Anuchin in landscapes studies. Moreover, the representation of the connections between different elements of 'nature' brings us back to the quotation from Lenin in *Struktura otdela prirody oblastnogo kraevdcheskogo museya* (Yakovlev, Giller, and Shiriamov, 1939) which states that 'the main idea of the nature department in the museum is to reveal those objective laws of nature that are being produced as nature develops; not only to help the viewer to understand them, but to study how to use them in one's socialistic practice'. The text continues with a discussion of the way in which 'objective laws' can be 'used' in the construction of Socialism, and how this is presented in the museums which adds to the creation of 'Soviet taxonomy'.

Apart from showing what is 'typical', a special case is also dedicated to the 'unique' elements of the *kray*: it shows the phenomenon of alas terrains, depressed permafrost environments specific to Yakutia, and the terrain's importance in defining the Yakut lifestyle. Again, there are two different types of cases: glass ones showing the laws and interconnections between different elements of the environment, and *simulacras*, reconstructions of scenes from the wild in a picturesque style.

In the Yakutsk museum, the landscape approach is used not only to provide the exposition's basic narrative, but is also taken to its very limit to explain the tools and production sources of the region's local peoples, and their lifestyle and everyday routines. In other words, the 'Nature–Human' department is still very much built upon the Marxist narrative of human–nature relationships.[44] Differences in landscapes are used to explain the differences in indigenous peoples' communities, lifestyles, and economies, and thus the landscape approach here aligns with environmental determinism. What is surprising is that this part of the exhibition does not include any Russians. While I will examine the

[44] This narrative, however, as I have shown previously, was not specific to Marxist geographies, but can be found in early Western geographies of the 19th and 20th centuries.

reasons for this in much greater detail in Chapter 6, it appears to be due to the heritage of Soviet tradition of constructing 'the Others' from national minorities, placing Russians in the privileged position.

Rooms on the first floor reflect the approach stated in the 'Conception of the development of the museum' document in a perfect way; that is, 'to show the established traditional cultures of the different ethnicities of Yakutia against the background of natural-geographical zones.' Thus 'the exposition will reflect the unique connection between natural factors and the culture of traditional societies' (*Kontseptsiya razvitiya muzeya*, 2011, p. 7). Placing aside the first room and its display of prehistoric history, let us focus now on the range of the exposition's other three rooms.

The organization of the materials in these next displays is driven by the landscape approach to the geography of each physical-geographical unit within Yakutia, and the unity of the sets of geographical characteristics inside these units. However, it is clear that the exposition also uses another axis of organization when it comes to the 'human' exhibits: a chronological axis. The display begins with a representation of prehistoric communities, with a clear reference to a time period, through an undated installation representing indigenous communities, and then on to a depiction of the Yakuts in the 14th to 18th centuries. The chronological series then continues on into the next department, whose displays begin with the history of Russian colonization. Both the 'Conception' text and the display itself establish clear, linear connections between human culture, everyday life, and production and tools, and the natural environment. This is the concept at the heart of environmental determinism, and again attests to both the tradition of the Soviet school of geography and the Soviet Marxian guidelines on the representation of these subjects.

While there is a functional aspect to the use of glass cases, to shield exhibits from potential damage, they are also used to establish distance, by placing objects in a more

sterile and ordered environment (Lidchi, 1997, p. 173). The placement of natural objects in glass cases underlines the distance between a human (visitor) and the natural environment depicted; this is what happens with 'scientific data' in nature departments. Whilst 'scientific' cases, through their selection of material, aim to show and 'prove' what are understood to be universal laws of geography, 'everyday life' cases aim to provide an overall impression of a particular type of landscape, depicted by colourful representations.

The *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Yakutsk is not the only one to implement the landscape approach as its main organising principle for the 'nature' department. Almost all the case study museums, to a certain extent, organise their 'nature' expositions according to this same principle. However, this is the moment at which the spatial dimension of the museum's respective *kray* begins to play a significant role. *Krayevedcheskiy* museums representing large territories containing various landscapes (such as the ones in Yakutsk, Tomsk, Anadyr or Kazan') must make an effort to depict the whole variety of landscapes found in their territory. The museums of smaller territories (such as local village museums in Perm' *kray*, in Chusovoy, Vyshera; in Tomskaya *oblast'*, like Kolpashevo, Narym or Paraben; or in Chukotka, like the ones in Lavrentiya or Provideniya) tend to represent only the landscape they belong to, rather than many

possible landscapes like the larger museums. Therefore, the scope of their nature departments is sometimes limited to a narrow exposition of the 'nature' of their own *kray*.



Figure 4.5. The 'nature' department in the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Krasnovishersk.

Figure 4.5 above, showing the way 'nature' is shown in the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Krasnovishersk, is a good example of this tendency. Taxidermy specimens are organised on different heights so that owls 'fly' near the celling, while an otter is set on the 'lower' level, probably to symbolise the fact that it lives on the edge of water. The 'middle' level is occupied by bears, wolves, and other mammals. The original idea of presenting the *kray*'s landscape is reduced to these 'typical' animals and a series of picturesque visual images of the *kray,* all locked away in a tiny room—the figure above makes it difficult to see, but the entrance to the room is actually blocked. No schemes,

soil dug-holes, or connections are provided to explain to the viewer the interconnections between various elements in the landscape. The original Soviet concept is cut to fit into the tiny room, but the resulting room is still so full that it is impossible to approach it for closer study. As it is now, it is hard to say whether the room really has any concept left behind it.

The expositions above, therefore, show the extent to which a landscape approach is present in some of the museums studied. Landscapes of case study museums exclude the presence of man and any human-made or human-influenced landscapes. It excludes any settlements (villages and cities), and instead shows nature as a 'virgin' and 'untouched' environment, which functions purely by a set of laws and objective characteristics. Such a way of constructing the representation is heavily based on the Soviet guidelines of the late 1950s, and displays no influence of newer theories of geographical thought.

Nature and industry

Apart from the landscape approach, which organises nature departments in regional museums and serves as a basis for local museums to show their *kray*'s environment, there is one more pattern frequently present in the museums which directly connects it with Soviet geography. This is the pattern of showing how 'nature' can be useful in constructing socialism, or, in other words, explaining its role in the *kray's* economy.

The *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Kolpashevo, north of Tomsk, is one of the most 'classically Soviet' *krayevedcheskiy* museums of all the case studies. Its structure, materials, and even citations follow the Soviet plan of 1934 in almost every detail. The museum's 'nature' department opens with a general introductory section, presented in figure 4.6, providing general information about the evolution of life, geology, the *kray*'s terrain, and—among other things—its natural resources. As we see from figure 4.6, this

section of the department consists of fairly dated mounts featuring 'scientific' diagrams explaining the evolution of species, maps of natural resources, specimens, and artefacts. From the very beginning the displays emphasise the link between the geological structure of the *kray* and the natural resources ('*poleznye iskopayemyye'*) found therein, which are suitable for extraction and further use in industry.



Figure 4.6. General Introduction to the 'nature' department, Kolpashevo *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2016.

The museum's 'nature' department consists of several parts, which together create a linear narrative for the viewer. One of the main themes traceable across almost all of the information mounts, dioramas, and cycloramas, is the reference to the way in which what is displayed could be used in the region's economy, and or might be useful for the local economy and society. Despite implying this close connection between nature and economy, however, the museum does not show the way in which, if at all, this economy began to form cities in the region, and how it transformed the everyday life of the region's

inhabitants. In figure 4.7 we can see one particularly clear example of this trend. The mount, entitled ‘Natural Resources’, outlines the characteristics of Tomsk region’s mineral resources (still referred to as part of the USSR, not Russia—which betrays how long ago the exposition was put in place!), and pays specific attention to oil, proclaiming that 13 June 1968 was ‘the birthday of oil production in the region’. The mount presents a map of natural resources found in Kolpashevo *kray,* with several detailed schemes of mineral deposits in the territory, and shows how they emerged and developed. Apart from discussing mineral and oil resources, the mount also includes a description of peat, alongside several samples, and shows how it can be used in the national economy. So, from the very beginning the department aligns the viewer to understand nature from the perspective

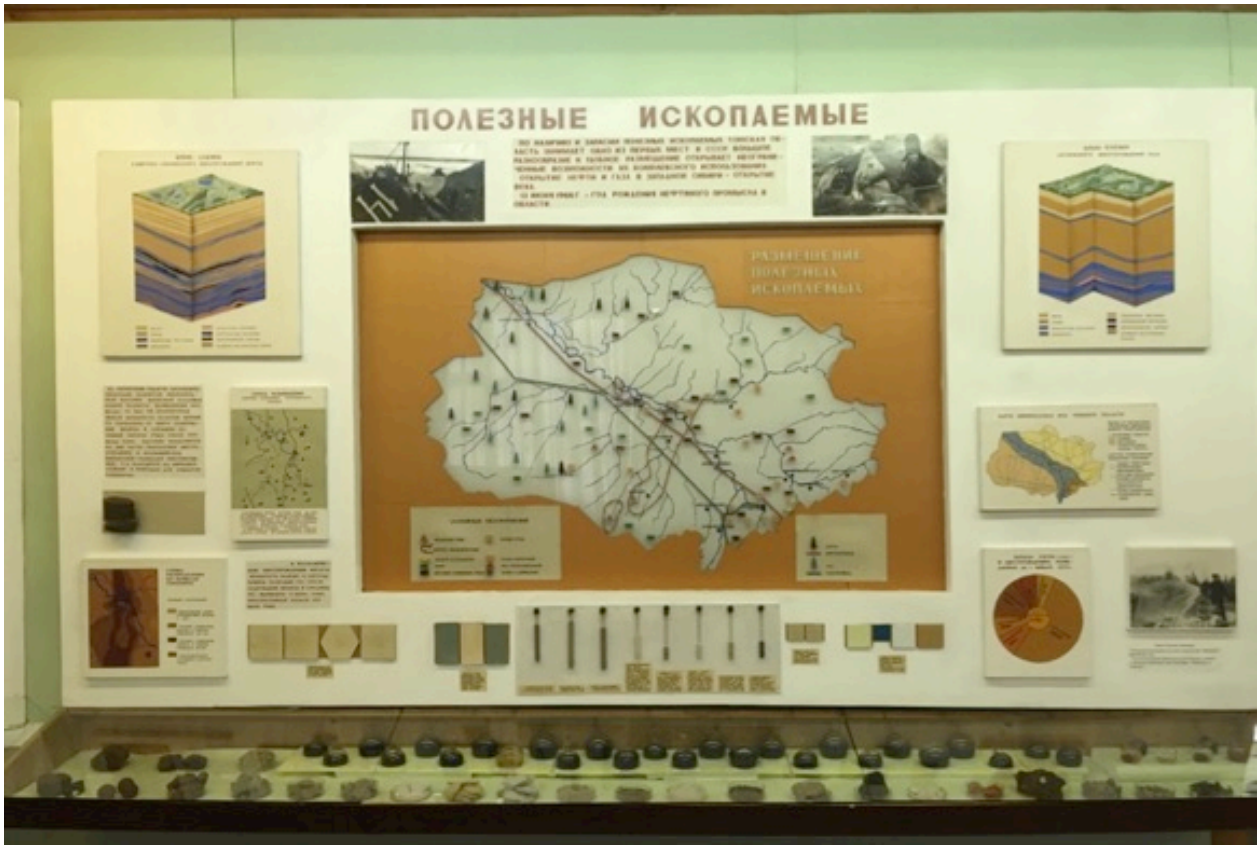
of its potential usefulness, and speaks about the ‘richness’ of a *kray* in terms of its physical resources.

The department continues with the characteristics of various parts of the *kray’s* landscape, but each of these also somehow incorporates a representation of the way this ‘nature’ might be useful for humans. For example, among the different characteristics considered in the section dedicated to forests, one part is devoted to forestry enterprises. In the section dedicated to the Ob River and its flooded meadows, there are sections devoted to the agricultural lands that are flooded, and how they are adapted to this. In the section on the *kray*’s fauna, there is a large section on Soviet fur ranches, together with

a collection of fur. This part of the Kolpashevo exposition is surprisingly reminiscent of the exposition in Lavrentiya.[45]

Figure 4.7 Natural resources display in the 'nature' department, Kolpashevo

A particularly interesting section of the 'nature' department in Kolpashevo's

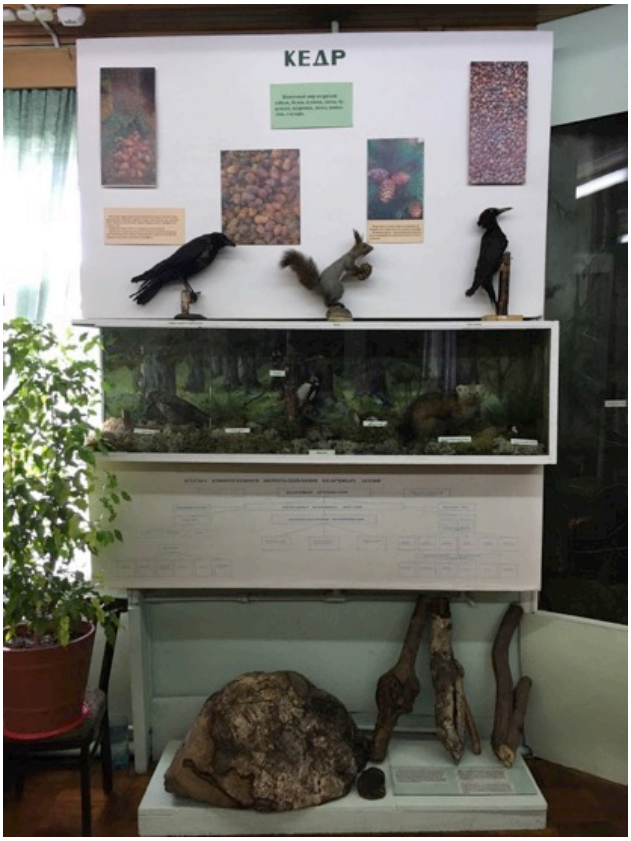


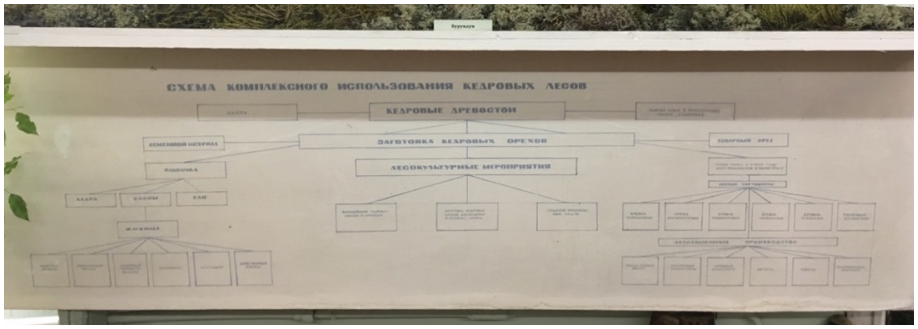
museum is the part dedicated to forests, seen below in figure 4.8. This forms a relatively large part of the museum, and provides detailed characteristics of the forest and forestry industry of the *kray*. The forestry industry always occupied a special place within the Soviet resource economy (Pallot and Moran, 2000). The exposition display presents an objectified view of forests themselves (in a small glass case in the middle of the mount) and the animals living in these forests, but the most significant part is the lower 'scheme of the complex uses of cedar forests'. It shows in detail various ways of using different 'elements' of the forest, from wood to animals. It introduces human activities, ranging from simple activities such as hunting and commercial and private nut collection, to more

[45] A more detailed analysis of human–animal relations will be discussed in the following section of this chapter.

complex activities involving production cycles. It is a fascinating example of a display pushed to the limit in an attempt to show how nature can be useful for human beings. Similar to this example, though less systematised, is the presentation of the human use of rivers in the section of the exposition dedicated to the Ob River. So, the way landscapes can be used by humanity sometimes even forms an inseparable part of the narrative a museum creates in representing them.

Figure 4.8. 'Scheme of the complex uses of cedar forests'. Kolpashevo *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2016, overview and close-up.





When exposition space is lacking, this representation can be reduced even down to a simple text. Figure 4.9 shows part of the 'nature' department from Parabel' *krayevedcheskiy* museum, North of Tomsk. The first mount features flood meadows, which 'occupy zones with several kilometers wide alongside the rivers … and serve as perfect hay lands'. The second mount states that 'the direct value of the forests of forestry treasures is in their value as a source of wood substance, nuts, resin, and other products… Each year 392 cubic meters of woods is logged'. So, in the case of Parabel', the representation of the lands of the *kray* is actually reduced to the bare description of its practical values.

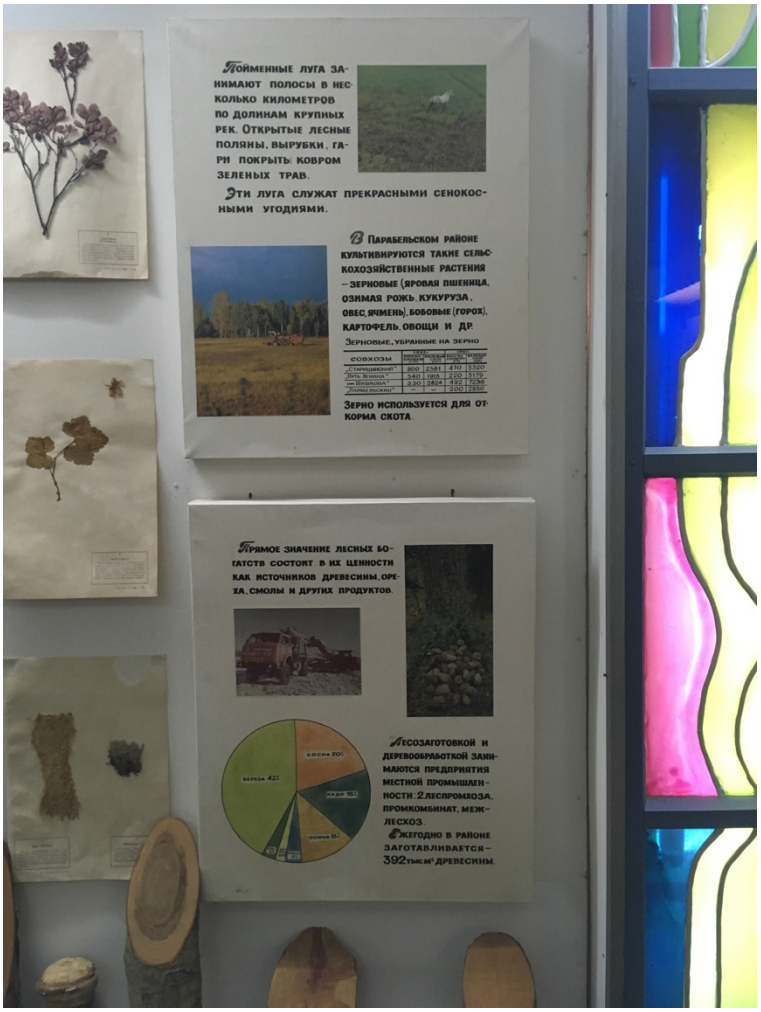


Figure 4.9. Description of landscapes. Parabel' *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2016.

Even so, Parabel' museum's exposition does not represent the most extreme case of reducing landscapes to their practical usages; Krasnovishersk's exposition goes still further. The museum in Krasnovishersk, in the north of Perm *kray*, also contains a section

on the forestry industry within its permanent display. This part of the exposition is placed between the tiny room presenting the nature of the *kray* (see figure 4.5), and the section of the exposition dedicated to local crafts. This representation of the forestry industry differs from that found in Kolpashevo and Parabel'. Unlike them, here not a single phrase is dedicated to forests as part of the *kray*'s landscapes, and we find none of the characteristics of 'objective laws' or soils, as in case of the museum in Yakutsk. Instead, the representation of forests is completely reduced to the forestry industry as part of the construction of the socialism narrative.

Figure 4.10 shows how the forestry industry is presented as part of the construction of Socialism: it is presented through a range of black and white portraits of various people involved, from tractor operators to the chiefs of forestry lots. However, nothing on the mounts mentions the labour camps, which were founded in the late 1920s to work on the *lesozagatovki*, or gives any information about the conditions there.[46]

Thus, the representation of the 'practical side' of nature is still very typical for many case study museums (Kolpashevo, Lavrentiya, Provideniya, and Tomsk). This aspect of the representation of nature lies on the boundary between 'nature' and the 'culture and society' department, and sometimes the border is decidedly blurred. Some local small museums, due to a lack of space, reduce the representation of nature and show only its practical use. This serves as a brilliant example of how Soviet ideas and approaches are still alive in *krayevedcheskiy* museums today. Presenting the natural world in terms of its capacity to serve mankind is directly addressed in many Soviet guidelines, and is something that lies in the heart of Marxist-Leninist geography. The Soviet school of

[46] Having said this, the museum in Krasnovishersk is a rare example of a museum which does address the repressions and gulag camps within the *kray*. For further discussion on this topic, see Chapter 5.

geography has always envisaged the ‘supremacy of a man over nature in practice’, and this is still the predominant narrative in the *krayevedcheskiy* museums described above.

Figure 4.10. Mount dedicated to the forestry industry and collectivization. Krasnovishersk *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2016.



Human–animal relations in krayevedcheskiy museums

Apart from the representation of flora, the nature departments of *krayevedcheskiy* museums also represent fauna. In ‘Stuffed animals’, Asma discusses anthropocentric taxonomy at length. This type of taxonomy is often based on objectifying animals as ‘bad’ and ‘good’ for human beings (Asma, 2001, p. 62). I argue that in a range of

krayevedcheskiy museums, this objectification is pushed even further. Not only are animals divided into groups according to whether they are 'bad' or 'good'; flora and fauna as a whole are seen purely as a resource base for human beings. Apart from the obvious examples of an anthropocentric narrative of nature's usefulness to human beings described above, expositions contain many other examples that develop this narrative with respect to animals.

First, I want to return to the museum in Kolpashevo. Kolpashevo museum represents one of the most extreme examples of anthropocentrism that I encountered in my research, containing direct discussion of how natural organisms or objects are useful for human beings. Figure 4.11 shows the exposition dedicated to the fur industry of the *kray*. This display is placed alongside the cases representing wildlife, but is itself located on the edge of the nature and society department. It presents various furs obtained in the *kray* and provides basic information about people involved in the *kray*'s fur factories. Surprisingly, the display representing the fur industry of Lavrentiya (located north of Chukotka, thousands miles away from Kolpashevo, and in completely different environmental conditions) closely resembles the display in Kolpashevo. Figure 4.12 shows this display, entitled 'the Gold of Chukotka', which can be seen to present the *kray'*s fur similarly, as part of the 'nature' department, alongside stuffed animals and scenes of wildlife, and in obvious terms of presenting how 'useful' this nature might be to humanity.



Figure 4.11. Fur industry exposition in the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Kolpashevo, 2016.

A similar attitude towards animals, though perhaps less intense, can easily be found in other case study museums. For example, in Kazan in the Tatarstan Republic, one of the main exhibit pieces of the 'nature' department is a huge stuffed sturgeon (Figure 4.12), that according to the accompanying explanation was brought from St Petersburg, 'but is very similar to one that was caught in Tetushki village in 1921'. Despite the outrageous size of the specimen, that becomes its main exhibition value, the label describes the importance of great sturgeon in the *kray*'s industry.



Figure 4.12. Fur industry exposition in the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Lavrentiya, Chukotka, 2016.

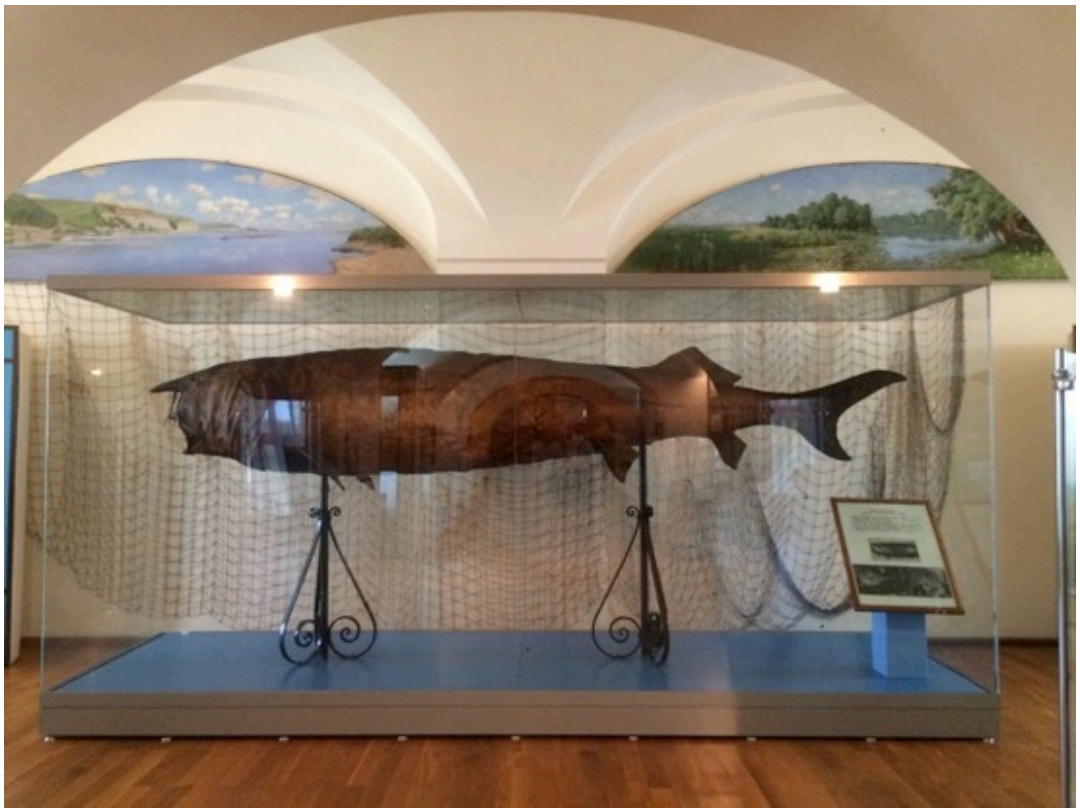


Figure 4.13. The great sturgeon in Kazan's *krayevedcheskiy* museum.

The representation of human–animal relationships in *krayevedcheskiy* museums goes beyond the 'industrial' aspect. The majority of 'nature' department expositions show 'scenes of wildlife' in order to explain the patterns of animal behaviour as seen and understood by museum curators. These scenes significantly recall the Soviet guidelines on creating meaningful expositions with a single possible narrative. In the next section I

want to analyse these ‘scenes of wildlife’—the cases presenting ‘animal behaviour’ in *krayevedcheskiy* museums.

Representing wildlife in krayevedcheskiy museum.

Aside from the ideological and theoretical level of ‘nature’ departments and the ‘common unsaids’ they cause, there are also those ‘common unsaids’ created and fostered by the representation techniques of *krayevedcheskiy* museums. Let us examine the representation of the landscapes themselves and reveal the techniques of the construction of a ‘Soviet taxonomy’, and therefore the techniques in organising ‘common unsaids’ within ‘nature’ departments. The predominate method of showing nature in the museums I visited is to show ‘typical’ wildlife animals against the backdrop of photographs or paintings of the picturesque *paysages*.

In this section I want to pay special attention to the museum cases used in presenting nature, and how they construct narrative and ‘common unsaids’. The cases themselves play a significant role in the exhibition, as they are the means of ‘dividing up both the objects and the statements made by the group objects—the cases [act] as punctuation marks to better articulate the message of the museum’. (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000, pp, 129–30). All the cases in nature departments can be divided into two groups. The first group consists of glass cases showing the system relationship between the landscape’s natural environment, soils, and wildlife—these are presented as ‘scientific’ cases (see the representation of landscapes of *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Yakutsk). The second group consists of cases depicting complex scenes from the ‘everyday life’ of animals. While the first group is more likely to illustrate landscapes, the second group is usually dedicated to animals.

The *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Yakutsk is one example where the two approaches described above are blended. In figures 4.2–4.4 objects intended to

represent a particular landscape are grouped together in a single glass case. This assemblage is supposed to represent the unity and interconnection of the elements of a given natural environment, and to present this environment as a unique bounded landscape; at the same time, the objects are displayed against the backdrop of colourful paintings. However, this blended approach is rare. In most other case study museums, the two methods were kept separate.

The creation of 'scenes of wildlife' is a common pattern in many *krayevedcheskiy* museums. In Solikamsk (see figure 4.14), for example, these scenes of nature are placed along all walls in the room, creating an almost total installation behind the viewer. The display shows various stuffed animals in certain poses and relationships one to another—for example, an owl is depicted eating a squirrel.



Figure 4.14. Wildlife representation in the 'nature' department, Solikamsk *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2016.

In some museums, the attempt to create such cases comes up short against the reality of aged museums and a lack of space. In Tomsk, for example (see figure 4.15), the stuffed animals of the forest are simply gathered together into a single case, which is divided roughly into ‘winter’ and ‘summer’; by doing this the museum reduces explanation to a minimum. The overarching idea of what these specimens aim to show, or what their positioning is supposed to communicate to the viewer remains uncertain.

Extreme cases of reducing the idea of representation of animals’ behaviour and wildlife is featured in figures 4.16 (from Bolshaia Atna, Tatarstan) and 4.17 (Chusovoy, Perm *kray*). In the first example, we see the ceiling painted to represent the sky and an owl hanging below. This is the only part of the museum which attempts to show nature. The second example shows the display of a stuffed ferret eating a wood grouse; strangely, the museum offers no further explanation of where and why this kind of behaviour might have taken place, and no clue is given as to what the viewer should learn from the display.



Figure 4.15. Wildlife diorama in the ‘nature’ department, Tomsk *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2016



Figure 4.16. *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Bolshaia Atna, Tatarstan, 2016.



Figure 4.17. *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Chusovoy, Perm *kray*, 2016.

‘Everyday life’ cases usually show various wildlife species interacting with each other against picturesque landscape backgrounds. They bring us back to anthropocentrism, as they present the ‘typical’ behaviour of animals from a distinctly human perspective. The majority of these cases, including the obviously ‘scientific’ ones presenting landscapes, neglect to feature any kind of constructed environment or trace of human activities. Anything that could be connected with human activity—cities, industries, camps, etc.—is usually completely ignored. The only exception I have encountered is in Lavrentiya museum (figure 4.18). In Lavrentiya, ‘scenes of wildlife’ are first of all not limited to cases and instead actually ‘jump out’ into the room at large. At least the half of the stuffed animals on display are simply placed directly on the floor of the room. Secondly, the background painting is unusual in that it does include the presence of humans: it depicts a tent (although it is not completely clear whether this tent is a traditional chukcha yurt or not) and a cross-country vehicle. The reason for including these details in the current depiction of wildlife might be connected with the origin of *krayevedeniye* and *krayevedcheskiy* museums in Chukotka, —here, they served as part of the ‘cultural pack’ of Soviet colonisation.

The idea behind creating ‘scenes of wildlife’ is to explain the patterns of animal behaviour as observed and understood by curators of museums. This idea recalls the Soviet guidelines on creating meaningful expositions with a single possible narrative. The museum thus tries to present the ‘typical’ behaviour of wildlife animals, depicting ‘typical’ scenes of their interactions. Yet in fact, placing the group of animals together does not actually create any value or additional sense. Moreover, a lack of space sometimes means these representations are simply reduced to a group of stuffed animals placed in close quarters.



Figure 4.18. *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Lavrentiya, Chukotka, 2016.

Alternative approaches to the representation of nature

Attempts to rethink *krayevedeniye* and redesign *krayevedcheskiy* permanent displays have recently begun to occur frequently. One important initiative is the program 'genius loci. new *krayevedeniye'*, initiated by the Russian Cultural Fund[47], which sponsors new initiatives at *krayevedcheskiy* museums. The program began only in 2015, and it is to early to evaluate its results. Less official alternatives have emerged from Russian contemporary artists working with local histories, identities, or aesthetics to re-imagine *krayevedcheskiy* museums. These attempts at re-imagining *krayevedeniye* include works by Vladislav Efimov, Pavel Otdelnov, and Maxim Sher.

During my research and fieldwork, I was fortunate enough to visit one of the rare examples of a Russian museum that has refused its Soviet heritage and the old way of representing knowledge according to the 'Soviet taxonomy'. As I discussed in Chapter 2,

[47] http://fond.culture.ru/ru/main

there are several museums that have chosen to implement new ways of exposition construction. Of these museums, I visited the one in Anadyr.

Anadyr's *krayevedcheskiy* museum faced renovation and re-exposition in 2002 as part of the massive cultural and social changes that took place in the region when Roman Abramovich was head of the Chukotka government. The new conception of the museum was written and implemented by a Moscow-based team. In a certain sense, this renovation represents an example of a reinforced cultural initiative from the centre, which continued to implement its 'central' ideas on how *krayevedcheskiy* museums ought to appear, rather than an approach based on 'listening to the province'.

However, temporarily putting aside the wider question of the overall relevance of such an attempt to rethink *krayevedcheskiy* museums, I wish to take a closer look at Anadyr's renovated nature department. The Soviet-era nature department in the museum may have gone, but the stuffed animals remain. In the wider context of this thesis, and in the theoretical framework of this chapter, it is interesting to consider how the same 'words' (in this case, objects) may be used to create quite different 'sentences' (overall narratives)—in other words, how the same artefacts and specimens are grouped according to new concepts and principles, and what broader narrative they are now part of.

The overall exposition (figure 4.19) is divided into several parts, each of which is presented by a range of artefacts and specimens. However, unlike the previous examples, displays do not adopt a landscape approach. The overarching Marxist-Leninist ideology has vanished. However, it has not obviously been replaced by another ideology or narrative with predominance of aesthetics over substance



.
Figure 4.19. Anadyr *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2016.

Some of the scenes and diorama look strange, and the hidden concepts are not always easily unravelled, while other narratives look more familiar to a viewer because of the expectations viewers might have and their habit of observing certain patterns in other *krayevedcheskiy* museums. We could take as an example the assemblage shown in figure 4.20 below. A set of traditional clothes is placed alongside a wolf and a ground squirrel in a narrative that proved impossible for me to understand and decode without further help. Besides many different explanations of these odd displays, the one I find most relevant is that visitors to the museum are often unconsciously deeply used to decoding certain museum narratives, and so when presented with new 'sentences', even when created by familiar specimens, these narratives remain unclear.



Figure 4.20. Anadyr *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2016.



Figure 4.21. Anadyr *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2016.



Figure 4. 22. Anadyr *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2016.

Though this display does not feature the directly anthropocentric quotations that we observed in the Kolpahevo museum, it still continues to show ‘nature’ from an anthropocentric gaze, through the presence of the clothing. The diorama in figure 4.21, on the other hand, depicts ‘pristine’ and ‘untouched’ nature, where stuffed animals are aligned to show their relationships with one another. Another set of objects, shown in figure 4.22, represent seal hunting.

Some of the installations, without extensive commentary, remain obscure. The original concept clearly included interactive screens providing extra information and explanations, but during my visit none of the screens present were in working condition. Some narratives were nevertheless familiar—for example, in the display shown in figure 23, the narrative obviously revolves around deer, and the variety of wooden objects featured fall clearly into the category of human transport using deer and sledges. However, the display is interrupted by the mysterious presence of a swan, which, without further explanation, does not seem to fit into such a narrative.


Figure 4.23. Anadyr *krayevedcheskiy* museum

Despite the fact that these narratives are not always easily decoded, the museum represents a rare example of an attempt to create new principles and new narratives with which to replace the old Soviet ones, even though this re-envisioning was still implemented from the centre. However, we do not notice any new theoretical principles for *krayevedeniye,* but rather a number of objects, which stand for certain ideas. At the same time, the 'Soviet taxonomy' has been banished, along with its associated landscapes, and the picturesque dioramas and drawings are also no longer present. This clearly represents an important shift in *krayevedcheskiy* expositions, though it is not yet accompanied by any obvious new theoretical underpinning.

Conclusions

The absence of free academic debate and the possibility of rethinking what *krayevedeniye* stood for, and the implementation of highly centralised views from above resulted in the strong presence of Marxist-Leninist ideology in Soviet *krayevedcheskiy* museum expositions, which continues into these museums' present-day counterparts.

This presence consists of a landscape approach to material organisation and the tendency to present physical geography, and largely ignore human-made landscapes.

The nature departments in the case study museums—apart from the one in Anadyr—share a common structure based on the landscape approach and establish a specific gaze towards human–nature and human–animal relationships. The landscape approach in regional museums creates a series of representations of 'bubbled' landscapes, based on 'objective laws' that are presented by the system with specific characteristics, values, and relations. In local museums, representation of nature is frequently reduced to 'typical' scenes of animal behaviour, followed by a description of the usefulness of the *kray*'s flora and fauna in local industry.

This approach echoes the way 'nature' was perceived and studied in Soviet geography. Three main tendencies, underlined by Oldfield and Shaw (Shaw and Oldfield, 2007) remain visible in museums today: the predominance of physical geography, rather than human or social geography; practical- and policy-orientated displays.

I have argued that we can summarise this approach to the exhibition design of nature departments by speaking of a 'Soviet taxonomy', a certain pattern of classification that supports predominant Soviet theoretical concepts in geography. I claim that the main principles from the Soviet era remaining in today's museums are the physical geographical approach to organising exhibition materials, anthropocentrism, and utilitarianism in displaying animals and landscapes. The representation of nature–human and human–animal relationships, though, remains the same, based on Marxist-Leninist ideology, which sees the environment of the *kray* as the building blocks of Socialism. In other words, I argue that this 'Soviet taxonomy' is still found in many museums today, in the presence of Marxism-Leninism applied to geographical thought and the tendency to approach nature as a set of objective landscapes. The taxonomy's main feature is the explanation of production forces (and of economical activities in a *kray*, according to the

planned economy) through the natural environment. In certain case study museums this concept is pushed to the limit, and different natural conditions are used as an explanation of the lifestyle of indigenous people and their culture, through labour forces and economical activities. All the case-study museums use a certain level of objectification in their display of both flora and fauna, often presenting landscapes through a single representation (e.g., dioramas, cycloramas, and stuffed animals) that is intended to stand for the whole variety of flora and fauna in a landscape.

Chapter 5. Erasing the Gulag: Representations of Stalinist repression in *krayevedcheskiy museums*

Introduction

This chapter aims to reveal the 'common unsaids' of *krayevedcheskiy* museum history departments, and the way in which these were formed in Soviet *krayevedcheskiy* museums and in modern day museums, at both regional and local levels. As I showed in Chapter 1, one of the most common applications of the term 'blank spot' in Russian Studies is to address troubled periods of Soviet history which were completely removed from the narrative. While *krayevedeniye* and historical departments in *krayevedcheskiy* museums have generated a lot of 'common unsaids' and 'blank spots' concerning aspects of Russian and Soviet history, I will focus in particular on troubled periods of Soviet Russian history, notably, the Gulag and other aspects of Staliniss repression. I have chosen this particular topic to analyse how it is shown in various present day museums (my first reference period), compared to the total ban on representing the topic during Soviet times (my second reference period). In other words, I aim to explore the extent to which a topic, completely erased during the end of the period of *krayevedeniye's* Centralization (1955), may have found its place in the permanent displays of *krayevedcheskiy* museums today. My choice of case study regions and museums for tracing these 'common unsaids' was determined by the idea that landscapes of ex-Gulag camps might be approached as post-Soviet military landscapes and therefore might become a 'common unsaid'.

In previous chapters I have described the ways in which the Soviet regime influenced the core of *krayevedeniye*, the guidelines on museums exhibitions, and the process of the unification of regional and local narratives. In this chapter I will give a brief overview of how historical departments were built in the Soviet Union before moving to

an analysis of what they show today. In what follows, I will not discuss museums fully dedicated to the Gulag and Stalinist Terror (for example, the Gulag History Museum in Moscow, or Perm'-36 in Perm'), although these are on the rise in contemporary Russia. The fact that these museums are government-controlled is quite controversial. They can be understood as an example of Barth's 'inoculation', as their existence does not signal a change of official discourse regarding the Gulag and Stalinist Terror. The presence of these two specialist museums devoted to 'troubling aspects' of the country's past might be considered enough to absolve the government of any responsibility to represent these events more broadly.

I have therefore chosen to explore the topic of Stalinist Repressions in *krayevedcheskiy* museums. Below, I trace the exposure of representations of the Gulag and repression to a general visiting public who have 'traditional' expectations of the subject matter on display in a *krayevedcheskiy* museum. In other words, I analyse how this 'blank spot' in a region's history is reflected for viewers, who are not particularly seeking out information about the Gulag.

Representation of history in Soviet times

In discussing the the way in which 'common unsaids' were constructed during the Soviet period, I need to address not only guidelines to *krayevedcheskiy* museums on the representation of history, but also those dedicated to the construction of socialism and, more broadly, the culture and everyday life of Soviet people (which fell in *krayevedeniye* into the 'society' category). The comparison of the guidelines issued during the Soviet period, with the ideas informing current expositions allow us to understand whether there were any critical changes in the shift from representation of the Soviet *present* as it was displayed in the museums in the Stalin and post-Stalin era to current representations of Soviet *past*. In other words, it will help us ascertain whether contemporary

representations of socialist everyday life and culture have been re-imagined in today's *krayevedcheskiy* museums. I begin by addressing the long-standing principles and practices of displaying history in Soviet *krayevedcheskiy* museums in order to understand the extent to which today's permanent displays have inherited aspects from the Soviet period.

All three departments of a Soviet *krayevedcheskiy* museum (nature, history, and society) were (and remain) closely connected to each other. This is especially true for the history and society departments, which were sometimes addressed in the same guidelines during Soviet times, produced by Soviet authorities in Moscow. It is difficult to identify the certain boundary between Soviet *history* and Soviet *society*. As we know from previous chapters, Soviet *krayevedcheskiy* museums aimed to represent equally the 'past' and the 'present' and the border between them was quite often blurred. Museums frequently started with 'pre-historical' sections, which were—and, as I will show, still are—especially located at the blurred intersection between 'history', 'society', and 'nature' departments.

In one of the first guidelines for *krayevedcheskiy* museums, Shneerson described the 'historical–cultural' department, which should show 'all the monuments of material and non-material cultural up to the present day, considering that the most important moment in the historical development of culture was always connected to technology' (*Protokoly zasedaniya metodicheskoy komissii po krayevedeniyu,* 1930). He underlined the importance of the concept of historical materialism in representing history. Thus, departments had to demonstrate the 'social structures' that appear and supersede one another determined by the basic of social relations of production. Shneerson went further, explaining the importance of showing the 'societal environment' as a backdrop for displaying cultural heritage, as without it they 'lose their value' (*Protokoly zasedaniya*

metodicheskoy komissii po krayevedeniyu, 1930). More detailed instructions on 'historical' representation are found in the 1939 document 'Scheme of thematic and expositional plan for the historical department of *krayevedcheskiy* museums, developed by the Institute'. Here, the following structure for pre-feudal mode of production 'history' departments is proposed:

1) 'The creation of a human'. The scheme of development of hominids should show how the human is formed in the process of labour.
2) Lower stage of savagery
3) Middle stage of savagery
4) Upper stage of savagery

This outline is followed by the explanation that these complexes should be shown in a specific order: firstly, the tools of production, then secondary occupations, and finally, monuments of labour (*Skhema postroyeniya tematicheskogo i ekspozitsionnogo plana dlya istoricheskikh otdelov krayevedcheskikh muzeyev, razrabotannaya institutom, 1939*). Exactly the same stages are described in Mikhalchenko, 'The role of a human in the development of the USSR's nature' (Mikhalchenko, 1942), which shows that the same theme could be present both in history and nature departments.

In this chapter I focus on the history of the Soviet period in *krayevedcheskiy* museums prior to 1991, in order to understand what 'common unsaids' were contained in these representations and to trace the extent to which those 'unsaids' are inherited by contemporary museums. Of all departments, the 'history' department is the one with the most limited number of guidelines issued during the Soviet period of centralization. This reflects the overlapping border between the historical and the present in Soviet *krayevedcheskiy* museums and the primary aim of museums to celebrate the contemporary USSR.

In 1944, Nikolay Korobkov, a military historian and professor at Moscow Architecture University, issued the official document 'Principles of thematic plans of history departments in *krayevedcheskiy* museums' (*Tematicheskiy plan otdelov istorii krayevedcheskikh muzeyev, razrabotannyy institutom*, 1944), in which he proposed the following structure for 'history' departments:

1. Ancient history of the people of the USSR (before the Russian state)
2. Kievan Rus'
3. The fall of the Russian national state
    a) From the Mongolian conquest to the Battle of Kulikovo
    b) From the Battle of Kulikovo to Ivan the Third
4. The formation of the Russian multi-national state in the 17th century
5. The Russian Empire in the 17th century
6. The 19th century and the emancipation of serfs
    a) Before the Peasant Reform
    b) From the Peasant Reform to the Revolution of 1905
7. 20th century: the development of Imperialism (including the foreign politics of *Tsarism*, the Russo-Japanese war of 1904–1905, the Revolution of 1905–1907, and the Stolypin land reforms)
    a) First World War (1914–1917)
    b) February Bourgeois Democratic Revolution (*Tematicheskiy plan otdelov istorii krayevedcheskikh muzeyev, razrabotannyy institutom*, 1944)

Each of the chronological periods should be characterised by economics, social relations, sovereignty and military organisation, culture, and the governing factors of domestic and foreign policy. Each of the periods was introduced by a short description of central milestones and exposition materials with specific examples.

These departments were to be followed by the departments of 'Soviet history', which would include: social construction, the formation of the USSR, the process of industrialisation, Stalin's new Constitution of 1936, and the moral unity of the populace. Korobkov's plan addressed a range of specific events such as the formation of the USSR, 'the speeches of Lenin', 'the struggle for industrialization', collectivization, '1929, the year of great changes', 'the spread of socialism in the 1930s' and others (*Tematicheskiy plan otdelov istorii krayevedcheskikh muzeyev, razrabotannyy institutom*, p. 84).

It was important that a museum show both *kray* and country under Stalin's Constitution by addressing:

The victory of socialism in the country and in the *kray*

The elevation of agriculture and the victory of the *kolkhoz*

The cultural life of the city and village

The strengthening of the USSR's defences

Korobkov states that it is crucial to show the history of those nations which became part of the USSR, including 'the historical necessity and the sense of their inclusion in the Russian state, and their participation in the economic and social life of the country'. The main focus in the history of Russia and the USSR should be on 'the history of the sovereignty and culture of the Russian populace' (*Tematicheskiy plan otdelov istorii krayevedcheskikh muzeyev, razrabotannyy institutom, 1944*).

The central idea of the Soviet department towards the end of the period of centralized museum governance was to show and promote the 'heroism and patriotism' of the Soviet people by following a defined (but liable to change) list of themes and topics with respect to local or regional materials (Galkina, 1950). It was deemed important to create 'a strict and detailed plan of exposition, so that the objects on display do not tell different stories to different people, but rather provide harmonious ideas about the matters

for which people go the museums'. Essentially, what this tells us is that permanent displays should not create any bias, but rather provide a streamlined narrative without any possible ambiguity.

Thus, the topic of a *kray"*s 'Culture and *Byt* should, according to Simkin, be shown in two parts (Simkin, 1959). The first part should represent the new socialist *byt* of working men. The second should illustrate the cultural growth of a Soviet way of life. The *byt* of working class individuals and peasants during the civil war should be represented by artefacts showing how tough this period was. A moulage of the monthly food ration given to workers, the wooden boots they wore, the oil lamps used—all this might be included in the exposition to show the destitution of the time' (Simkin, 1951, p. 10). The differences between before and after the October Revolution might be shown by including materials on women's conditions in the *kray*. Simkin advises that the majority of *krayevedcheskiy* museums might show the 'practical implementation of the equality of women throughout the whole exposition of culture and *byt* in the Soviet department' (Simkin, 1951, p. 15). However, he underlines that special attention to this topic should be paid by museums in the national regions, in which 'the condition of women were the most rights scarce or citizens and the hardest'. Further, he suggests that the representation of the theme might be supplemented by documentary materials about 'legitimate liquidation of such relics of the past as the marriage of small children, forced marriage, polygamy, etc'. Cultural growth, Simkin continues, must be shown by presenting the cultural institutions of a *kray*, which participate in educational projects.

What is interesting in Simkin's plan is that he proposes to transgress one of the basic principles of *krayevedeniye*—to show not the 'typical', but rather the 'outstanding':

'it is better to show the flat of a stakhanovets[48]*, where one can find objects of everyday use of the higher material level of the leading constructors of socialist society. In such a flat, there is not only a radio, but also a domestic library; not only a gramophone, but also a piano; apart from a bicycle, he might have a motorbike, and quite often a car. We need to reveal the new shoots, which define tendencies even if they are not yet widely spread in this particular kray'* (Simkin, 1951, pp. 39–40).

Some of the exhibition parts contained not only a society–history bias, but a 'history–nature' bias as well. For example, 'Great social constructions' should have been shown 'not only in the context of the transformation of nature, but equally in the Soviet history department, to show their economic and worldwide historical meaning. The creation of hydroelectric power stations, channels, and irrigative systems along the Volga, Don, Dnepr, and Amu-Dar'ya is the practical implementation of Stalin's historical speech of 9 February 1946 on the grand program of creating the material base of communist society in our country' (Dobrusnikin and Plenikin, 1952). Furthermore, the representation of the 'economic and global historical meaning' of the 'Giant Constructions of Communism' was described in detail:

1) General characteristic of the scales, progress rates, economic and global historical meaning of construction sites
2) The 'Great Construction Sites' should show evidence for the advantages of socialism, as well as technical progress in the country and their nationwide character

(Dobrusnikin and Plenikin, 1952, p.*42*)

[48] *Stakhanovets* was a name for Soviet workers who were honored and rewarded for exceptional diligence in increasing production (after Aleksey Grigor'yevich Stakhanov, Soviet miner).

Soviet history (past and present) was supposed to be built around several key events that were to be represented through the display of 'local materials'. This closed and predetermined system of representation of Soviet *byt* excluded the possibility of presenting other opinions and narratives. As a mode of approaching history through a series of events and narratives predetermined and approved by the government, it generated many 'common unsaids'. In what follows, I show that not only do museums still use the same materials and data in their displays as they did in the past, but that they also inherited the same structure of expositions, and reproduced the same Soviet gaze and historical narrative.



Figure 5.1. 'Fifteen years of struggle and social construction' exhibition, view of 'The Second Five Year Plan', 1932. Perm' museum (Baranova, 2005 p. 42).

An overview of history departments today

The history departments I visited during my field work in various regions share certain common traits and patterns. First of all, the time frame of 'history' is uncertain. When 'history' ends is a matter decided by each particular museum, and what is

understood to be *history* from the contemporary point of view is often an open question, which every museum decides on its own. For example, the history department in the museum in Kalyazin covers the period up to 1917, while the *krayevedcheskiy* museums in Perm' and Anadyr' both exhibit historical events up to the 1990s and even 2000s.

The majority of *krayevedcheskiy* museums in the case-study regions inherit the Soviet approach of organising Soviet history departments around a range of key events in Russian history seen through local materials. Furthermore, events and topics are presented in expositions, even when such events did not affect the territory and places represented in the museum. One such key event, which usually predominates in 'Soviet history' departments, is 'the Great Patriotic War' (GPW). In fact, the Great Patriotic War is the last 'key event', chronologically speaking, that is approached in official history as of momentous national importance. Recent scholarship has discussed the Russian obsession with the Great Patriotic War) especially at the present time, which, it can be argued, is tied up with Russian attempts to regain recognition as a world power (Bassin and Bouzarovski, 2011; Morozova, 2009; Tsygankov, 2003). Victory in the GPW is now considered inseparable from national identity. This was vividly illustrated by Putin's statement in 2003 that 'either Russia will be great or it will not be at all' (Shevtsova, 2003). In an interview in 2000, Putin was asked to comment on the concern caused among Western powers by 'renewed Russian claims to the status of a great power', and the ensuing trends towards military re-armament. As a response, he snapped: 'Russia is not claiming a great power status. It is a great power by virtue of its huge potential, its history, and culture' (Putin, 2000c). The question is to which extent these messages are brought into contemporary *krayevedcheskiy* museums by the curators.

Alongside these key events there are also some from Soviet and Russian history that do not fit so well into the narrative. One major example is Stalin's Repression and the Gulag. Different types of media (such as textbooks, news and media, museums, and

memorials) have found different ways of dealing with these events, and this is a matter of my next section. If we agree that Russian national identity is closely bound up with its status as a great power, then the desire to 'forget' certain events in recent history and erase traces of them from institutions which create regional and local identity, becomes logical and understandable.

What history do *krayevedcheskiy* museums represent?

This chapter engages with a variety of literature and fields of debate in order to answer a series of questions about the (mis)representation of history in *krayevedcheskiy* museums and the creation of 'common unsaids' in historical narrative. These questions include: what do *krayevedcheskiy* museums represent—'formal history' (Halbwachs, 1980) or public memory? Is there any post-Soviet official historical narrative (or narrative 'that everyone buys into')? If so, how is it represented in *krayevedcheskiy* museums? Which events are shown in history departments and which are neglected? What are the reasons for this pattern? Is this set of events the same in all museums or does it differ regionally? What are the methods of creating 'blank spots' in historical expositions? These questions can be explored in debates about the politics of memory and of 'forgetting', of societal traumas and the construction of historical narratives. While all these issues warrant further investigation, I have decided to focus my discussion on the question of whether—and if so how—Stalinist Great Terror, including the Gulag camps system and the process of forced relocation, are represented in several case study museums. This is a highly difficult topic to address in contemporary museums, as Russia has so far failed to create a program of commemoration for the victims of Stalinist Great Terror. Using evidence from several case study museums, I argue that the way museums deal with the theme of Stalinism can be understood as a process of constructing discursive 'blank spots'. Exploring the representation of the Gulag will help reveal the

methods of working with problematic historical narratives used in my case study regions, and enable us to better understand how these 'blank spots' are constructed.

As already mentioned, the question of what *krayevedcheskiy* museums actually represent—public memory or formal history—remains controversial. According to Maurice Halbwachs, one of the most important historiographer, 'general history starts only when tradition ends and social memory is breaking up' (Halbwachs, 1980). History begins only 'when the subject is too distant in the past', it is 'collections of the most notable facts in the memory of man', but 'past events read about in books and taught and learned in schools are selected, combined, and evaluated in accord with necessities and rules which are imposed on the groups' (Halbwachs, 1980, p. 78). Adopting this approach, I claim that *krayevedcheskiy* museums combine these two concepts together. On the one hand, as government institutions, they are meant to represent official history. On the other hand, they present stories that are still alive in the public memory and use materials brought in by the local population that might not correspond to the official historical narrative. There are different concepts and approaches to describing the connections between history as scholarship and history as collective memory and politics, which differ from one country to another. However, in this work I aim to follow Miller's ideas about various social practices and norms associated with the regulation of collective memory, and apply some of his principles to *krayevedcheskiy* museums (Miller, 2011). In some cases, I analyse the expositions as examples of 'official regional history', as discussed above. According to Miller these forms include 'commemoration' (that is, the maintaining of monuments and museums and the marking of certain past events at the state or local level as especially significant), the focusing of attention on certain historical themes and the suppression or marginalization of others, and the selective payment of pensions to war veterans depending upon the conflict (Miller, 2011, p. 30). Miller argues that in Russia's case we frequently encounter such terms as the 'politicization of history' and the

'politics of memory' (Miller, 2011, p. 28). Miller continues his discussion about the state's influence on the politics of memory and historical research by showing the main instruments used. These include the regulation of access to archives, the determination of standards for history education (that is, the minimum set of themes and facts that the student is required to know), and the priority level given to the funding of research and publications on various historical problems (Miller, 2011, p. 30). I would add to this list the political foundation and control of *krayevedcheskiy* museum displays.

Another concept of Miller's that I wish to adopt is the binary of so-called 'closed' and 'open' sites in the politics of memory. Miller unpacks 'closed' as those sites that 'impose a strictly defined interpretation of a historical event or figure', and 'open' as those that create 'a space for dialogue and for a variety of interpretations' (Miller, 2011, p. 30). Originally, Soviet *krayevedcheskiy* museums were obliged to create displays that did not allow for any possibility of misinterpretation, so they conform to the model of 'closed' sites. This is true not only for *krayevedcheskiy* museums but also for other types of museums in Soviet Russia. Anatoliy M. Khazanov, in his work on the politics of memory in Moscow's history museums, claims that 'museums had to represent official ideology and official culture, and the main purpose of all museums, galleries, and exhibitions was ideological indoctrination' (Khazanov, 2000, p. 37). He accuses museums of showing 'forgeries' in order to support the ideologically correct line, whilst avoiding direct falsifications.

Another aspect of the politics of memory is the politics of 'forgetting'. Miller distinguishes several types of 'forgetting': 'conscious', which he describes as taking place when a society refuses to deal with certain events which are 'especially painful and generate too much conflict'; 'denial', which occurs when 'crucial social forces avoid recognition and discussion of certain shameful or criminal events of the past'; forgetting may also be described as 'understanding' when the focus of public attention shifts away from an event or process after efforts have been made to discuss it, including 'the

question of guilt and responsibility'. Miller concludes that the politics of memory may be 'more or less open to influence by and dialogue with various social forces and historians, more or less productive in healing the wounds of the past and in overcoming conflicts within and between nations. But it may also give birth to new conflicts and create deliberately distorted images of the past' (Miller, 2011, p. 31).

Using the concepts described above, I will now analyse the materials used to tell the story of the Gulag in *krayevedcheskiy* museums in the past 25 years since the USSR's collapse, exploring whether they leave room for multiple and conflicting interpretations. My analysis in this chapter discusses how *krayevedcheskiy* museums regulate the politics of memory and the platforms they employ for 'commemoration' and the extent to which they inherit the Soviet model of dealing with it. I show how the exclusion of the Gulag and Stalinist repression from expositions in *krayevedcheskiy* museums serves also to erase it from regional identities. My overarching argument is that the way in which expositions in *krayevedcheskiy* museums are built, and the narrative they create, has barely changed since the collapse of the Soviet Union, and that the majority of museums reproduce the Soviet method of constructing the history of the 20th century. In other words, the 'blank spots' of Soviet *krayevedcheskiy* museums have not changed since the collapse of Stalin's regime and there has been no conscious work to rethink the old narrative.

The question that remains is whether the absence of the Gulag and the repressions from the historical narratives of *krayevedcheskiy* museums is intentional and conscious, or whether it is it is simply the unconscious result of regional and local authorities reproducing Soviet habits.

Representation of the Gulag: from 'denial' to 'understanding'?

Here I wish to engage with contemporary debates within memory studies, but apply them to the current mechanisms of creating 'common unsaids'. In this section I will analyse several case studies at both regional and local levels to demonstrate how

'common unsaids'' are constructed in every particular cultural medium of working with trauma. Applying this to what has already been said in Chapter 1, I aim to study how the Gulag and repressions are removed from their regional and local context and therefore erased from regional and local identities. I then examine the means by which traces of these events are excised from geographical landscapes, separated from the current inhabitants of the region and the region's history. In other words, in this section I discuss how the Gulag is represented, if at all, in *krayevedcheskiy* museums, and explore the mechanisms of exposition museums use in the production of 'blank spots' concerning the Gulag and Stalinist Great Terror and, more generally, the materials used to tell the story of the Terror. I will discuss the degree to which this represents a conscious 'forgetting', a 'denial', or a forgetting through 'understanding' and partial acceptance of societal responsibility for what happened.

Overview

According to official statistics there are more than 800 *krayevedcheskiy* museums in Russia, excluding school museums and public museums that often use the word *krayevedcheskiy* in their titles, but do not officially belong to the network. According to Irina Flige of the St. Petersburg-based NGO Memorial which has produced a 'virtual museum of the Gulag' website[49] there are 127 museums in Soviet successor states that in some way represent the Gulag and the repressions in their expositions. Of the total number of government-run *krayevedcheskiy* museums in the Russian Federation, just thirty have displays dealing with the Gulag or Stalinist repressions, of which ten are at the regional level (Arkhangel'sk, Syktyvkar, Izhevsk, Yakutsk, Nar'yan-Mar, Saratov, Voronezh, Kirovsk, Omsk, and Tomsk). My research has added several further *krayevedcheskiy* museums to this list, but even with these additions, the number does not exceed 10% of all *krayevedcheskiy* museums. Some of these *krayevedcheskiy*

[49] http://www.gulagmuseum.org

museums (those in Tomtor, Yagodnoye, Vorkuta, Norilsk, and elsewhere) became members of the 'Memory Museums' association, which aims to unite those museums which show the repressions in their exposition.[50] Thus before proceeding to analyse the way that the Gulag is represented in *krayevedcheskiy* museums, I should re-iterate that we are talking about only a small minority of cases, and that in the vast majority of *krayevedcheskiy* museums the topic of the Gulag and Stalinist repression is not even mentioned. Although, as I mentioned earlier, I try to avoid generalised conclusions on the level of the whole country, on this topic it is definitely appropriate to state that the Gulag is not represented as part of national history in regional level museums. This, despite the fact that the Gulag in many regions was central to the projects symbolising the construction of socialism.

In other words, before exploring the methods by which the Gulag is erased from overarching regional and local identities in particular case studies, I want to draw attention to the absence of Stalinist Terror on the national level. Not including the repressions in the majority of *krayevedcheskiy* museums in the country tells us how the fact of simply avoiding it, on a constant basis, as a matter of a fact in the historical exposition reflects the level of trauma and Russia's current policy towards it. Apart from erasing the Gulag as a historical fact and narrative which was important for the whole country, the Gulag camps, prisons, and labour camps are simply removed from the economic and social development of the country; its role is just taken away. This is certainly a 'denial' of the influence of Stalinist Terror in the country.[51]

[50] http://memorymuseums.ru

[51] There is State Museum of Gulag History in Moscow, which opened in 2015. Though is it not a part of the *krayevedcheskiy* network, I feel that its existence should be mentioned here. One can claim that the museum is a sign of the acknowledgement of Stalinist Terror on the government level, and to a certain extent that is true. But the Terror still failed to become a predominant topic of 20th century history in the regional *krayevedcheskiy* museums.

The scale and universality of the Stalinist repression is difficult to exaggerate, but certain regions were nonetheless more affected than others. By this I mean that there were regions whose social and economic processes were particularly affected by the repressions due to an extensive and persistent network of labour camps and special settlements (*spetsposeleniya*). All regional and local museums that present the Gulag in their expositions are situated in these regions, which were more deeply influenced by the Repression. While this may be expected, it also perpetuates the idea that the Stalinist repressions were a phenomenon that was restricted in time and space, rather than presenting it as the trans-regional phenomenon that it was integral to the whole country's development, and should have been part of a national narrative. This returns us to my earlier observation that, at the national level, this topic is consciously forgotten and 'denied' as an historical event, and only partly acknowledged.

Looking more broadly at the representation of 20th-century history in *krayevedcheskiy* museums, the attitude to the Gulag strongly contrasts with the approach taken to the 'Great Patriotic War', which is constructed as a 'key event' across Russia, and is linked to national identity. The Great Patriotic War figures in the majority of *krayevedcheskiy* museums, regardless of how each museum's area was affected by this war. Of all the *krayevedcheskiy* museums that I visited, either in person or through online research, the only ones that completely excluded representing the War were a few museums in Chukotka.

In the next section I will address several museums that do represent the Gulag in their exposition, and I will attempt to unpack the ways in which they represent the Gulag and how 'blank spots' are constructed even if the Gulag is featured. I aim to trace this representation at both regional and local levels in the same case study region to examine the extent to which local museums replicate regional museums' 'blank spots' or contest them.

Representing the Gulag on the regional level

The representation of the Gulag in individual museums can differ dramatically. I want to start with two quite different examples of regional *krayevedcheskiy* museums in Tomsk and Yakutsk. These two museums allow for a striking comparison because both are situated in regions deeply affected by the system of exile and labour camps, and both museums contain in their permanent displays exhibits specifically related to Stalinist repressions. Both have also set up branch museums dedicated to political exiles: the NKVD Jail Museum in Tomsk and the Museum of Political Exiles in Yakutsk. These two regions are rare examples of including the Gulag as part of historical narrative in their exposition, against the backdrop of silence at the national level. Yet, the way in which they represent the topic is strikingly different and allows us to witness how a 'blank spot' is made from the topic.

The main exposition of Tomsk museum is one of the rare examples (unique among my case studies) of a museum that not only acknowledges the existence of the Repression in its region, but also shows its influence on regional social and economic processes and aims to include it, ambiguously, in local identity. Stalinist Repression is shown with local materials; the relocation is chosen as a key process that affected the region's history and economy. The *Sibiryaki volnyye i nevolnyye* ('Siberians free and exiled') Project was designed in 2013 and won the Potanin Foundation's 'A Changing Museum in a Changing World' prize.[52] The project consists of two parts: an exhibition in the main *krayevedcheskiy* museum, and a crowdsourcing online platform, that I will discuss later.

[52] V. Potanin is one of the greatest Russian philanthropists, and became famous through his social, educational, and cultural projects. The Potanin Foundation was established in 1999 with several grant programs, most of which are dedicated to regional initiatives (http://english.fondpotanin.ru).

The ‘Siberians free and exiled’ exhibition occupies a whole room, designed and set aside purely for the project (Figure 5.2). Winning the Potanin grant allowed the creation of this exposition to differ significantly from standard Soviet exhibition design. The exposition uses modern techniques, is ‘user-friendly’, and presents material in an easily accessible manner. Additionally, the exposition includes game-like, interactive elements: certain groups of objects and small scenes are referred to through questions. Such questions usually concern the function of certain objects and are geared towards teenagers or children; the answers are given in text on the back of the question paper. This makes the exhibition interactive and more accessible to younger generations, which helps to overcome the ‘blank spot’.

The exposition’s centrepiece is a *Stolypin* car (a type of railway carriage designed by the Tsarist prime minister Petr Stolypin to transport participants of the 1905 Revolution into exile) but then was put to use to deport and transport the repressed during the Stalin era, which is divided into two parts (Figure 5.3–5.4). As shown in figure 5.5, the exhibition combines archival documents and photographs, written text with conclusions drawn from them, and representations of the everyday life of the subjects of the exhibition. This latter, the everyday life, is presented by the railway carriage and small installations which depict scenes from the exiles’ lives. In the middle of the *Stolypin* car, the project’s website is displayed. The exposition’s aim is to represent both those people who were exiled or forced to move to Siberia and those who moved there of their own will. The railway carriage represents the everyday routine of both types of relocated people, as well as providing information about the total number of victims (see Figure 5.5 for the example of the information mount), their identities, the number of colonies in the region, and other information concerning relocation. The information is grouped into several themes and supported by photocopies of archival documents.



Figure 5.2. ‘Siberians free and exiled’ exhibition, Tomsk, overview of the exhibition space. October 2016.



Figure 5.3. ‘Siberians free and exiled’ exhibition, Tomsk, inside *Stolypin* car. October 2016.



Figure 5.4. ‘Siberians free and exiled’ exhibition, Tomsk, mounts dedicated to special settlements. October 2016.



Figure 5.5 ‘Siberians free and exiled’ exhibition, Tomsk, mount dedicated to exiles of the second category, those ‘forced to leave’. October 2016.

The themes represented in the mounts are: ‘*spetsposeleniya* of the first and second category’ (Figure 5.5), ‘the process of the organization of labour camps’, and the differences between different types of special settlements. The information mounts include numerous portraits of named individuals, both victims and guards. This a process of actually naming people and providing their personal stories, helps to include the Gulag in contemporary society, placing the narrative within local society and forging a clear connection with local history.

The influence of the forced and voluntary population relocations on the economy and social life of the region is presented in graphics and diagrams. In fact, according to the museum’s statistics, one person in every second family in Tomsk or in the Tomsk region moved into Tomsk during the time period in question (*Tomskiy krayevedcheskiy muzey: iz proshlogo v budushcheye,* 2003). The influence of relocations on the region’s

economy, life, and society is hard to exaggerate, and the museum actively promotes this fact in its exposition.

The online part of the project goes further. It is comprised of a crowdsourcing platform that displays personal family archives dedicated to the exiles who came to the Tomsk region. It is hard to imagine a more inclusive project than the crowdsourcing of local family histories. The project aims 'to preserve the personal stories of relocation', to prevent them from being lost over the course of a few years. This crowdsourcing website brings us back to the original idea of *krayevedeniye*, which, as I showed in the first chapter of this thesis, was based on pre-web crowdsourcing practices. Consciously or not, the Tomsk museum's project not only continues the original tradition of *krayevedeniye* within a *krayevedcheskiy* museum, but also does so in a way that is user-friendly and up-to-date. But what is more important, it creates a direct link between the relocated individuals and today's society. If we follow the distinction that Halbwachs made between 'formal history' and 'collective memory' (Halbwachs, 1980), the website positions itself firmly as the latter, dealing with 'collective memory'. A clue to the thinking behind the project may be found in one of its explanatory statements that 'big history is silent about these people' which literally claims that this topic is excluded from official history (*Tomskiy krayevedcheskiy muzey: iz proshlogo v budushcheye, 2003*).

The website also contains a map on which one can trace all the uploaded personal stories, information, and other archival documents by their geographical location (figure 5.6). Although the offline exposition lacks geographical materials, the web part of it fills in this gap by providing a relatively detailed interactive GIS system of relocation. That is quite a rare example of the direct inclusion of history in a geographical dimension, which helps overcome the possible exclusion of relocation from regional geographies and the creation of a 'blank spot' on the topic.



Figure 5.6. Map of personal stories, places of relocation, and villages in the Tomsk region. The map also allows a user to view the locations of cities and administrative boundaries in the past and in the present.

Thus each of the two parts of the project uses archival documents to display both the representation of historical narrative and collective memory. As a whole, the project appears to offer the visitor an open space for discussion. However, there are two aspects that make Tomsk museum a less than ideal example of the acknowledgment of Stalinist Great Terror and its inclusion in local and regional narratives. Firstly, there is no broader context of Stalinist repression shown on the national level, with the result that the visitor is not able to see the relative role of the Gulag in constructing 'their' region compared with others. This has to do with the process of excluding the Gulag from national level narratives. Secondly, the exposition itself physically falls outside of the historical order of the rest of the museum's history department, so that within the museum itself the exposition is 'bubbled'. The repressions and relocation, as well as the Gulag system, is not presented as an inseparable part of history, but set apart from the main material. However, the overarching picture of the repressions is shown in detail in a separate branch of the main museum.

Tomsk museum has several unique branches, some of them located in villages nearby, that represent the Gulag and Stalinist Repression. These local branches will be the subject of further discussion. For now, let us turn to Tomsk's NKVD Jail Museum, which is situated just across the road from the main *krayevedcheskiy* museum building, and is an official branch of the museum.

The NKVD museum was the first museum in the Soviet Union dedicated to the Stalinist Repression and the Terror, initiated by the local branch of the NGO Memorial. It was established in 1988, and from the beginning was a branch of the regional *krayevedcheskiy* museum. Although located across the street from the main museum, it is considered a specific and separate institution, and entrance requires a special ticket. Whatever underlying reason for this separation from the main museum, the consequence is that *krayevedcheskiy* museum visitors must make a conscious decision to inform themselves about the operations of the NKVD in the region.

While the 'Siberians free and exiled' exhibition in the main museum focuses on the influence of exile in the region, contextualizing it within the general history of migration, the NKVD Jail Museum provides a broader picture of the scale of the Repression and focuses on the personal stories of victims, labour camps, and the Gulag, as well as identifying places of prisoner execution. In other words, this more complete picture of repression and terror is only found in the museum which requires special interest from viewer, while the main *krayevedcheskiy* museum provides a slightly narrower narrative.

The NKVD Jail Museum mixes archival data with 'effectual' elements. The exhibition's materials are divided into sections distributed through separate cells in which prisoners were previously confined (Figure 5.8). The archival parts contextualise the Stalinist repressions, and attempt to convey a sense of their scale of these events at the national level by, for example, showing a map of labour camps in Soviet times (Figure 5.9), or providing information on camps in other regions (Perm'-36).

What sets the NKVD Jail Museum apart from all other museums in my case study is that it actually occupies a former jail building, rather than regular, neutral museum exhibition space. Furthermore, this fact has become part of the museum's own promotion: the museum's advertising banner states the that the NKVD Jail Museum is the first in the USSR, and the only one of its kind in Russia (Figure 5.7). This presentation invites discussions on embodied museum experiences, dark tourism, and 'negative sight-seeing' (Turner and Kimberley, 2015). According to Turner and Kimberley, museums in former jails provide a special experience to visitors, one that they are unlikely to encounter in 'normal life', and they create a particular 'carceral atmosphere' (Tuner and Kimberley, 2015, p. 312). Discussions about how such museums shifted to create an embodied visitor experience through the engagement of multiple senses include the role of materiality in museum design and the narration of history (Hoskins, 2004, 2007), the place of performance in presenting the past (Johnson, 1999a, 1999b), the importance of museum space and the routing of visitors (Geoghegan, 2010), the role of shared engagement and sociality in experience (Macdonald, 2007), and new virtual, audio, and sensory technologies as mediums of bringing the present into touch with the past (Ciofi and Bannon, 2007; Howes, 2014). However, following Turner and Kimberley's argument, I believe that museums situated in former jails do not just follow the discrete methods above, but rather create something of their own. Curators of such museums consciously create a particular 'atmosphere' by their decision to preserve the interiors of the jail untouched.[53]

[53] For further debates on 'atmosphere', see McCormack (2008), Adey (2013), and Anderson (2006, 2009). For more extended discussion on the way prison museums construct their environment and visitor experiences, see Turner and Kimberly (2015).



Figure 5.7. NKVD Jail Museum banner, Tomsk, 2016

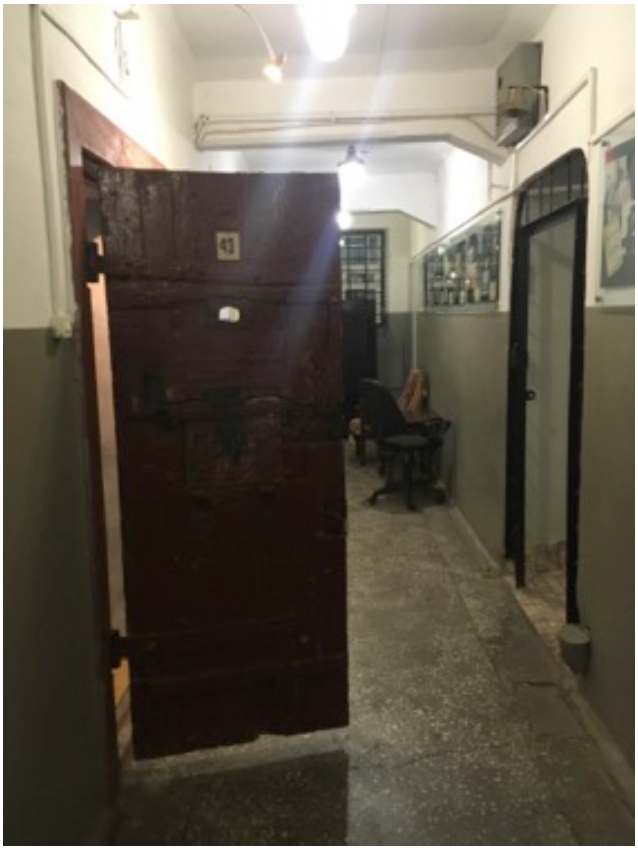

Figure 5.8. Overview of museum corridor with entrances to the exhibition rooms, NKVD Jail Museum, Tomsk. October 2016.



Figure 5.9. Map showing Gulag camps in the USSR, NKVD Jail Museum, Tomsk. October 2016.

The exhibits consist of photographic images and archival documents, the latter including Soviet propaganda materials for context (Figure 5.10). The story of the repressions is told through personal narratives and the biographies of local people who were affected by the terror and repressions (Figure 5.11–5.12). The archival display provides information about several places in the Tomsk region and beyond it that were significant in the history of penal systems in Soviet Russia, such as Narym, Kolpashevo, and Perm'-35. The archival part of the exhibition does not attempt to interpret, but rather presents the 'raw' documentation, giving visitors the space and opportunity to draw their own conclusions.



Figure 5.10. Information mounts, NKVD Jail Museum, Tomsk. October 2016.

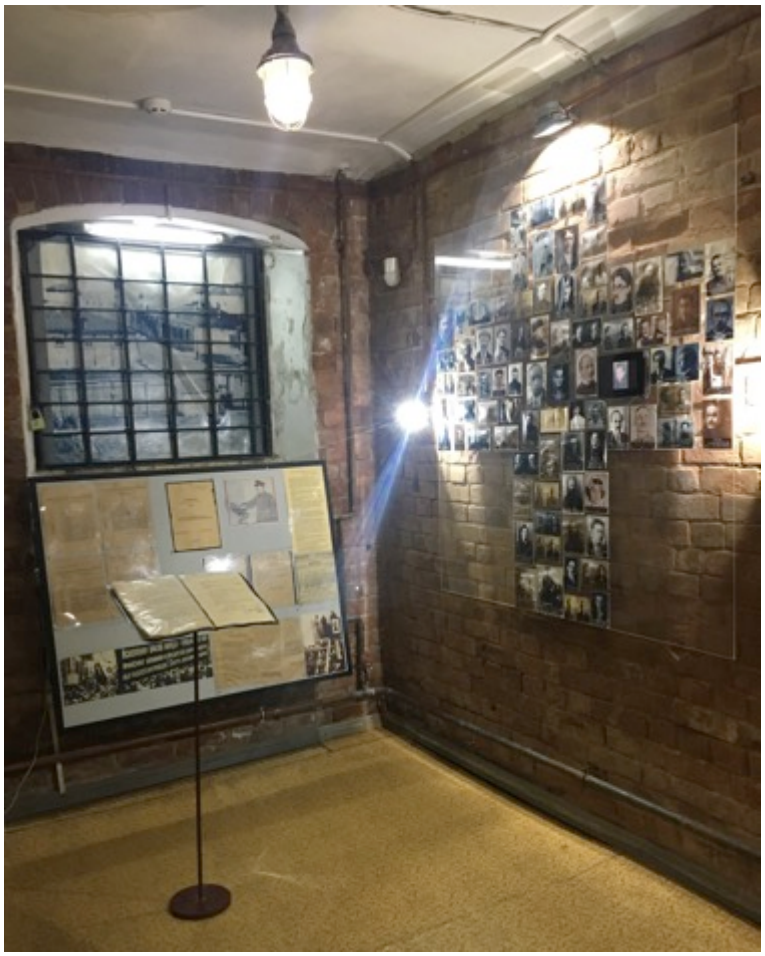


Figure 5.11. NKVD Jail Museum, Tomsk. October 2016.



Figure 5.12. Biographies of victims, NKVD Jail Museum, Tomsk. October 2016.


Figure 5.13. Interior of a crime investigator's office, NKVD Jail Museum, Tomsk. October 2016.

The ’experiential part’ of the exhibition consists of a preserved cell (Figure 5.14), that has not been redesigned into an exhibition room, but the interior of the cell kept untouched, and a segment of the interior of a crime investigator’s office (Figure 5.13). It must be said that despite its existence in a former jail building, the curators have not pushed visitor experiences any further: there are no architectural reconstructions, no game elements, and no audio or sensory installations which might refer a visitor to a ‘Repression atmosphere’. The engagement with visitors’ senses is limited; rather than being an ‘organized ruin’ (Turner and Kimberley, 2015, p. 318) it is more a preserved space with a well-structured information archival section. However, the experiential part is deeply acknowledged by visitors. Feedback about the NKVD Jail Museum frequently notes the special ‘atmosphere’ created: ‘Thanks to the museum I was immersed in the atmosphere of the repressions’ (07.03.2016), ‘I could feel the atmosphere of that time’ (06.03.2016), ‘Thank you very much for reconstructing the atmosphere of the repressions in the 1930s’ (31.03.2016).[54] The method apparently helps bring the material closer to viewers.

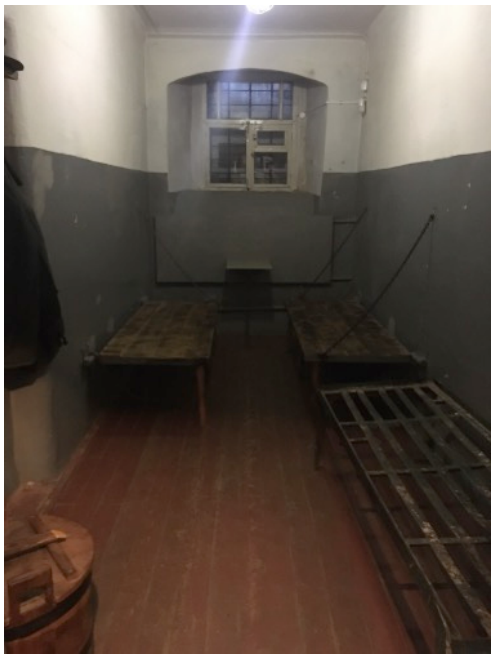


Figure 5.14. Cell, left untouched, NKVD Jail Museum, Tomsk. October 2016.

[54] For other comments please visit http://nkvd.tomsk.ru/feedbackvisitors/feedback2016/.

'Gulag' with a St. George ribbon

The other region which I consider here—Yakutia—is situated in eastern Siberia and extends deep into the Arctic circle. Importantly for our topic, it was the site of a large penal complex from the 1940s to the 1960s. According to the information mount presented in the display there were 105 Gulag camps in Yakutia.

The Gulag is represented in Yakutsk's *krayevedcheskiy* museum by one information mount (Figure 5.15) and a small installation (Figure 5.17) and is incorporated into the exhibition display about the Great Patriotic War (GPW) and its 70th anniversary, entitled, 'One victory shared for everyone'. The display introduces a narrative familiar to Russian audiences, showing the achievements and heroic deeds of the Yakuts and Russians living in Yakutia, against the backdrop of a display of the Great Patriotic War. There are no other materials relevant for that period apart from Great Patriotic War attributes. Collected artefacts, documents, photographs, and propaganda posters from the War period present the region's whole history, from the USSR's establishment of the Yakutian Republic in 1922, right up to 1947. Yet among the 12 mounts dedicated to the Great Patriotic War, only one is dedicated to the Gulag (Figure 5.16). Moreover, the mount is labelled with a St George ribbon, a symbol of the Great Patriotic War in Russian culture. The St George ribbon is a recent symbol of patriotism and loyalty to the current regime and its official historical narrative. Placing the Gulag in the context of the achievements of the Great Patriotic War is itself remarkable, but in a sense also typical for Russian official discourse, in which the Gulag exists as one of the inevitable prices of winning the victory over Fascism. It also creates a false impression of these two events happening in the same timeframe, which is false. According to earlier research, the camps in Yakutia existed until at least 1956 (gulagmaps, 2013).



Figure 5.15. Overview of the Great Patriotic War department, *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Yakutsk, June 2015.

Considering the overall expressive, visual language used in the texts dedicated to the Great Patriot War, the tone in the description and the outlook of the Gulag system display is rather neutral and even cold.

The information mount is perceived as 'historical' and as providing the 'objective facts' about the Gulag, while the installation stands for the more emotional, experiential part. The description of the Gulag on the information mount gives basic facts about the Gulag system in general and in Yakutia in particular, without reference to any sources of information or archives. The only document presented is the resolution on the labour service of prisoners from 11 of July 1929 in USSR, which is not region-specific. Two issues in the text capture the viewer's attention immediately. First, the text literally states

that ‘Yakutia was not the most important, but was the brightest part of the Gulag’[55] (Figure 5.16). It is hard to guess what the author meant; she or he (the text has no author) may have been trying to underline the importance of prisoners in the regional economy. The example relates to the broader problem of undeveloped language to talk about the Gulag in Russia. Both ordinary people and professionals struggle to find words to talk about this dramatic aspect of their region’s past, and they have no model or example that might show the best way of doing it. In some cases—like in Yakutia—this linguistic gap resulted in such grotesque phrases as are found in the text on display.



Figure 5.16. Mount dedicated to the Gulag, *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Yakutsk, June 2015.

[55] ‘*Gulag deystvoval na territorii vsey strany, i Yakutiya byla, byt’ mozhet, ne samoy vazhnoy no samoy yarkoy yego chast’yu’ (Russian)*

A second issue that catches the eye is the fact that some of the text includes quotations from Solzhenitsyn's written testimony, *The Gulag Archipelago*. This latter fact is subject to different interpretations; on the one hand it appeals to a controversial critic of the Soviet system, but on the other hand it could be seen as indicative of a failure to engage with the region's documentary evidence on the Gulag, and again an attempt to find language and words to describe the history of region.

Apart from the text there are nine black and white historical photos of camps and their remains today with relatively vague geographical descriptions. By this I mean that descriptions might include the name of an administrative unit, or simply refer to a river or mountain to address a camp's location—not very helpful considering the size of the region. But the mount includes neither maps of Gulag camp sites, nor even a simple map of Yakutia region (which is the largest in Russia) with toponyms. As a result, it is impossible to deduce where the camps were situated and how they are connected with today's regional infrastructure. This erases the camps not only from the landscapes and the geographical imagination of the local people, but also creates a gap between them and today's regional landscapes. Further, the mount contains no attempt to demonstrate the role of exiles and the labour camp system in the region's economic and social development.

It is unclear why the photographs are black and white, as they refer to a period in which colour photography already existed and was widely used. Though there are no dates included in the capture, some photos show the remains of camps, which we know are later than the 1960s. It is unclear why no contemporary pictures of at least camp remains are included; this fact, too, erases the camps from the contemporary landscape of Yakutia and places the events further back in time than they actually were. The choice of black and white photos rather than full colour creates a certain gap between them and

the viewer, as we are used to the idea that black and white photos usually refer to historical events that happened long ago.

Neither the 'information mount', nor the installation next to it includes any names. While the GPW section is filled with portraits (Figure 5.15.), the only information mount dedicated to the Gulag contains none. The display does not provide a single personal story of an individual, so that both victims and guards remain anonymous. As I have shown previously, some *krayevedcheskiy* museums tend to use biographies of 'famous' prisoners as a region's legacy and turn them into a local tourist attraction (in Perm''s northern villages, for example). Yet, though there were many talented people exiled to the Yakutia camps, they are not featured in the exposition. This is one of the instruments and signs of the creation of a 'blank spot' around the Gulag—depersonalizing it and separating it from today's society.

The installation next to the cabinet mount is the reconstruction of a tiny room with a set of everyday objects that would have belonged to prisoners, such as shoes and a can (Figure 5.17). It is a generalised reconstruction of a 'typical prisoner' lifestyle, which adheres to the tradition of *krayevedcheskiy* museums (of showing objects and scenes typical for the region) with an attempt to create 'atmosphere' and speak to viewers' emotions. The small size of the cell, the lattice over the window, and the simplicity of objects are presumably intended to reflect the uncomfortable conditions in camps. That is an attempt to speak to a viewer's emotions, and such experiences can be traced in many museums dedicated to trauma both in Russia (the Gulag Museum, the Jewish Museum, NKVD Jail Museum in Tomsk) and abroad (the Holocaust Museum in Budapest). But in the case of Yakutia's exposition, you are unable to place yourself in the cell, and can only glance inside, meaning it is hard to 'experience' the conditions of prisoners.

To conclude, the Gulag display in the Yakutsk museum does several things, which cause a misrepresentation of facts and the creation of ‘common unsaids’ surrounding the Gulag prison system. First, the display provides a false timeframe of the Gulag camps existing in the region, and lacks any documents or archival resolutions which the visitor could consult. The Gulag remains displaced in regional and local contexts through the lack of any geographical information of the camp system, and is depersonalized through the lack of any provision of personal stories or at least victims’ names. Second, the display contributes to a relatively popular pro-governmental discourse in Russia about the achievements of the Soviet period and the necessity of the repression for the Soviet economy and victory in the Great Patriotic War by marking the Gulag mount with a St. George ribbon and including the exposition in the overarching display on the Great Patriotic War. But in this case the necessity is not underlined, as no cause or consequence is shown, and the Gulag is excluded from discussions of the economic and social development of region. The Gulag and repressions are presented without any broader national context, and no reasons for or consequences of these events are explained. As events, they are not incorporated into broader narratives of the development of regional economies, cities, and transport infrastructures.

The display in Yakutsk is an interesting example of a case where the Gulag is present in the display, but the ‘blank spot’ as a misrepresentation still exists. This type of representation is quite close to what Roland Barth termed ‘inoculation’.



Figure 5.17. Gulag exposition, *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Yakutsk, June 2015.

Despite such minimalistic representation of the Gulag in the main permanent display, the *krayevedcheskiy* museum has a branch museum that deals with the topic of exile. This 'Political Exile Museum' is situated nearby (very similar to the case in Tomsk): a very old wooden house acts as a 'house for commemoration' of the political exiles in the Gulag and its prisoners in Yakutia. Yet, this branch is in fact totally dedicated to the political exile in the 19th century, showing the everyday life of Tsarist exiles to the region. While admitting the existence of political exile during the Russian Empire and its influences both on people's lives and the cultural environment in the region, the

exposition ignores the exile system of Soviet regime and the presence of political exiles in the region.

This is another example in which repressions are shown in a region that was heavily affected by them. In Yakutia, the museum provides a relatively detailed and broad overview of what I call a 'key event' (the Great Patriotic War) and shows the Stalinist repression as a separate 'bubbled' event, displaced and depersonalized, lacking any real materials that might allow a visitor to study the topic. The complete invisibility of the Gulag and 20th century exiles in the 'Political Exile' museum also reinforces the dominant discourse in the portrayal of Soviet history in the republic. The Great Patriotic War and its meaning for the region, on other hand, is clearly exaggerated.

The museums in the regional capitals of my other case study regions barely represent the role of the Gulag and repressions in their region's development, while, similar to what we have seen in Yakutia, they stress the significance of the Great Patriotic War in the formation of their region. Anadyr' Museum, in the far north-eastern part of Russian Eurasia, which, as I observed above, was completely reorganized in 2003 by a team from Moscow, focuses on national minorities and their traditional culture. It presents no materials about the Gulag camps in its territory despite the fact that Magadan was the site of a notorious complex of mining camps which recorded the highest mortality rates of any of the Gulag complexes and was accurately described by Solzhenitsyn as 'the cold pole of terror'. Museums situated in central Russia (such as the museum in Kazan' in the national republic of Tatarstan)—located in the Volga-Urals region, containing part of another large, inter-regional complex of camps—also contain no information about the scale of the Stalinist Repression or of the contribution of forced labour to the republic's development.

Exclusion as a 'blank spot'?

The *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Perm' *kray* is an especially noteworthy case for our study. Perm' region was one of the first to have Gulag camps after SLON on the Solovetskiye islands expanded onto the mainland (Pallot, 2005). Apart from containing a number of significant camps with multiple sub-divisions (see Figure 5.18 below for a map), Perm' region was also a major destination for deported peasants and ethnic minorities in the early 1930s and 1940s. Exiles, deportees, and forced labourers built and worked in factories, constructed whole cities (such as Berezniki), and constituted the principal labour force in the forestry and mining industries, in this way playing a remarkable role in Perm''s regional history.

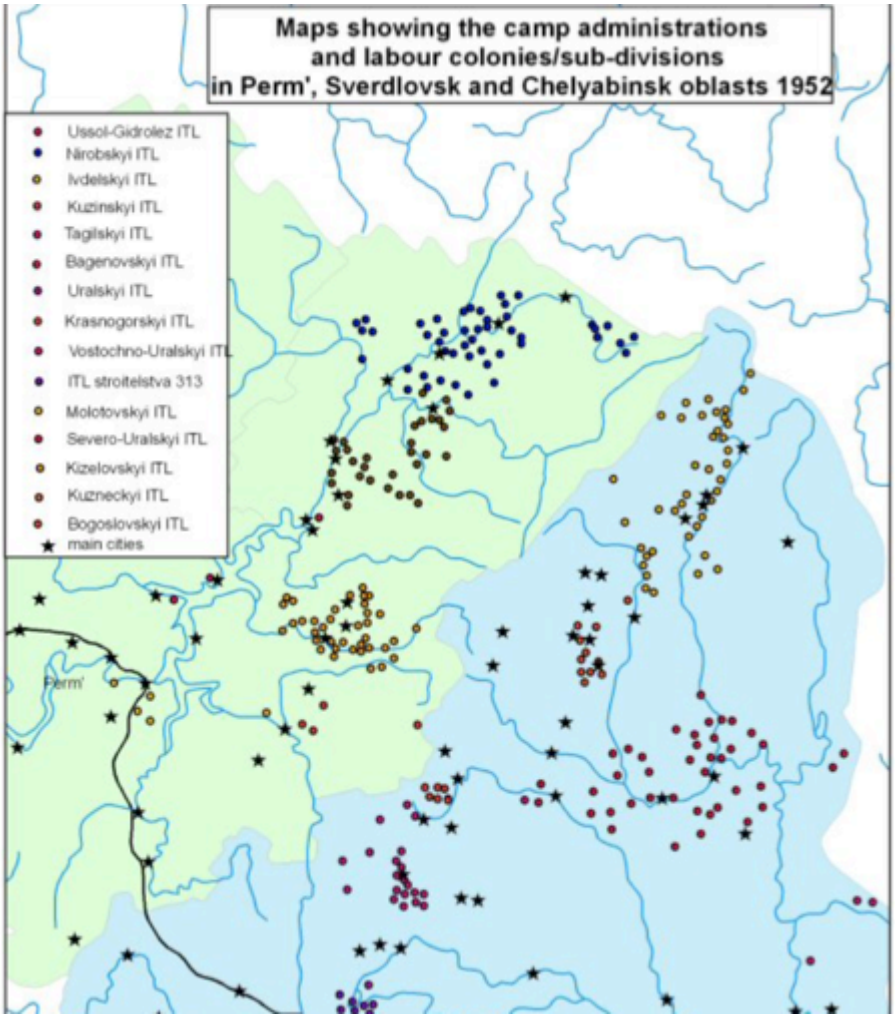


Figure 5.18. Map of camp administrations and labour colonies in the Perm' region. (produced by author, gulamaps.org project)

The permanent display in the main building of Perm''s *krayevedcheskiy* museum is curated by the 'history' and 'society' departments and exposes the history of the *kray* in a range of interior simulations (figures 5.19–5.21). However, the existence of such a wide network of camps and their role in the *kray*'s economy and social life is not mentioned at all. The Soviet period is represented by an extensive overview of the people and institutions that were evacuated to Perm' during the Great Patriotic War. In other words, we see here a familiar representation of the 20th century through the materials on the Great Patriotic War. Evacuation is shown by a range of propaganda posters appealing to the home front, by an assemblage labelled 'Interior of a war period apartment', and by a range of material artefacts dedicated to the industrialization of the *kray*.



Figure 5.19. The 'history' department, Perm' *Krayevedcheskiy* Museum. October 2016.



Figure 5.20. The interior of an apartment during the time of the Great Patriotic War, 'history' department, Perm' *Krayevedcheskiy* Museum. October 2016.



Figure 5.21. Soviet period, 'history' department, Perm' *Krayevedcheskiy* Museum. October 2016.

The process of the Soviet industrialization of the region, the work of *udarniki,* and the rapid development of industrialisation are all displayed; but the museum exhibition fails to acknowledge the political exiles and prisoners who were directly involved in these processes. This is a case, then, of completely ignoring and denying any presence of the Gulag in the territory. There is no need to evaluate how the Gulag is erased, because it is simply not shown at all.

So, despite the influence that the presence of Gulag camps and special settlements had in Perm' region, the history of the *kray* on the regional level and its industrial development is presented without any acknowledgement of the involvement of prisoners and exiles at all.

Concluding the analysis of regional *krayevedcheskiy* museums, we can claim that we have seen evidence of three completely different approaches towards the representation of the Gulag in regional museums in three otherwise similar regions—those which were heavily affected by the Gulag system itself and by other sites relating to Stalinist Repression. These different approaches range from the complete reproduction of Soviet 'common unsaids' and Soviet historical discourse in the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Perm', to the partial acknowledgement of Soviet approaches in the museum in Yakutsk, to the complete change of narrative in Tomsk.

This overview of the different modes of representing the Gulag at a regional level in *krayevedcheskiy* museums shows just how broad the spectrum is. At one end of the scale, we find 'open' exhibitions, enriched with archival documents displaying the role of the Gulag in a region's development; at the other end, we find this period of the nation's history rendered completely invisible.

Representation of the Gulag at the local level

But what about the sub-regional level? Here the question concerns the extent to which local *krayevedcheskiy* museums merely reproduce the approach taken in regional museums, and the extent to which they have used the freedom of the post-Soviet period to construct alternative, unique narratives. Is there a chance that narratives and events removed from national discourse, and misrepresented on regional levels, nonetheless exist as part of local representation?

Below I describe several different examples of local museums in the regions described above, and analyse how the narratives they construct support or contest those promoted at the regional level. According to the Virtual Museum of the Gulag website, the Tomsk region has a substantial number of local museums which present materials connected to the Gulag. I will focus here on the Museum of Political Exiles in Narym (a

branch of Tomsk's *krayevedcheskiy* museum) and the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Kolpashevo.

Narym is a small village situated 430km north of Tomsk on the Ob' River. The village has a long history of political exiles and even earned itself a place in Russian folklore with the proverb 'God created Crimea, but the Devil created Narym'. The first exiles came to Narym in 1638 and ever since then it has remained a common destination for exiles. One of the most 'famous' exiles in Narym was Stalin himself, who spent several months there as a political exile in 1912. The museum in Narym was established in 1938 as 'The Museum of Stalin in Exile' in cooperation with the V.I. Lenin Museum in Moscow, but it was only opened to the public in 1948, complete with a huge Stalin sculpture in the back yard (Figure 5.22).



Figure 5.22. Museum in Narym named after Stalin in 1950 (archives of Narym museum).

In 1959 the museum was reorganized as part of the policy of de-Stalinization, and was renamed ‘Narym Memorial Museum of Bolsheviks in Exile’. In 1991, it was renamed again as ‘Narym Museum of Political Exiles’. These name changes should not be taken as indicating changes in museum policy, such as, for example, shifting from the commemoration of Stalin to the commemoration of his victims; this is not the case. The museum simply displays, in chronological order, the different generations of exiles to Narym (figure 5.23), as indeed it always has done. It creates a narrative about the way people were moved to Narym, their everyday life, and their relationship with local people. It shows exiles at different times without any judgment—but also without any real historical context. The museum does not explain why people were exiled to Narym or anything about their social status. For the Stalin period, the waves of exiles to Narym are not placed within the broader context of the repressions, and no distinctions are drawn between various groups of exiles across time (figures 5.24–5.25). On the one hand, this lack of contextual explanation may be understood as an attempt to create a neutral, ‘open’ exhibition, which tells the story of the exiles and their influence on the village ‘from below’, as was done in the museum in Tomsk. But this is not what the exhibition conveys. The majority of exhibits are from late Soviet times, as is the design of the space, and the scripts and texts accompanying the exhibits. The citations are often taken from Soviet scholars or authors, and almost all the analysis is also simply left over from the Soviet period (figure 5.25).



Figure 5.23. Overview of the Narym Museum of Political Exiles, 2016.



Figure 5.24. Soviet mounts in Narym Museum of Political Exiles. October 2016.



Figure 5.25. Exhibit dedicated to Stalin in exile in Narym Museum of Political Exiles. October 2016.

Focusing on the Gulag and Stalinist Terror, I found that it is reflected in the exposition, but only through old materials and sets of data. The presentation of Stalin's experience in Narym is placed alongside the stories of political exiles that were later part of his campaign of repression (figure 5.25), although there is nothing in the exposition to acknowledge this fact. Thus, despite the museum's unique and interesting story, and its large archives, the exposition remains unclear and vague. It does not provide facts or information, but rather reproduces the Soviet approach to the exiles of the late Soviet period.

The new way of representing the Gulag in the regional capital's *krayevedcheskiy* museum has clearly not 'trickled down' to Narym. However important the *krayevedcheskiy* museum was in developing a distinctive place-identity in Narym in the Soviet period, this identity is unlikely to have changed in the 25 years since the USSR's collapse.

Another local museum in a place directly influenced by the Stalinist Repression is Kolpashevo. Kolpashevo is notorious as a place where mass executions took place. The bodies of the victims of such executions were buried by the Ob' River. Recently, knowledge of this tragic history has been spread via social media by the well-known Russian opposition activist Sergey Parkhomenko. In 1936, the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in the *rayon* capital (Parebel, later shifted to Kolpashevo due to changes in administrative borders) was organized as the Narymskiy Regional *Krayevedcheskiy* Museum, to represent several districts, and it is the most 'classically Soviet' *krayevedcheskiy* museum I have seen.

The 'Repressions' corner of the museum is presented as part of its history department, and follows a series of events organized in chronological order, which includes the repressions in overarching history. This history department has remained more or less unchanged since the 1970s and Soviet discourse is clearly visible in the display (figure 5.26). The 'Repressions' section is the only new, post-Soviet exhibit, and it is clearly demarcated from the pre-existing display on political exiles in the beginning of the 20th century (figure 5.27).

Soviet discourse in Kolpashevo surfaces in the texts and slogans used, such as 'Bolsheviks struggled in political exile but nevertheless succeeded', and the statement that exile to Narym was 'a source of professional revolutionary manpower' (Figure 37–38). Visitors to the museum are told that many important leaders of the Communist Party went through 'the school of life here', and are able to read the stories of such people in

the display. The victimization experienced by these early 'heroic' exiles is quite different from the victimization suffered in Stalinist Repression.



Figure 5.26 The history department in Kolpashevo's *krayevedcheskiy* museum. October 2016.

The 'Repressions' exhibit is situated between the 'Results of the Five Year Plan' exposition and the 'Soviet Enlightenment' display. It consists of several short biographies of victims, several black and white photos (of unidentifiable persons), a poem, execution lists from the 'Book of Commemoration'[56], and earth from the cliff

[56] A 'Book of Commemoration' is a Russian form of commemorating the victims of the GPW and the Repressions through lists of names.

where the executed victims were buried.[57] Again, there is no overarching picture of the repressions at a national or even a regional scale, no map of camps in the Tomsk region, or any other information which might help contextualize repressions.



Figure 5.27 'Repressions' exhibit in the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Kolpashevo. October 2016.

These two examples show us that despite the relatively open and unusual exhibition policy of the Tomsk *Krayevedcheskiy* Museum, local branches have either actively chosen not to follow its example, or simply lack the resources to do so.

By contrast, the local, district, and municipal level museums in Perm', which, as we saw earlier, completely ignore Stalinist Repression in the permanent display, illustrate the possibilities that exist at lower levels in the administrative and spatial hierarchy to forge a different path. In the northern part of the *kray*, which had a high

[57] Exiles and the Repressions also played a role in the museum's history. For a certain period of time the museum was directed by administrative exiles: B.A. Dmitriyev (1929–1932), L.N. Nikonov (1933–1934). N.V. Billevich, the museum's director 1934–,1937 and a member of the Communist Party, was also arrested and executed. These facts are represented on the Tomsk museum's website (http://tomskmuseum.ru/kkmu/kkmomusee/). In the exposition in Kolpashevo, only Billevich is included as one of the victims of the Repressions.

density of camps and special settlements from the early 1930s right through to the later Soviet period, neighbouring local authorities pursued completely contrasting practices in their representation of the Gulag and is still the site of large penal complex of many correctional institutions.

I will begin with the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Berezniki. Berezniki was built as an archetypal (if not *the* archetypal) 'socialist city' (*sotzgorod*) in 1932, when several local authorities were merged to form a single urban centre. Berezniki was famous as the site of one of the largest chemical plants in the USSR, as it still is in the Russian Federation today. It was built exclusively by penal labour during the first five-year plan (1929–1934). The museum was opened in 1925 and its history display was re-designed in 2011.

The museum website[58] explains that the exhibition shows the *main* historical events of the Upper Kama basin (Verkhnekam'ye), the unofficial title of the region denoting the upper Kama River. Despite the huge influence that the system of labour camps and exile had on the region, and the fact that both the city and the plant were built by prisoners, little space in the museum is given over to this aspect of the city's development. A small number of display cases contain photographs and documents (figures 5.28–5.31) relating to the Gulag, and there is a small installation of a 'typical barrack' (figure 5.28) in which prisoners were housed and which, supposedly, shows the everyday conditions endured by victims. However, it is definitely one of the generalized 'utopian' barracks which has little to do with real conditions in a camp.

There is also a wall featuring a large panoramic landscape image with security wires in front. Unlike the NKVD Jail Museum, which contains an effectual part designed to bring prisons 'closer' to the viewer, the exposition in Berezniki does not aim to do this.

[58] http://www.museum-berezniki.ru/ekspozicija

It contains no personal stories, no maps, no names, and no photos from contemporary ex-Gulag sites.



Figure 5.28. The ‘barrack’ in the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Berezniki. October 2016.



Figure 5.29. Part of the Gulag section in the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Berezniki. October 2016.



Figure 5.30. Part of the Gulag section in the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Berezniki. October 2016.



Figure 5.31. Interior of the 'barrack' in the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Berezniki. October 2016.

Thus, although the museum in Berezniki does provide some materials about the Gulag in the region, the displays are minimal, and the role of forced labour in the city's

development is shown without any geographical or historical context, whether local or regional. The victims are all anonymous and their experiences unexplored, and no direct connections are drawn between their presence in the region and the existence of the city and chemical plant. Rather, the city's development is attributed to the five-year plan, technological advances, and immigrant 'volunteers'. The Gulag is present in the exposition, but as in the other museums I have discussed, it is disconnected from Soviet history and achievements, and its role in regional development, therefore, extremely under-represented, considering the declared purpose of showing the *main* historical events of the area.

Further to the north is one more museum that I wish to compare. It is located in Krasnovishersk (15,000 inhabitants). Krasnovishersk is a local capital, a small, formerly industrial mono-settlement on the Vishera River. It came into existence in 1930 when it was chosen as the site of a pulp and paper plant used for processing timber felled further up the river valley. Labour for timber harvesting, and for the construction and then manning of the paper plant, was provided exclusively by forced labour. The initial contingent was brought from the Solovetskiy island camps in 1926 (Pallot and Moran, 2000). The first labour camp here was formally a branch of SLON, but in 1929 a separate camp administration was created. This place was the first camp where the famous Russian writer Shalamov was kept, and he described the construction of the paper and pulp factory in his novel 'Vishera'. The camp here was the first 'showcase camp' in the USSR; it served as a model and standard for others and was commanded by Eduard Berzin, who later established several camps in Solikamsk and Kolyma.

The local *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Krasnovishersk consists of two parts: a permanent display of three departments and a physically separate and specially created 'Shalamov room'. Almost all the materials and documents dedicated to the Gulag are presented in this 'Shalamov room', rather than as part of the permanent display.

However, there is a certain section in the permanent display that includes a description of forced labour in the city's development, without mentioning any facts about the Gulag. The physical separation of the Gulag display from the rest of the museum has allowed the curators to present more materials and details about camps in the area than in other museums with Gulag displays, as elsewhere the consequences of the Stalinist repression are excluded from the narrative created in the main display and require (as in the Tomsk case) special efforts to approach the exhibition.

The 'Shalamov room' is further divided into two parts, 'dark' and 'bright', which in turn represent the 'bad' and 'good' sides of Gulag camps' presence in the region (figures 5.32, 5.34). The exhibition is rich in archival documents, photographs, maps, and other objects somehow connected with the Gulag.



Figure 5.32. The 'Shalamov room' in the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Krasnovishersk. October 2016.

The first thing that draws visitors' attention is the fact that the museum's marketing in Krasnovishersk uses both the figure of Shalamov and the fact that he, himself, wrote

about the place as a marketing tactic. This brings us back to the idea of ‘dark tourism’. Although the former Gulag camps have not yet been turned into sightseeing attractions, the fact that a famous Russian writer lived here in exile and wrote about these places is widely promoted. It is interesting to compare the representation of well-known figures in different museums; whilst the museum in Krasnovishersk has dedicated a special room to Shalamov, the museums in Berezniki and Perm’ almost completely ignore the fact that he was exiled to the region.

The ‘bright’ side of the room glorifies the achievements of those who built the village and plant, through Soviet flags and photos of the buildings constructed by prisoners, whilst the ‘dark’ side shows the complexities of everyday life of the prisoners and displays some death statistics. The attempt to find ‘good’ in the Gulag, and more broadly, in Stalinism s, is a familiar trope and it is not surprising to find it in museum expositions. It is similar to the narrative that we have seen in Yakutsk: an attempt to justify terror, either through an accompanying economic and social uprising (figure 5.44) or through victory in the GPW. But in this case the narrative is pushed even further.

Krasnovishersk, like Berezniki, was built by the forced labour of prisoners and exiles, but it does a more in terms of including the Gulag in its local context. This may well be because as a mono-industrial settlement that continued to rely on penal labour to harvest timber for the pulp and paper works to the end of the Soviet period, However, although it acknowledges the presence of the camps, clearly including it in local history, landscape, and society, its approach is still related to the national narrative of the ‘inoculation’ of the Gulag. It admits there is a ‘dark’ site to it, but nevertheless glorifies the ‘good’ aspects in the same exposition.



Figure 5.33. ‘Labour is an affair of honour, glory, heroism, and valiancy’ slogan in the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Krasnovishersk. October 2016.


Figure 5.34. The ‘dark’ part of the Shalamov room, *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Krasnovishersk. October 2016.

There is one more example of what might be called an 'initiative from below' in my case study regions, that I was unable to visit personally due to logistics issues, but whose story I witnessed. In the Yakutian village Tomtor (situated on the axis road between Yakutsk and Magadan, approximately 1,000 kilometers from each and difficult to access) a school history teacher has organized the 'Museum at the Cold Pole', which is basically a museum of the Gulag (figure 5.35).



Figure 5.35. Photo from the Facebook page of the 'Museum at the Cold Pole'. Image from the museum Facebook page.

Almost all the photographs displayed on the Facebook page were taken during a crowdfunding campaign that was launched in Summer 2016 to support the museum. It is hard to draw any firm conclusions about the representation of the Gulag and any materials that are used in the exhibition, as my access was limited to pictures of the museum on the web. However, the museum is a good example of an initiative from below, which contests the gaze of the Gulag produced in the regional centre and speaks about the events around it.

Finally, local museums in the Tver' region, the Tatar Republic, and Moscow Oblast' that I visited completely exclude the topic of repressions and the Gulag from expositions; this is even the case in the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Dubna, which presents a film

about the Moscow-Baltic Channel—despite the fact that this channel was built by Gulag prisoners is even acknowledged in the exposition. This proves once again that Stalinist Great Terror has not yet become a widely accepted national narrative.

Conclusions

Representations of the Gulag and its influence on regional economy and society vary greatly, but in the majority of cases are entirely lacking and completely invisible; *krayevedcheskiy* museums thus contribute to the production of a 'common unsaid' concerning it in Soviet history. Those museums that do deal with the Gulag, and do so in 'open' exhibitions, basing their discourse on archival documents, are extremely rare. One is forced to conclude that among *krayevedcheskiy* museums there are those that simply deny the existence of the Gulag, and those that, in Miller's formulation, forget about it through a process of 'understanding'. Or, if we follow Barthes's rhetoric, they create an 'inoculation', a 'myth' to hide the inconsistency of the system (Barthes, 1957, p. 152). In the case of this study, the system whose inconsistency is being hidden is Soviet governance.

Among the ten percent of museums that represent the Gulag, there are many examples that do so without proper documents and research, and rely instead on attempts to evoke visitors' empathy through reference to familiar tropes such as the shoe or feeding bowl, or through quotations from a well-known memoirist. The *krayevedcheskiy* museums that do include expositions about the Gulag share some of the following common traits:

First, different aspects of the repressions tend to remain displaced in regional and local contexts. Museums lack maps and materials from places that might literally connect them with the ground.

Second, in the same way, the history of the repressions frequently becomes depersonalized. Official representation almost completely ignores personal stories and biographies.

Third, in the majority of museums, no cause or consequence is shown. The Gulag and Repressions are presented as independent events, without any broader national context, and no reasons for or consequences of these events are explained. As events, they are not incorporated into broader narratives of the development of regional economies, cities, and transport infrastructures.

In conclusion, the evidence I have presented shows the Gulag as a huge geo-historical 'blank spots', erased both from geographical imagination and from historical narrative. These 'blank spots' are reproduced by *krayevedcheskiy* museums on a national, regional and local level as a large, socially-constructed emptiness.

The loosening of central control and monitoring of expositions could have allowed *krayevedcheskiy* museums to become places to contest well-rehearsed discourses about the place and role of the Repressions in the narrative of Soviet history. However, this has not happened. *Krayevedcheskiy* museums, while not influenced directly by Russian state propaganda, have not become a place to promote new understandings of Russian patriotism and identity.

Chapter 6. The construction of 'the Others' in *krayevedcheskiy* museums

Introduction

In the previous empirical chapters, I approached the way environment and history are understood and represented in the respective departments of *krayevedcheskiy* museums. These chapters described, how regional histories and geographies are depicted and represented through museum expositions and discussed the theoretical backgrounds of those expositions. They revealed the dominant historical and geographical narratives in *krayevedcheskiy* museums and defined the 'common unsaids' created by them. The third department in the 'classical' *krayevedcheskiy* museum represents society, although it was hardly ever formulated as a separate 'society department', and it underwent continuous change throughout the period of centralization. The Shneerson museum plan of 1929 proposed four departments, with 'Society' split between 'Historical-cultural' (which included 'all the significant sites of material and intellectual culture up to the present day', on the assumption that 'the development of culture was always dominated by questions of tools of production';) and 'Contemporary national economy and construction of socialism' (which 'aimed to provide a detailed analysis of each branch of the national economy and contemporary everyday life'). The same four-department structure was also recommended by *Glavnauka* in 1930. Yet subsequent changes in museum structure resulted in the exposition of three departments: Nature, History, and the Construction of Socialism. 'Society' was split between the two latter categories. I begin this chapter with an introduction to how I will conduct critical analysis of Soviet and Russian ideas of depicting 'Society' in museums.

There are many ways of considering the creation of 'common unsaids' in *krayevedcheskiy* museums' representation of people and their interactions, and how

these ‘common unsaids’ have changed since the collapse of the Soviet Union. And, among the potential topics for understanding ‘common unsaids’, the representation of Russian society today might be the most problematic of all. In recent years, political pressure on societal process in Russia has increased enormously: many social civil society institutions have been put under political pressure and accused of being a ‘foreign agency’, large-scale mass-media propaganda has replaced other popular narratives, and the promotion of ‘traditional family values’ and homophobic laws has become dominant in official societal norms. The Russian Orthodox Church has gained a lot of power and support from the government. Each of these topics represents an interesting case to study as part of *krayevedcheskiy* museum expositions, and reveal the extent to which *krayevedcheskiy* museums have become a place of promoting governmental narratives and ideas in the post-Soviet period. The exploration of how contemporary society is represented and what ‘common unsaids’ are represented in museums engages several research agendas including feminism, post-colonialism and political-economy; approach studying how women are represented; a neoliberal gaze approaching changes in the state economy and how that is shown in museums; the extent to which the Russian Church is present in the museum, etc. In this project, however, I want to focus on another, perhaps even more interesting, aspect of Soviet and Russian society.

In this chapter, I apply the concept of post-Soviet ‘military landscape’ in order to define problematic areas and conflict zones which tend to become a ‘common unsaid’ in contemporary Russian society, and to trace how they have developed since the Soviet period of centralization. Alongside ‘military landscapes’[59] I argue that zones of Russian and Soviet colonial expansion in the North and East should also be approached as examples of problematic and conflicted landscapes. The Russian and Soviet ‘North’ has always been special areas for Russians, who have come to various stages of building up

[59] See Chapter 1 of the thesis for the discussion

their agenda there. As Lilya Kaganovsky (2017) pointed out, the concept of the Russian 'North' applies equally to the Eastern and Southern regions which are deeply embedded in the same 'Northern' Russian mentality, such as Altay Republic, Amurskaya Oblast', Tuva Republic, and many others. These territories are usually addressed by central Russians as the spatial 'Other' (Kaganovsky, 2017). The emerging academic 'New Arctic' approach distinguishes five main stages of Western 'Central' presence in Northern regions: 'from heroic representations of Arctic exploration through to the International Polar Year (1932–1933), the post-1945 militarization of the Arctic, the International Geophysical Year (1957–1958), and the subsequent recasting of the Arctic as a fragile environmental bellwether' (Doel, Wråkberg and Zeller, 2014). In the Russian and Soviet cases, the stages were slightly different, but the overarching approach towards Northern regions remained the same. Serving first as an exploration frontier, then as a scientific and resource base, and then becoming a place of exile and penitentiary institutions, the Russian North and East were always in a sense 'military landscapes'.

Russian and Soviet deeds accomplished in the Northern and Eastern frontiers have always been part of patriotic narratives: these frontiers are the location of 'heroic' exploration, romantic geological expeditions, and represent a land of 'real men' in terms of militarization. Today the Russian Artic is facing a renewed military presence, and still serves as a resource base for oil and gas companies.

I have investigated how the story of Russian and Soviet presence in these regions is shown in *krayevedcheskiy* museums, revealing the darker side of this presence and its 'glorifying deeds' in the Northern and Eastern frontiers. In particular, I deconstruct the narratives of Russian Imperial and Soviet presence in these regions and reveal how local museums portray indigenous people. This will help build an understanding of how 'the Russians' are constructed more broadly against the backdrop of other ethnicities and

nationalities, and how the attitude towards national and Northern minorities has changed since Soviet time.

The Soviet 'national question' and *krayevedeniye*

As a precursor to a later analysis of the guidelines on representing nationalities in *krayevedcheskiy* museums, I begin by providing an overview of Soviet national policy and the role played by *krayevedeniye* in the development of policy. National policy in the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union has been widely discussed in various scholarly contributions. The main problem for the governments throughout the years was that of uniting various ethnicities and nationalities under one umbrella to strengthen the central governance in distant areas. The Soviet policy on 'national questions' was frequently based on ethnographic knowledge and ideas produced during Imperial Russia and under the Soviet regime.

According to Cvetkovski (Cvetkovski and Hofmeister, 2014) ethnography is often involved in state-building, especially in imperial processes. Moreover, ethnography is frequently seen as a discipline to justify new imperial instruments of control over colonial territories (ibid, p.50), engaging with 'quasi-ethnographic engineering' and supporting the development of ethnography as an academic discipline. Cvetkovski sees ethnographic knowledge (especially in Russia) as mostly politicised, and his argument is supported by many scholars including Hirsh (Hirsch, 2000, 2005) and Slezkine (Slezkine, 1991,1994).

Russian territories were starting to form into a single state in the late Middle Ages through expansion towards its northern and eastern frontiers in Eurasia. It was in parallel with this annexation that the problem of dealing with other ethnicities and the diversity of cultural and faith communities emerged. From then to the present day the Russian government has been attempting to find a way to deal with this diversity and implement this method into state policy (Cvetkovski and Hofmeister, 2014). That has become the focus of the work of many scholars, who approached various ways of developing national

policies at different periods in the country's history[60]. Both the Tsar's regime and the Bolsheviks sought to unite all citizens, but the former sought to do so under the banner of a classless utopia and socialism, while the latter sought unity through a constant attempt to incorporate multi-ethnicity into the Russian Empire's official policy. The Soviet regime, according to Slezkine, developed a clear concept of nationality precisely because it wanted to overcome it. So, speaking quite broadly about the differences between Imperial Russian and Soviet attempts to deal with ethnic diversity, the Imperials sought to 'emphasize and strengthen' heterogeneity, while the Communists sought to implement universalism (Slezkine, 1991).

Moreover, Slezkine (Slezkine, 1991, p.480) describes Soviet national policy as one 'devised and carried out by nationalists'. The nations in the Soviet Union were seen as an 'historically evolved, stable community based on a common language, territory, economic life and psychological make-up manifested in a community of culture'. Despite the range of disagreements present in debates, Leninist-Stalinist national policy was based on this understanding of how nationalities function. One of the main contradictions identified by Slezkine is seen in the juxtaposition of the Soviet claim that 'all nations are equal' and the idea that there exist 'backward' and 'civilized' nations.

The process of enlightening these 'backward' nations was part of Stalin's cultural revolution announced in 1929 to bring all regions and people to socialism. According to Hirsh the revolution promised to turn 'all the "primitive" classes and tribes into Soviet citizens' (Hirsch, 2000, p.189)—and *krayevedeniye* played an important role in that process.

[60] See, for example, Catherine Black Clay, *Ethos and Empire: The Ethnographic Expedition of the Imperial Naval Ministry, 1855–1862* (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1989); Yuri Slezkine, *Arctic Mirrors: Russia and the Small Peoples of the North* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994); Daniel R. Brower and Edward J. Lazzerini, eds., *Russia's Orient: Imperial Borderlands and Peoples, 1700–1917* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997).

When speaking about the 'national question' and *krayevedeniye*, two different levels of discussion should be distinguished. The first relates to the role of *krayevedeniye* as a method of knowledge production and, thus, of education in these 'backward' regions; the second relates to the representation of certain nations in *krayevedcheskiy* museums.

Krayevedeniye was an important part of Stalin's cultural package in enlightening 'backward' nationalities (for example in Chukotka, part of the 'cultural enlightenment package' consisted of *krayeved*, teacher, veterinary, and cinematographer). The tasks of 'national *krayevedeniye*' were fully defined by the general line of Soviet national policy, which correlated to the right of a nation for 'self-determination until separation'. Apart from that, the important task of *krayevedeniye* was in constructing cultures 'national in form and social in content' (Toletov, 1947). Describing the role of *krayevedeniye* in the nation's social development, in the lectures dedicated to the *Krayevedeniye* and the nationalities of USSR one of the scholars of *krayevedeniye* – Sergey Toletov cites the resolution about 'national questions' of the X Communist Party Congress in 1921 which stated that the task of the Party is to 'help the working class of non 'Great Russian' nationalities to catch up with central Russia'. It outlined four strategies to achieve this goal: 1) the development and enforcement of Soviet governance in the forms that corresponds with national lifestyle, 2) the development and enforcement of national court, administration, and economical authorities from local people 'who know the national lifestyle and psychology', and in the national language, 3) the development of the press, schools, theatres, houses of culture and cultural institutions in the local language, and 4) the development of a wide network of courses and schools in the national language. There were several traits of *krayevedeniye* that could classify it as 'chauvinistic', and among others Toletov underlines the attempts to create links between capitalistic nationalities outside the USSR, promoting the idea of 're-union as a form of supporting imperialistic intervention against the USSR',

and paying too much attention to local history and the 'great ancestors' to cover the role of Soviets (Toletov, 1947).

Although these were the tasks *krayevedeniye* was supposed to be working towards, they do not refer specifically to the museums' expositions. In what follows, I will examine the guidelines that existed concerning the representation of ethnographic materials in *krayevedcheskiy* museums, and explore how that was part of larger processes of national policies in the Soviet Union (Stalin, 1950, p. 51).

'Nationalities' in Soviet *krayevedcheskiy* museums

Francine Hirsch, in her book *Empire of Nations: Ethnographic Knowledge and the Making of the Soviet Union*, analyses the role of ethnographical knowledge and national policy in the Ethnographic exhibitions in the early Soviet era and their correspondence with national policy (Hirsch, 2005). Her study provides us with a useful overview to understand how *krayevedcheskiy* museums functioned in this context. In her research, Hirsh mainly addresses the Ethnographic Department of the Russian Museum in Leningrad and traces how changes in Soviet national policy influenced its exhibitions agenda and design. She describes the shift from presenting the 'the exotic dress, traditional culture, and religious beliefs of the diverse peoples' in the 1920s to representing the same groups as people 'experiencing a period of unusually rapid economic and cultural uplift', but who 'still needed assistance to overcome the powerful pull of traditional beliefs and customs' in 1930s. The Ethnographic Department of the Russian Museum was one of the main state-building institutions between 1923 and 1934. Hirsh claims that the department's influence reached far beyond Leningrad; apparently, the representatives of distant regional museums travelled to the USSR just to see its collections and exhibitions (Hirsch, 2005, p.190). In other words, Hirsch approaches the Ethnographic Department as the model example for all regional museums, including *krayevedcheskiy* museums. Yet, *krayevedcheskiy* museums were never directly

governed or controlled by the Russian Museum. They came under the control of *Narkompros* even earlier than the Ethnographic Department and followed guidelines issued by the Central Bureau of *Krayevedeniye* (before 1937) and the Institute of *Krayevedeniye* (after 1937).

Thus, I argue that it is an oversimplification to view the ethnographical departments of *krayevedcheskiy* museums as attempts to create replicas of the Ethnographic Department in the Russian Museum. *Krayevedcheskiy* museums were following specific guidelines, described below, which aimed to strengthen the Lenin-Stalin nationalities policy concerning places and to create expositions with goals and methods other than those at play in Moscow and Leningrad. However, they certainly can be seen as cases of the regional policy of national state building and the implementation of national policy.

The guidelines and discussions concerning the depiction of nationalities in *krayevedcheskiy* museums began to appear relatively late—the majority of archival documents on ethnographical materials in the museums date from the late 1940s. The reason for this is that the members of the first museum conference in 1930 were strictly against ethnography in a museum, stating that 'we can build a real socialist museum only so long as we don't insert ethnography into it' (Takoyeva, 1949, p. 2-3). The reason for that presumably was in as new soviet *krayevedcheskiy* museums was define as the one 'looking for the present and future', rather than presenting past. This approach was later criticised and ethnography became an integral to museums. However, it was presented as part of history, with ethnographic materials used to trace the historical development of different nations. A clear division was made between the representation of pre-Soviet and Soviet ethnographical materials. The former were required to represent the everyday life of a nation, national crafts and art, and tools of production of material goods. The ethnographical materials in the Soviet department, by contrast, ought to show the

'enormous changes' that happened in the lifestyle of people under socialism, in terms of their rights, life, and culture.

According to Takoyeva and Levin (both – authors of guidelines on ethnography in *krayevedcheskiy* museums), the main principle should be historical, and a nation should be shown in its development from pre-Revolutionary times to the Soviet era. Attention should be paid to the economic construction of a nation and its everyday life, 'according to historical method' (Takoyeva, 1949; Levin, 1950).

Later on in the '*Voprosy istorii sovetskogo perioda v museyakh avtonomnykh respublik, avtonomnykh oblastey, natsionalnykh okrugov RSFSR*[61] (Dobrusnikin, 1952, p.p. 45-57) the Soviet departments were supposed to show how the national question was solved by representing the following:

1. that the Great Social October Revolution and the enforced dictatorship of the proletariat resulted in the total liquidation of national oppression and the establishment of national equality. Expositions should, therefore, highlight that this was only possible because the 1917 revolution stripped power from the exploitative classes.

2. how the Soviet multinational state developed historically, and how it united Soviet national republics in 1922.

3. how, at different stages of construction of the socialism, Soviet social nations were consolidating, and how the historical program of the liquidation of real inequality, economical, and cultural backwardness was carried out.

4. The whole exposition should be penetrated by the idea that only under the peoples' friendship the national state system, economy and culture of nations of Soviet Union could be possible.

[61] '*Voprosy istorii sovetskogo perioda v museyah avtonomnyh respublik, avtonomnyh oblastey, natcionalnyh okrugov RSFSR'* (Rus) – The questions of Soviet history in the museums of autonomous republics, autonomous regions and national districts of Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic

All the guidelines on the exposition of *krayevedcheskiy* ethnographical materials emphasise the clear division between the bourgeois 'ethnographies' of the pre-Soviet time and Soviet ethnography. The former is usually set apart as those collecting and representing the 'curiosities' and 'beautiful' objects; the Soviets, however, should focus on 'complexes of labour' and 'objects of everyday life' (Levin, 1948)! The shift from one perspective to another took place in the 1930s, when Marxism began to be applied to ethnographical materials. The main interest (by Levin) of this period was aligned with the party tasks concerning social building in the regions. The idea of presenting typical objects rather than 'curiosities' lies in the very core of the idea of a *krayevedcheskiy* museum (see Chapter 3) and can be traced in the exposition techniques used to show society (Levin, 1948).

Special attention of authorities imposing guidelines was paid to the museums located in the national autonomous republics, regions, and national districts. Museums there took on the functions of 'enlightening' (educating), propaganda, and representations of national history. The aim was to represent 'the historical path of a *kray* in the post-Revolution period in inseparable connection with our great Motherland'. Museums were required to construct expositions on the overarching idea that 'the new socialistic face of a *kray*' is a result of 'the politics of the Communist Party and the Soviet state, the result of Lenin-Stalinist theory and the program of solving the national question' (Dobrusnikin, 1952, p.3). Moreover, *krayevedcheskiy* museums in these regions should, in their expositions, present particular materials which show the friendship and help they gained from more developed Soviet nations—and first of all from the 'Great Russian Nation', which helped the rapid development of their culture and economics (*ibid*, p. 58).

Thus, *krayevedcheskiy* museums in the USSR were understood as playing a vital role in resolving the 'national question', helping to promote Stalin's national policy and acting as enlightening centres for 'backward' nations in autonomous regions.

Krayevedcheskiy museums in Northern and Far-Eastern regions can be approached through a post-colonial perspective, as they are the museums in regions what we might want to call with a 'difficult past', where culture and identity suffered under the colonial expansion of the Soviet regime. According to Per B. Rekdal in his contributions 'Peace is never neutral' to the 'Museums and Truth' (Fromm, Golding and Rekdal, 2014) 'museums in former colonies have been and are important in securing peace by conveying the idea of political unity on the national level, at the same time taking care of and showing diversity within the nation' (ibid, 25). Museums in former colonies are frequently seen as the institutions with the function of teaching the public 'about the unpleasant aspects of their history' (ibid, p. 27), playing 'a vital role in defining and showing common grounds that can be cherished by all' (ibid, p.27). On the other hand, Rekdal anticipates that the museums could sometimes promote 'the consolidation of artificial entities originally created by the unjust and unlawful act of colonialism' (ibid, p.28). This perspective, applied to the *krayevedcheskiy* museums in the Northern and Eastern regions of Russia, can reveal whether any work has been done by the museums to reflect the Soviet colonial processes which occurred in the region.

The 'common unsaids' that were pre-programmed by Soviet *krayevedeniye* and ideological pressure of governmental 'national program' are the other side of 'enlightening backward nations' coin. The only possible narrative that was created glorified the Soviet present and the socialist §future of the national minorities. In fact, these people felt a different level of pressure on their culture, language and lifestyle that was not yet acknowledged by the centre. In what follows I discuss the representation of indigenous people in regional and local *krayevedcheskiy* museums, as well as the representation of Soviet people and ethnic Russians, in order to show the extent to which these 'common unsaids' remain a feature of *krayevedcheskiy* museums today.

National minorities in contemporary *krayevedcheskiy* museums

Earlier in this chapter I provided an overview of the ideas of how Soviet society was supposed to be represented in Soviet *krayevedcheskiy* museums. I have shown the development of ideas about how Soviet society should be represented, and where 'common unsaids' occurred in these representations.

In this part of the chapter I show how different nationalities and ethnicities are represented in the society department of contemporary Russian *krayevedcheskiy* museums, as seen in my case studies. As mentioned earlier, the borders of 'society' departments are blurred; therefore, my analysis may occasionally include objects and artefacts displayed in nature and history departments which nonetheless tell the story of how society works.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union many changes occurred in the way people approached their own society and everyday life; the country, and society itself, had changed. Therefore, as the basic principles of society's composition were different from those under the Soviets, we might also expect a difference in the way contemporary Russian society is shown in *krayevedcheskiy* museums.

The Constitution of the Russian Federation begins with the statement 'We, the multinational people of the Russia Federation…' and, according to Articles 19 and 29, the equal rights for the people of all ethnicities, genders, and nationalities are guaranteed. , It is a reasonable expectation that people of all ethnicities, genders, and nationalities are given equal representation in *krayevedcheskiy* museums. As a starting point, I turned my attention to the representation of people of different ethnicities, nationalities, and genders in a number of case study museums in order to identify the Soviet 'common unsaids' still present, and any new ones occurring after the collapse of the Soviet Union. I do this through the examination of several case studies. My expectation was that I would find that 'Russians' are constructed in colonial discourses towards national ethnicities and

minorities and inherit the way in which Soviets, before them, were constructed and presented. I assume, further, that it would be problematic to find a *krayevedcheskiy* museum constructing 'Russians' at a distance to 'Soviets', which would critically underline the difference between the two societies, and, theoretically, would have helped locals build their identity separately from Soviets.

I start by tracing the representation of national minorities and indigenous peoples in the museums of Yakutia, Chukotka, and Tomskaya Oblast'. These are the case study regions where, according to the official list, indigenous people are present. I have also used *krayevedcheskiy* museums in Tatarstan as a case studies, since these are situated in regions where are other nations and ethnicities are present. In the Republic of Tatarstan, according to official statistics, Russians make up less than 40% of the population, with the majority of the population—over 50%— Tatar. There is a similar situation in the Republic of Yakutia, where Russians count for less than 50% of the population, although the titular population of Yakuts do not make up a majority. Chukotka is in a similar situation as Yakutia.

Northern minorities in *krayevedcheskiy* museums

Yakutia Republic

Yakutia is a good starting point because of its diverse etnic composition; apart from Russians and Yakuts, there are also a number of representatives of the Small-Numbered Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East (including the Yuakirgs, Nentsi, Evenki, and Dolgany). The history behind the ethnic diversity of Yakutia is interesting: according to historians, the Yakuts came to the region from the South in the 14th to 15th centuries and displaced the indigenous peoples already there, taking the most productive soils and territories for themselves; later, in the 16 – 17th centuries, Russians began to appear and to settle the region. Today, the number of Russians and Yakuts is respectively 50% and 37%, while the Northern minority populations constitute around 5% collectively. Thus,

apart from the colonial narrative of Russians and Soviets settling the region, there is also the narrative of Yakuts who colonised this area and displaced the indigenous population. The dual nature of this ethnic composition means that the representation of three different groups have to be considered in the Yakutsk museum: the Northern minority populations, the Yakuts, and the Russians.

Since there is no separate society department in the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Yakutsk today, I have relied on artefacts in the nature and history departments to build up a picture of population representation. The rooms are laid out in order using the landscape approach, moving from the northern part of Yakutia to the southern, but within these, –the people depicted in these landscapes seem, surprisingly, to belong to different time periods.

The first room in the chain is dedicated to prehistoric artefacts. The design simulates an underground cave with inclusions of permafrost, which apparently serves to refer visitors to objects found in the earth. The first thing to capture the viewer's attention is the giant skeleton of a mammoth placed in the middle of the room. The remains of mammoths in general have deep symbolic resonance in Yakutia and are approached as part of its natural heritage; images of mammoths can be widely found in souvenirs and other commercial products. In fact, a separate museum dedicated to mammoths recently opened in Yakutsk, and a mammoth monument in the city plays a significant role in the urban public environment, as, for example, a common location for wedding photo-shoots in the city. The second piece in the room to capture the attention is a set of robotic models of 'primitive people' engineered by the University of Tomsk in 2005 to represent early Yakutians. The models were donated to the Yakutsk Museum in 2006. The 'primitive people' comprise a family (mother, father, and child) sitting in a cave, imitating an everyday routine accompanied by incomprehensible grunting sounds The installation is in motion: the woman pestles, looking out of the cave to the audience and gasping, while

the man is communicating with the child. This installation has no labels or explanation. It presents a very general and simplified idea about the lifestyle of prehistoric people in the region.

These two main sets of objects—the mammoth and the primitive family group—are surrounded by cases containing a mix of natural and human-made objects. It is noteworthy that the artificial (hand-made) and natural artefacts are mixed together in the representation of each distinct period of evolution and geological history. Different eras (such as the Palaeolithic or Mesolithic) are represented by human-made tools. Most have labels showing their place of discovery and estimation of date. Natural artefacts include bones and the remains of different animals, or photographs of them. While the 'natural' or physical objects are spread randomly across the room, the human-made artefacts are organized in topological order within each era. Apart from this, the display also contains some necklaces, amulets, and magical objects. Cases containing these objects represent a certain set of ideas about the objects and their correspondence with each other. In addition, there are several small depictions showing scenes of everyday life from different eras. Some of these depict landscapes in which dinosaurs and other prehistoric animals feature alongside humans, despite the fact that they did not exist at the same time.



Figure 6.1 The display in room 1 of the 'prehistoric' family, *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Yakutsk, 2015

The second room is a narrow corridor with two displays (cycloramas). The annotation mount is dedicated to the indigenous people of the North (figure 6.2). Four A4 sheets accompany four black and white images, and describe the Chukchis, the Evens, the Evenks, and the Yukaghir. According to Yakutian official data about national minorities, there is at least one more ethnic minority not present in the exposition: the Dolgans.



Figure 6.2 The representation of national minorities in *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Yakutsk, 2015

The photographs are full-length portraits of people in 'traditional' clothes standing in front of their houses. Each ethnic group is described in terms of self-designation, population size, language, ethnic history, and traditional farming methods, housing, and clothing. Some descriptions also include religion and means of transport. The mount is followed by an installation depicting an extremely general 'indigenous' person, lacking any reference to a particular ethnicity. The installation shows an indigenous man sitting in front of a background painting of the pristine and virgin landscape of the northern territories. The man is surrounded by set of different objects, including spiritual items, tools, and means of survival (a boat, a shotgun, a pulk or sledge), and various objects of everyday use). It is hard to determine from the exhibit whether these objects were collected from Northern minorities directly or created by museum workers specifically for

the installation. However, it can be seen as an attempt to reconstruct a scene from everyday life, and is placed in an open case, which brings it closer to the viewer.



Figure. 6.3. The expositions in the second room, with mannequin of a 'northern' man. *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Yakutsk, 2015

A single sign in Russian is put up to label the whole installation. This sign makes one reference to the man's ethnicity—he is named 'Evenk in traditional clothes'—and includes a description of the objects used by the Evenks. Overall, the ethnic minorities are represented by twenty-three items, including the Evenk mannequin. It does not represent the present-day lifestyle of the Northern minorities. The viewer is left without any information of how and where the Evenki live today

What is really striking is the fact that the Northern minority peoples are presented in the nature department, rather than, for example, the history department, and they are shown respectively in the areas in which they used to live, as understood by the curators. The exhibition does not provide an overview of the different lifestyles of these people, nor

does it show how their modern lifestyle might differ from their life under the Soviet regime. It does not tell any story about these people at all, but simply locates them in the area of their habitation, in a geographical perspective which is, in itself, questionable. The Small Numbered People of North peoples are left with no names, no stories of how their lifestyle developed through history, and no information about their current lifestyle. From my perspective, they seem not to be present—as people—in the museum at all. The approach to Northern minorities in the region creates an enormous 'blank spot' surrounding the place of Yakutian, Soviet, and Russian colonisation of these territories.

Moving on from an analysis of the representation of Northern minorities, let us examine the representation of another major group in the museum. Yakutia's population is 50% Yakut. How, then, are they represented in the museum?

Like the so-called Small Numbered People of North, the Yakuts are represented in the same section of the nature department. The largest hall is dedicated to Central Yakutia and its lowlands. It continues to merge the representation of the lifestyle of the people (the Yakuts) and natural environment. The period before the Yakut colonization of the region is described by one map showing the distribution of Kyrgyz Kaganat in the 7th to 12th centuries. The humans living in the region in this period are named on the map as 'Yakutian tribes of the early iron age', while the whole map dates back to the 7th to 12th centuries.

The representation of the Yakuts consists of several reconstructions depicting their lifestyle from the 14th to 18th centuries, although certain objects and installations do not have any further time specification. There are two major displays of Yakut everyday life, one of which is undated and one of which dated to XVI century. The first shows a family living in a traditional Yakut Balagan (a type of nomad tent), with a woman near a mortar and pestle and a man and child sitting at a table. The people are represented by mannequins surrounded by everyday objects. The second display represents a male

Yakut sitting with a scythe, a hay hock, and an ox against a background picture of the lowlands of Central Yakutia. More than eighty items of everyday use are shown, representing the culture and lifestyle of Yakutsk in the period before the arrival of Russians. Signage in this part of the display sometimes provides the names of objects in Yakutian, transliterated into Russian.



Figure 6.4. Reconstruction of Yakut lifestyle (undated), Yakutsk *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2015.

A further small section represents the 'traditional beliefs' of the Yakuts, although this too is provided without further specification or dating of artefacts.

Thus, Yakuts are represented by a generalized overview of their lifestyle in the middle ages. This group of people are presented as belonging to the particular

landscapes in which they are depicted.[62] The museum exposition continues with the so-call Human-Society department. This department is actually a history department which, according to the display as a whole, starts with the Russian invasion; thus, considering that it is called 'Human and Society', 'society' apparently stands in for Russian society only.

The department consists of a range of rooms arranged in a linear fashion, aiming to navigate the visitor throughout the display in chronological order. The rooms are bigger than the tiny halls found in the nature department, and therefore provide viewers with more freedom to approach parts of the display out of order. The department's display starts with the 17th century, when Yakutia was annexed by the Russian Empire. The display shows the first Russian explorers in the region and their everyday life through a set of objects and artefacts. There are models of the first churches built in the region, alongside old, black and white photographs of new agricultural techniques imported by Russians, and of pupils in the first schools; these objects all depict the social institutions implemented at that time. The process of Christianization was followed by rapid church-building in the region, and appears in the exposition as 'an important part for the establishment of governance in Yakutia. The acceptance of Christianity contributes to the establishment of deeper economic and cultural connections between Russians and indigenous people and the spread of agriculture.' (the citation is from the label in the exposition).

The department thus provides an overview of how Yakutia and the Yakutian region was taken over by Russians, and which social institutions (educational, industrial, and

[62] The above descriptions are of how nature-human or society-environment relations were depicted in 2014. It is once more important to underline the fact that the display was organized according to the Conception of the Development of the Museum, and approved both by the Ministry of Culture and the President of the Republic, which means that the exposition reflects the predominant views of the local authorities about the content of representations of the nature-human interaction. It is not a private independent museum, which could make displays according its own agenda, but rather one belonging to a major national governmental cultural and scientific institution of Yakutia.

religious) were implemented to legitimate Russian (and later Soviet) power in the region. I would summarise my impression of the department as the attempt to characterize by different attributes which occurred within the republic and influence of Russian invasion on the Yakuts. The Small Numbered People of North are not represented in this section at all. The extent to which the Great Patriotic War (as the key event in that section) has influenced their everyday life of people in the region, and whether and how they were involved, remains obscure. This is something we have seen earlier in regulating documents produced in Soviet times: that individual nations should be represented only as part of the overarching discourse of the Soviet Union's creation.

The division between 'Nature-Human' and 'Human-Society' is very clearly chronological: humans cease to be seen as part of 'Nature' and become part of 'Society' only after the Russian occupation of the region. This casting of indigenous peoples as 'Others', as people more dependent on nature, is pushed to the limit by their placement within the respective landscapes where they 'live'. Such a narrative excludes the possibility of indigenous people moving to a city or village in Yakutsk or elsewhere and becoming a part of what is shown as 'contemporary society'.

Apart from the nationalities listed and discussed above, Yakutia was also one of the regions to which many German and Polish inhabitants of the Soviet Union were exiled. According to some estimates between 1934 and 1940 approximately 10,000 Finnish, Polish, and German people were exiled from central Russia to Yakutia. They are not presented in the exposition at all, neither as an historical fact, nor as a social group.

So, in conclusion, non-Russian ethnicities are presented in the Yakutsk museum through sets of scenes showing generalized pictures of everyday life of various national minorities, some of which are backdated. These groups of people are not included in the societal narrative or events, but set apart from Russian society through a range of both

exposition and narrative methods. Russian and Soviet history and society (there is little about post-Soviet times) remains predominant in the region, despite the presence of other ethnicities. Thus, the kind of exposition in Yakutsk almost completely excludes national minorities from the presentation of contemporary life in the region, and they are not integrated in to the narrative of development. The Yakuts are presented in both departments, but in a way that serves only to underscore the dominance of Russian influence in the region. The way ethnicities other than Russian are represented—both Yakuts and Northern minorities—is a means of underlining the leading role of Russians and, in all possible manners, the outstanding role of Russians in the region. That is quite a heritage of Soviet colonization narrative that we have seen in the guiding documents.

So 'common unsaids' here stand for the current lifestyle of non-Russians in the region (for example, in the big cities), the state of their culture and language. The other 'common unsaid' is on the other side of Russian colonization of these territories, which are not revealed as well. The consequences of forced relocation, implementation of *kolkhozy* for the reindeer herrings, Soviet *byt* (cities, schools, culture and language) are all left unspoken. While some topics are just a 'black spot' (completely excluded), others are just backdated, people are *folklorised* and taken away from XX century society representation. Furthermore, 'common unsaids' are omitting the discussion on the nature of power (colonial) relationship between centre and periphery and Slavs and non-Slavs.

This representation today is the direct heritage of the Soviet approach and Soviet national policy, which despite declarations about the equality of all nations, in fact constructed Soviet identity as above national identities. The Yakuts and Northern minorities are in fact excluded from today's society; their everyday life, habits, and means of living are not traced through to the present time.

Chukotka

As a comparison to Yakutsk, we turn now to the museum in Chukotka to see how indigenous people are presented in *krayevedcheskiy* museums there. history- The dominant event in the history of Chukotka that underpins the common unsaid in its *krayevedscheskiy* museums and, also, defines it's a zone of conflict, was the forced relocation of indigenous people which took place in the 1950s and 1960s. At this time, the Chukcha and Eskimos in the region were forced to relocate from their indigenous settlements into modern Soviet villages. It was part of the Soviet package of 'enlightening' backwards people: children were sent to residential educational camps and forced to learn Russian, and hunters and fishermen were corralled into *kolkhozy*.

I have chosen three museums in Chukotka to examine how Soviets and Russians, on the one hand, and indigenous people, on the other, are presented in expositions, and how the story of forced relocation is depicted in them.

The first of my case study museums is found in Anadyr'. This museum, as I mentioned in a previous chapter, was recently redesigned by a Moscow-based team of design experts. The Soviet-era departments were replaced by numerous small installations, the ideas behind which remain uncertain. The exposition in Anadyr' represents society from pre–historical times to the present day. Overall, the feel of the exposition is completely the opposite to that of the Yakutsk museum. All of the 'scenes' and installations mix artefacts and objects normally associated with the indigenous lifestyle together with those normally connected with 'Russians'.



Figure. 6.5. The expositions in the Anadyr' *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2016.

Items which 'normally' characterize the lifestyle of indigenous people and are associated with them are juxtaposed with those representing a 'contemporary' lifestyle – see for example figure 6.5. It seems that placing some of 'indigenous' items (clothes, a carpet on the wall, an animal tusk) alongside with 'contemporary' (such as pair of jeans and t-shirt) is an attempt to create a feeling of inclusion of indigenous people in Chukotka's modern society.

Moreover, the museums do speak about Soviet and Russian presence in the region. There is a specific section on the figure 6.6 dedicated to the pre-revolutionary XIX

century expeditions of Russians in the Far North and the exploration of Russians in the peninsula. The fact that this topic is featured at all, is a novel way of depicting the Russian invasion of Siberia and the Far East differing from the simple colonial perspective we observed in Yakutsk. In Anadyr''s museum we are shown a set of objects describing the lifestyle of a member of one of these exploratory expeditions: the display is centred around a 'tent', symbolic of exploration in the region. This method of presentation still lacks a critical approach and does not reveal the negative sides of Soviet presence in the region, but it does challenge the 'traditional' Soviet representation of the Russians as the bringers of civilisation and enlightenment to 'backward' regions. However, the set of artefacts on display in the exposition, neither reveals what the Soviet presence meant for indigenous people, nor discusses the consequences of the forced relocation of indigenous people in late Soviet times.



Figure. 6.6 The expositions in the Anadyr' *krayevedcheskiy* museum, 2016.

The exposition in Anadyr' (figures 6.5 - 6.6), therefore, is set at a distance from the Soviet way of presenting nationalities; it shows the indigenous people as part of present-day society, but do not try to create a balanced representation of what happened to indigenous populations during Soviet times.

For my second case study museum in the region of Chukotka I selected the most distant one, located in Lavrentiya (figure 6.7). This museum in Lavrentiya is run by indigenous people, and the second one - in Provideniya, whose directors were ex-Soviet teachers came to the region.

The museums in the far north of Chukotka peninsula are remarkable for a range of reasons. I visited two museums which were extremely hard to reach: there are no roads, only a handful of flights per year, and no ferries. These distant villages are completely isolated and their only visitors are scientists, which number 10–15 per year. Lavrentiya is a village, and the administrative centre of the *rayon* (administrative and municipal district). The majority of its inhabitants are Chukchi and Eskimo, who were relocated there in the 1960s and who have no reason—and no resources—to return to an indigenous lifestyle. There are almost no Russian inhabitants and the village survives on whale hunting, which is allowed under license for indigenous people in Russia.


Figure. 6.7. Overview of the main square and main street of Lavrentiya, 2016

Despite Lavrentiya's isolation and its life at the very edges of survival, there is a *krayevedcheskiy* museum in the village run by several people. I believe that the *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Lavrentiya is the museum furthest from Moscow, and, in my search for an alternative to central-line narratives, I was curious to find out to what extent the narrative might differ in this, the most distant of museums. The museum occupies several rooms on the first floor of a residential building and acts as a one of the cultural centres of the village—another is the library. The museum staff are all local and one of the key figures, the ex-director, is an Eskimo woman by the name of Elizaveta Alikhanovna Dobriyeva, the daughter of Ali Dobriyev. The Dobriyevi are Ingush (Northeast Caucasian) brothers who came to Chukotka at the beginning of the 20th century after they failed to succeed hunting gold in Alaska. One of the brothers settled down in Chukotka and married an Eskimo woman. This marked the beginning of the

Dobriyev dynasty, which was referred to in various Soviet newspapers and books. The museum's former director originates from this famous family. Along with others, her family was relocated from their indigenous settlement of Naukan, on the Denev peninsula, at that time the easternmost settlement in Eurasia. In 1958 the decision to relocate people from Naukan was made; all the Eskimo were randomly placed in nearby villages, which served to almost completely demolish the village's unique dialect of the Eskimo language. Dobriyeva was one of those moved to Lavrentiya as a child and she likes telling stories of how they used to live in Yranga before moving to Lavrentiya. This forced relocation in the recent experience of locals has completely shaped their present life and caused them a multitude of problems. This relocation was part of the program of *Narkompros*, designed to enlighten and educate the 'backward' indigenous people (Krupnik and Chlenov, 2007). The processes locals faced during the late 1950s and early 1960s are similar to those faced by national minorities in Canada, but in Russia their influence on locals is still not acknowledged.



Figure. 6.8. 'Ethnographical' department of *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Lavrentiya, 2016

Despite the fact that the story of relocation is crucial to the identity of the local community and the museum director's family, in particular, there is no references to the re-location in the museum. In fact, the exposition there is quite depersonalized.

The museum consists of several rooms set up to reproduce the classical Nature-History-Society structure. The museum begins with an undated Soviet poster, 'Pages of history', which outlines the history of Chukotsky *rayon* and Lavrentiya from 1909 as the history of the fluctuating borders of Soviet administrative regions and the development of Soviet settlements. The two main mounts placed directly in the entrance present the history of the settlement and posters dedicated to the Great Patriotic War—not the original posters but black and white copied prints of the images. The museum, in general, tells the story of the settlement from the Soviet perspective, and following Soviet ideas of how a place's story should be represented.



Figure. 6.9. 'Ethnographical' department of *krayevedcheskiy* museum in Lavrentiya, 2016

Apart from the nature department that, predictably, consists of stuffed animals and lots of fur industry as I described in Chapter 4, the museum shows various artefacts of the Eskimo and Chuckcha lifestyles. The museum collection consists partly of original items and partly of replicas. The relationships between the museum's directors and the archaeological expeditions working in the region are uncertain; many places in Chukotka are still active excavation sites, including graves, and many objects and artefacts have been taken to the State Museum of Oriental Art in Moscow. For this reason, many items in the Lavrentiya museum are copies. However, at the same time, the museum does have rare originals in its collection, such as the unique toggling harpoon with a 'flying creature' on top, one of the rare examples of a full complex of Eskimo harpoons in the world.

In a sense, the museum in Lavrentiya is unique, as it is run by relocated indigenous people who may still remember their lifestyle before they were relocated. The museum they run is based on the Soviet model of a *krayevedcheskiy* museum but also shows the indigenous populations' life before the Soviets. It is an interesting example of a place where oral history and personal memory coexist alongside their museum representation, albeit the indigenous lifestyle before Soviet invasion is represented according to the Soviet guidelines and ideas. Despite the high involvement of people who were directly affected by Soviet policy, the curators of the Lavrentiya museum have not taken the opportunity offered by the end of central control to represent an alternative version of the history of their people.

My third case study is the museum in Provideniya, the administrative centre of Chukotka's Provideniya district. This museum is run by Russians who were sent to Provideniya by the Soviet system of distributing graduates across the country. While the museum is an official branch of the Anadyr' museum, the changes that happened in Anadyr' have not occurred here. The museum in Provideniya also tells the story of its village and surrounding areas, based on a Soviet chronology. The museum display starts with material from the early 1930s, as though nothing existed in the region before then. The exposition portrays the Soviet presence in the region as the story of the discovery of these lands by the Russians and Soviets. It consists of various objects associated with 'discovery expeditions' and 'colonial discourse': a globe, maps, binoculars, maps,

postcards, and so on. They all are presented as part of a ‘typical Soviet explorer’ interior (figure 6.9).



Figure. 6.10. *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Provideniya, 2016

The other face of Soviet presence in the region, the forced relocation of local Eskimo and Chukcha, is presented by one mount entitled ‘Ancient and contemporary settlements of South-Eastern part of Chukotka’, framed by whale bone remains (figure 6.10). This is the first time we have seen the relocations featuring in a museum in Chukotka. The mount presents several black and white historical images alongside a map showing the historical location of indigenous settlements. It also shows a present-day overview of some of the settlements. However, while the display describes the relocation, it provides no clue as to why and by whom the indigenous people were moved, nor does it discuss where they were moved to or how the relocation influenced their identity, language, and traditional lifestyle. It simply presents the fact that this happened, in a room set in between the ‘Soviet’ exposition and the ‘indigenous’ part.



Figure. 6.11. *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Provideniya, 2016

This method of presenting a narrative is an unequivocal example of what I call 'bubbling': introducing events in the region as a 'simple' matter of fact without cause or consequence. In other words, it disconnects events from their broader historical and societal context and provides no explanation about their origins. The 'common unsaid' in this case, is the circumstances and traumatic experiences of the forced relocation of indigenous people, their subsequent '-integration' into new cities and of the culture that they lost. This display is the sole reference in the museum to Soviet approach to national minorities, Stalin's national policy, and the idea of advancing 'backward' ethnicities. These narratives generally completely absent, with a small piece admitted at all: the fact that there were other settlements apart from Soviet ones. The indigenous people living in

the region before the Soviets are presented in a predictable manner, through sets of tools of production placed in typological order and through collections of cultural artefacts. Their modern presence is shown by a range of crafts still produced by indigenous people today.

The museum in Provideniya is quite predictable, but for one uniquely interesting mount that breaks free from the *krayevedcheskiy* tradition. The mount in question presents 'Beringia', a self-defined region uniting Alaska and Chukotka, and presents the story of their interconnection. Against the backdrop of the unsettled relationships between Russia and the USA, the presence of this interconnection appears brave at the very least, and jumps out of the museum's overarching narrative.

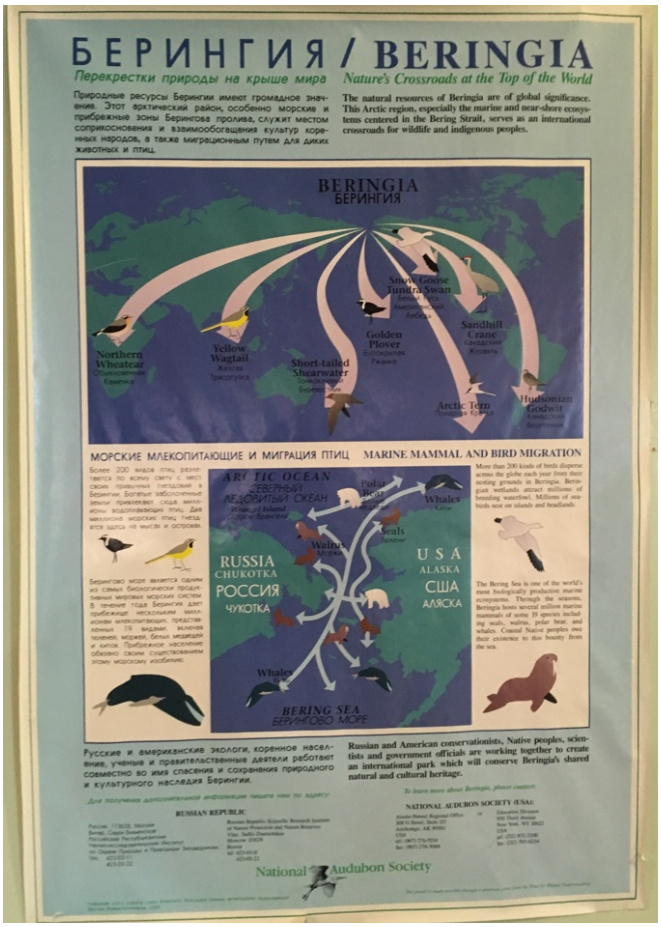


Figure. 6.12. *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Provideniya, 2016

In summary, the museums in Chukotka present the story of the Soviet presence and deeds in the region along with Soviet history, narrative, and national policy, with no

critical reflection on this period of the region's history. None of the museums, not even Anadyr', in which the exposition had recently been redesigned, had done any work to even acknowledge the colonial presence of Russians and Soviets and the central state's attitude towards the indigenous people. Needless to say, no work had been done to present any archival documents regarding the process of forced relocation, or to present alternative points of view on the process of the Soviet 'enlightenment of backward nations'. Despite the fact that indigenous people themselves have come to play key roles in the *krayevedcheskiy* museums, the content they provide is still aligned to the Soviet narrative.

Representations of national minorities in *krayevedcheskiy* museums

The third region from my case study selection which, according to government statistics, contains national minorities, is Tomskaya Oblast'. The indigenous people concerned are the Selkup and, according to the 2010 census, they constitute 0.12% of the region's population.

Starting with the museum in Tomsk, what is remarkable in this case is that the exposition intended to represent the ethnographical knowledge of the region and its indigenous people is dedicated not to the Selkup themselves, but to the '*Kulay* universe'. The exposition is called 'Under the constellation of the big moose' and presents the 'forgotten' civilization of Western Siberia. The narrative introduces the *Kulay* as an ancient civilization whose artefacts were found in recent archaeological excavations.



Figure. 6.13. *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Tomsk, 2016

The artefacts and objects on display are arranged around the tree, which, according to the exposition narrative, is an important religious symbol for the *Kulay*. The whole exposition creates a controversial impression of a mixture of facts, archaeological findings, and implemented national cultural policy. The latter is presented by the museum's online flash mob initiative 'I am the *Kulay*', which aims to show 'deep uniting routes for the people'. Some of the artefacts are not objects of material cultural but pieces made specifically for the exposition. For example, a large part is dedicated to

contemporary cultural products (clothes, necklaces, and paintings) produced in the '*kulay* manner' (figure 6.13).



Figure. 6.14 Krayevedcheskiy museum in Tomsk, 2016

So, the exposition in Tomsk's *krayevedcheskiy* museum simply ignores the presence of a national minority group in the region and replaces them by a semi-fictional account of the '*Kulay'* civilization.

However, the Selkups are presented in the expositions in more northern local *krayevedcheskiy* museums, in regions where they originally lived. The museum in Parabel' (400 km north of Tomsk) is quite small and situated in a typical village house. It presents the history of the region from ancient times up to the late Soviet period through the lenses of the Russian and Soviet colonisation of the lands. It is, therefore, not surprising that the Selkups are shown as one of the first subjects in this chronological order. The Selkups are placed in this chronological order as people who lived in Western Siberia before the arrival of Russians. They are characterised by a range of artefacts, an undated map of their settlements, tools of production and objects of material culture. The

account then continues to the Russian discovery of these lands and to the colonial institutions used to establish Russian governance in the region.

Thus, again, this way of presenting indigenous people is a way of creating a ‘common unsaid’ by ‘bubbling’ them and not grounding their existence in any broader social and economic regional context.



Figure. 6.15 *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Parabel’, 2016

The *krayevedcheskiy* museum of political exiles in Narym presents indigenous people in far more detail. The overall exposition, which is mainly dedicated to political exiles in the region, surprisingly reveals a lot about the local people. In a rare example of including indigenous people in a Soviet history and society museum exposition, the Selkups are represented by a range of archival photographs from the beginning of the 20th century up to the 1950s. These photos depict the life of locals alongside political exiles and representatives of Soviet governance (see Chapter 5 for the discussion).

Apart from the Selkups, another group of indigenous people are mentioned, the Evenks. This group is an indigenous ethnos mostly associated with the more northern and eastern part of Siberia. The glass mount dedicated to the Evenks is entitled ‘The Evenks—the “French people” of Siberia’. There no further explanations of this intriguing concept.



Figure. 6.16. *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Narym, 2016

The final mount of the department, entitled ‘Siberia surely is also Russia’, presents information about the oldest Russian residents from the 17th century—Russians who came into the region with the first colonial expeditions and formed the first Russian settlements there.



Figure. 6.17. *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Narym, 2016

I have already described my last case study museum in Tomskaya Oblast', the museum in Kolpashevo, as the most 'classically Soviet' *krayevedcheskiy* museum among all those analysed. It presents indigenous people as part of the historical evolution of people from the origin of humanity through to the Soviets.

The department contains direct quotations from Soviet times, stating the benefits indigenous people received when the Soviets came to power. Those included text-books, dictionaries, schools, and so on. The change in the lifestyle of indigenous people under the Soviet regime is directly addressed by the texts and artefacts displayed. For example, the textbook with implemented alphabet, which was design by the 'Language laboratory of the people of Northern Siberia' is presented as a part of Soviet colonization (Figure 6.18).



Figure. 6.18.. *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Narym, 2016

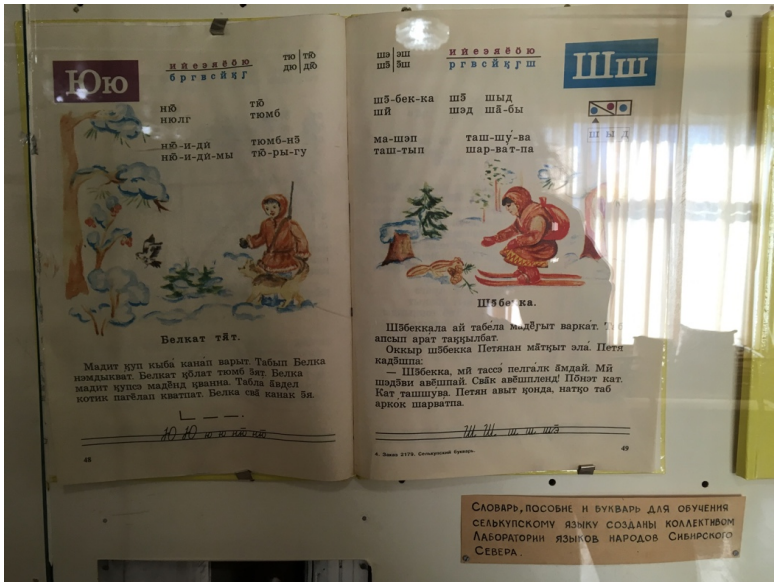


Figure. 6.19. *Krayevedcheskiy* museum in Kolpashevo, 2016

We can see that the museums in Tomskaya oblast' represent the indigenous people of the region in different ways. None of the museums examined presented them as part of contemporary society; instead, they were always placed in historical perspective. On the regional level, in Tomsk museum, the indigenous people are simply replaced by the poorly articulated story of the 'Kalay' civilization of the 5th century BC, whereas in northern museums of the *oblast'* the indigenous people are included, yet only according to Soviet guidelines, emphasising their tools of production and crafts, and highlighting a clear division between pre-Soviet and Soviet times. However, the predominant narrative in all these museums is the story of Russians and Soviets, not indigenous peoples.

Conclusions

In this chapter I have approached three different regions with complex ethnic compositions to analyse the ways in which national minorities and indigenous peoples are represented in regional and local *krayevedcheskiy* museums. I have showed how the close tights of *krayevedeniye* with Soviet national policy project has resulted in quite specific guidelines on representation of ethnic minorities in *krayevedcheskiy* museums.

In the case study museums in the Far East and Far North, Northern minority populations are presented in various ways, but all are almost completely excluded from the representations of contemporary society. Their presence in museums can be described as 'bubbling' or presented as 'a matter of fact' in most cases. The actual people in region are presented as Soviets and Russians and the narrative is shaped around them. That is an example of what Barthes calls 'identification' – 'an inability to imagine the Other', projecting self-characteristics onto others (Barthes, 1972, p. 152), which is applied to the non-Slavs in the museums.

The ‘common unsaids’ which are created in *krayevedcheskiy* museums today still stand for the process of Soviet colonisation, presenting it only in terms of ‘enlighten’ backward nationalities. While in many other societies, the colonial past has been subjected to critique, in Russia many of the assumptions about socialist internationalism and multiculturalism remain intact and the country’s colonial past un interrogated. *Krayevedcheskiy* museums continue to play a role in reproducing a sanitised version of Russian and Soviet history, even in the less controlled and more autonomous situation they now find themselves in.

Conclusion

This dissertation has presented the 'rise and fall' of *krayevedeniye* and *krayevedcheskiy* museums in Russia, showing the routes of its development in pre-revolutionary scientific activism, revealing the changes that took place during the Soviet centralization, and identifying and unpacking the predominant theories in the Soviet academia that influenced the Soviet system of knowledge production. The type of museums, on which I focused in the research that I have presented here, has never been given a close analysis from either the museum studies or area studies perspective, although, as I argue in this study, they certainly deserve it. The numerous museums found in both regional capitals and smallest villages constitute one of the largest cultural networks in post-Soviet Russia and one of the largest museum networks in the world. This network has distinct features and is based on principles that make it unique and place it apart from Western analogues. Among such analogues are the regional museums in Germany, nineteenth-century 'cabinets of curiosities in Europe', or even Russian ethnographical and historical museums.

Based on the analysis of the data I gathered through fieldwork and archival research I could identify some of these features. The most essential one is that *krayevedcheskiy* museums were established and still operate to present what is perceived as typical or representative in the given *kray* through the prism of principles that were introduced before the curators who run these museums were even born. Rather than presenting artefacts from far-away places, these exhibitions are based on the discipline of *krayevedeniye*—an idiosyncratic mixture of history, ethnography, and geography.

These observations led me to the discussion of existing approaches to the concept of *krayevedcheskiy* museum adopted by both 'western' and Russian scholars in chapters 2 and 3. I came to the conclusion that predominant approaches regard *krayevedcheskiy*

museums as a version of 'local history' museums. In the light of the principles that I identified, this predominant approach largely erases *what* these museums actually are, a material form of *krayevedeniye*. By analysing the predominant debates around *krayevedeniye* I unpacked these museums' distinguishing features in order to better place them in the broader context of museum studies.

The analysis of the exhibition policies and actual exhibitions led me to the discussion of not just what *krayevedcheskiy* museums show, but what they omit. Therefore, this study also focuses on what is excluded from *krayevedeniye* and expositions of *krayevedcheskiy* museums, on the reasons for this exclusion and techniques that are used to construct the omitted. I introduce the concept of 'common unsaids', by which I mean a specific method of interpreting 'problematic' landscapes and events in *krayevedcheskiy* museums exhibitions. Such landscapes include the sites related to the Gulag system, forced relocations, and other places of exile from both pre-Soviet and Soviet periods. From the theoretical point of view, I construct my concept based on the theory of 'cultural myths' developed by Svetlana Boym (Boym, 1994) in Chapter 1. In my empirical Chapters 4, 5, and 6 I discuss how *krayevedcheskiy* museums today reproduce the 'common unsaids' from Soviet and post-Soviet times and simultaneously construct new myths. The most powerful and notable of these contemporary myths is the state-sanctioned narrative of the Great Patriotic War that has been promoted to the status of the foundation myth of the entire nation. The structure of the dissertation allowed to trace the emergence of Soviet 'common unsaids' during the period of centralization of *krayevedeniye* and reveal the various levels on which they have been constructed.

The transregional and diachronic approaches that I have applied in the dissertation allowed me to come to the following conclusions on the core of *krayevedeniye* as a concept and the current state of the existing *krayevedcheskiy* museums network.

First, despite the changes in the theoretical basis of *krayevedeniye* over the last century there are certain common features which have been carried forward to the present day. One of them is the fact that *krayevedeniye* is based on the input of 'ordinary people', which makes it a truly vernacular civil knowledge production system. This vernacular character of *krayevedeniye* underpins my theory of 'common unsaids' that are just as manifest in the museums today as they were during the Soviet period. In a sense, being 'written by people' the 'common unsaids' may be even more powerful within the society than the unifying cultural myths produced by government discourses and media. State-sanctioned myths are often limited to particular social groups, while the 'common unsaids', as this dissertation claims, may be perceived as truly 'vernacular' and therefore appeal to broader social groups and people of different political, financial, and social statuses.

Second, I came to the conclusion that some of these silences had been constructed based on the Soviet 'party line' to contribute to the overarching discourse aimed at glorifying socialism building. Notably, the consequential 'unsaids' appeared mostly in society and nature departments of the museums to justify certain strategic economic and social policy decisions. These are some examples of the most prevalent Soviet 'common unsaids', but many others are yet to be revealed in future studies. These Soviet 'common unsaids' are constructed in the research through the close analysis of primary sources–documents of Soviet kraevedcheskyi expositions. The persistence of those silences is underlined in contemporary *krayevedcheskiy* museums departments— nature, history and society— in empirical Chapters 4, 5, 6 respectively. The 'common unsaids' themselves in the dissertation stand for the range of the 'darker' consequences of the Soviet policy, but of course not limited to them. The revealing of the roots of other 'common unsaids' in regional museums of Imperial Russia is yet to be done. The analysis of the Soviet 'common unsaids' and their presence in contemporary museums constitute

at least a half of this dissertation. The system of Gulag camps, forced relocation of people, colonial policy towards national minorities and the small-numbered peoples of the North and Far East, Soviet policy of nature conservation and resources development—my research shows that all these topics are either excluded or 'disconnected' from the representation of a *kray* through a range of techniques. The chosen ways of presentation of these topics in the majority of *krayevedcheskiy* museums use various rhetorical techniques identified by Barthes. These techniques aim to exclude the unwanted phenomena from *kray*'s history, as well as from present-day landscapes and society. These methods include 'inoculation' (as in the majority museums when talking about Stalinist repression), 'bubbling', 'privations of history', 'statement of fact', and 'identification', all of which, as I show in the empirical chapters, have been used in *krayevedcheskiy* museums to deal with the 'embarrassing' periods of Soviet history and at the same time to support the development of national foundation myths of successive states—Russian Empire, the Soviet Union, and today's Russia.

Third, there are 'scientific' 'common unsaids' formed by discourses prevalent in Soviet science at a given moment. Undoubtedly, in Soviet science these 'common unsaids' were, in their turn, affected by the system of Soviet governance. However, I have also been able to demonstrate how some of the discourses and theories in Soviet geography, ethnography, and history influenced the exhibition policy in Soviet *krayevedcheskiy* museums. They are still visible in today's expositions. Examples are the anthropocentric focus of nature departments and the predominance of landscape approach, as well as the domination of Marxism-Leninism in nature and history departments. These 'common unsaids' do not lead to the total exclusion or 'inoculation' in Barthian (Barthes, 1957) terms as some of the political ones do, but do employ 'neither-norism', 'statement of the fact', 'bubbling', or 'identification' as concealment techniques. In developing the concept of 'common unsaids', I do not argue that the troublesome

historical event, person, or landscape are completely excluded from the museum exposition. Instead, they are treated in such a way as to support the official, hegemonic myth of how a particular place fits into the narrative of the Soviet or, now, Russian national identity. Thus, the 'common unsaids' contribute to the displacement, de-personalization, de-association of certain topics from the *kray*'s regional identity and through this contribute to the construction of (post-) Soviet military landscapes in a region.

My study of *krayevedcheskiy* museums feeds into multiple research areas. First, this work is a major contribution to the Russian area studies as it introduces a transregional study of contemporary *krayevedcheskiy* museums, which has not been previously undertaken. My research offers a new definition of *krayevedeniye* and a new critical methodological approaches to *krayevedeniye* and *krayevedcheskiy* museum, which challenge the existing definitions given to these concepts by 'western' and Russian scholars. In fact, the proposed critical definition and approach to *kraevedenie* opens up a new wide field for future debates and research on *kraevedenie*, the path of its development and the role it played in Soviet and Russian societies. The previous works by Victoria Donovan (Donovan, 2015), Emily Johnson (Johnson, 2006) and Catherine Evtuhov (Evthuhov, 2012) has not engaged deeply with the core of *kraevedenie*, leaving out the substantive questions of this phenomenon. This dissertation fills this gap in the Russia area scholarship by providing a deep analysis of *what* constitutes the core features of *kraevedenie*, proposing a definitive frame and tracing back its change and evolution under the supervision of Soviet institutions. Subsequently, I offer new approaches to *kraevedcheskyi* museums as material forms of *kraevedenie* and its main institutional centres. This dissertation challenges the established approaches to these museums, revealing what has constituted their expositions and how these was changing

in the twentieth century. Furthermore, it is the first research to offer a transregional perspective on their current state.

Second, this research engages with current geography scholarship. The dissertation advances both human geography and physical geography. On the one hand, it broadens the current perspective on 'military landscapes' by adding post-Soviet perception of them and proposing a way, in which they can be understood in contemporary Russia. This theoretical framework of 'critical landscapes' has not yet been applied to post-Soviet landscapes. My proposed perspective advances Woodward's framework of 'critical military landscapes' by adding ex-Gulag sites, zones of Soviet colonisation and expansion, and territories of ethnical tension to them. It challenges the existing framework of 'military landscapes': by approaching them as social and political constructs I add a large number of 'problematic' areas to the current scholarship. I hope that my future works will provide a further deeper analysis of the theory of (post-)Soviet military landscapes and zones of visibility/invisibility of ex-Soviet landscapes in present-day Russian media and cultural products.

Apart from that, this dissertation enriches the scholarship on Soviet school of geography. Taking the basic features of Soviet geography described by Denis Shaw and John Oldfield I have revealed them in a material form in the *kraevedcheskyi* museums expositions until the present day. Furthermore, this dissertation traces the influence of Soviet geography on *kraevedenie* not only on the level of personalities and institutions, as it has been done in the works by Marina Loskutova (Loskutova, 2009, 2011), but also explicates it through the analysis guideline correspondence and documents issued by supervisory agencies.

Third, this dissertation advances current debates on memory in Russia, in particular, in the way of dealing with problematic Soviet past and the Soviet trauma. In this area the 'common unsaids' also mean the silences about people, events or

landscapes which Russian society has not yet developed a language to speak about. It broadens the existing 'historical' approaches to memory making by applying a landscape-based gaze.

In conclusion I would like to make a few further observations about *krayevedcheskiy* museums' relevance to the Russian society today and anticipate both the future development of *krayevedeniye* itself in contemporary Russia and the remaining research questions about *krayevedeniye* for the further studies.

First of all, the very fact that the system of *krayevedcheskiy* museum still exists is extraordinary. Many other Soviet cultural institutions (like 'Houses of Culture', *Doma Kultury*) or Soviet projects of enlightenment ('Cultural Enlightenment', *Kultprosvet*), not to mention the institutions themselves (*Glavnauka*, *Narkompors*) have changed dramatically since the collapse of the Soviet Union or simply disappeared. Yet *krayevedcheskiy* museums has somehow survived in Russia, though in some of the ex-USSR and Warsaw Pact countries (Poland, Lithuania, Latvia), the network of *krayevedcheskiy* museums has been redesigned or dismantled completely. The original Soviet institutional system of producing *krayevedcheskiy* knowledge and expertise based on the centralised regulations discussed in this study, has disappeared. Currently, there are no academic research centres for *krayevedeniye*, there are no course or research programmes in universities; local newspapers, however, are still there and such museums often have their own publishing programmes. The whole project of *krayevedeniye* has become almost completely extinct. Yet, one of the largest cultural networks of the country—*krayevedcheskiy* museums—remain and continue to evolve.

Secondly, the *krayevedcheskiy* museums are now to a significant degree independent in what they can exhibit. There is no centralized governance any more as all museums have regional subordination, and no regulations issued on what should be displayed. My research has shown that the central narrative that they reflect does not

(yet?) reflect the new Russian state ideology of the Putin years and no new central institutions on *krayevedeniye* were set up to control what the *krayevedcheskiy* museums exhibit. At least, there is no direct influence of official agenda to the extent to which it was done in the period of the Soviet centralised governance. On the contrary, there is a tendency to conduct decentralised spontaneous activities within the network to rethink their expositions undertaken in many cases independently from the government funding. Such examples are rare, but significant. We do not know for how much longer this independence will last. It seems that it remains to this day only because the entire *krayevedeniye* system has been 'forgotten' and deemed unimportant. However, these museums are now presented with an opportunity and liberty to develop what they have never done before. On the other hand, the museums have not yet become new community centres and have not developed any particular place within the Russian society. From the general public perspective, they are most likely to be seen as heritage and nostalgic remains of the Soviet times, rather than local cultural centres.

Thirdly, *krayevedeniye* still has not gained its own ground among academia, education, and popular movements. Russians are still not sure how to speak about this phenomenon at the period of its development under the Soviet governance and how to re-define activities that are taking place now. This reflects the absence of critical studies of *krayevedeniye* and the exposition policies of *krayevedcheskiy* museums in both Western or Russian academia. In this study, I have developed a definition of *krayevedeniye* and discussed its role and the role of *krayevedcheskiy* museums and how it has been changing. Based on the analysis of regulatory and framework documents, I have demonstrated that *krayevedeniye* itself, within disciplinary studies, passed through different stages in redefining its subject and methods during the Soviet era. From 1955 to the present day, there has been only very limited impetus for *krayevedeniye* to continue transforming. In a certain sense, *krayevedcheskiy* museums are 'time capsules' of the

state of *krayevedeniye* in particular and the approach to the production of knowledge in late 1950s in general. One of the main outcomes of my research is the identification of the Soviet principles informing the design of expositions and tracing them to the present day. Only now some museums are rethinking the curation of their exhibits. In doing so, they are trying to respond to a new wave of popular interest to local histories, public memory, and personal family stories. However, that has not yet become a general rule. On the contrary, they can be regarded as exceptions from the overarching pattern of continuity of expositions inherited from the Soviet era.

Fourth, I found that the continuity of the principles behind the arrangement of expositions reproduces the Soviet 'common unsaids' embedded in them. This is the crucial finding of this study. The fact that *krayevedcheskiy* museums today hide and highlight the same things as they did in the Soviet time shows that there has been no work done by scholars of *krayevedeniye* in reconsidering certain events and narratives of the Soviet time. The same events, people, and landscapes are being put forward or hidden, depending on the Soviet attitude towards them.

It is essential to note that this thesis has only scratched the surface of *krayevedeniye* and *krayevedcheskiy* museums and has mapped some of the routes of its possible development. In some sense, my research has posed more questions than it has answered. Most of these compelling issues are outlined in this thesis and belong to the sociology of perception field. Further studies might explore the role of museums in contemporary Russian society and analyse the public response to them by finding out how the messages encoded in *krayevedcheskiy* museums are decoded by the Russian audience. There is a range of emerging research questions on the role and status of a *kraeved* during Soviet time and in contemporary Russian and how this type of a person and their relationships with the government were changing. There is more research to be done in relation to the permanent displays themselves to unpack how a *kray* is

represented and to which extent it corresponds with the representations in mass media. Finally, there is some fascinating work on the museums, local communities, and evolution of their co-existence to be done also.

I hope that these and other questions will be discussed and addressed in future studies. I hope as well that they will go beyond specialist area studies and will become embedded in wider disciplinary discourses as one of the examples of a non-Western knowledge production system.

Bibliography

Primary sources.

Archival documents.

GARF: *Glavnyy Arkhiv Rossiyskoy Federatsii*, Governmental Archive of the Russian Federation.

CGA, YASSR: *Tsentralnyy Gosudarstvennyy Arkhiv Yakutskoy ASSR*, The Central Governmental Archive of Yakutiya Republic.

Dobrusnikin, L.A. (1952). *Voprosy istorii sovetskogo perioda v museyakh avtonomnykh respublik, avtonomnykh oblastey, natsionalnykh okrugov RSFSR,* GARF 10010/4/459. Moskva.

Dobrusnikin, L.A. and Plenikin, F.I. (1942). *Pokaz velikikh stroyek kommunizma v krayevedcheskikh muzeyakh*. GARF 10010/4/ 462. [Manuskript]. Moskva.
Galkina, P.I. (1950). *Nauchno-issledovatelskaya rabota v krayevedcheskikh muzeyakh*. GARF 10010/4/405. Moskva.

Dokumenty (prikazy, otchety) obshchestva izucheniya YAACCR. (1917 – 1932). CGA, YASSSR f.468/58. Yakutsk.

Karpych, V. (1946). *Ot diletantizma k nauke: Predvaritelnye zapiski k istorii razvitiya sovetskogo krayevedeniya.* GARF 10010/4/263. [Manuskript]. Moskva.

Kryazhin, I.P. (1945). *Puti i stadii razvitiya sovetskogo krayevedeniya (1917-1941).* GARF 10010/4/235. Moskva.

Levin, M.T. (1948). *Etnografiya v krayevedcheskikh muzeyakh.* GARF 10010/4/354. [Manuskript]. Moskva.

Mansurov, A.A. (1935). *Ustroystvo i oborudovaniye zdaniy krayevedcheskikh muzeyev*. GARF 10010/4/12. [Manuskript] Moskva.

Mikhalchenko V.F. (1942). *Rol' cheloveka v izmenenii prirody SSSR.* GARF 10010/4/187. [Manuskript]. Moskva.

Osnovnyye polozheniya o perestroyke ekspozicii rayonnykh krayevedcheskikh muzeyev. (1949) GARF 10010/4/412. [Manuskript]. Moskva.

Otchet o deyatel'nosti tsentralnogo byuro krayevedeniya (1931). GARF A 2307/16/51. [Document]. Moskva.

Otchety o rabote krayevedcheskikh uchrezhdeniy, plany krayevedcheskoy raboty i dr. instruktivno-metodicheskiy material. (1932). GARF A/2307/17/98. [Document]. Moskva.

Perepiska s Tsentralnym byuro krayevedeniya po administrativnym voprosam, plany raboty, protokoly zasedaniy byuro, chast' 2. (1932). GARF A/2307/17/87. [Document]. Moskva.

Plavilshchikov, N.N. (1959). *Poleznye i vrednye zhivotnye.* GARF 10010/4/630. [Manuskript]. Moskva.

Plavilshchikov, N.N. and Giller, A.G. and Yakovlev, A.A. (1946). *Ekspozitsii otdelov prirody krayevedcheskikh muzeyev.* GARF 10010/4/285. [Manuskript]. Moskva.

Plenkin, F.I. (1939). *Programma kompleksnogo opisaniya administrativnogo rayona (primenitelno k rabote krayevedcheskogo muzeya).*GARF 10010/4/82. [Manuskript]. Moskva.

Polozheniye o krayevedcheskoy rabote, svedeniya o rabote Tsentralnogo byuro krayevedeniya, plan raboty. (1933). GARF A2307/18/51. [Document]. Moskva.

Postanovleniye narodnykh komissarov RSFSR o reorganizatsii krayevedcheskoy raboty na mestakh. (1937). GARF 10010/1/11. [Document]. Moskva.

Postanovleniye Soveta Narodnykh komissarov o poryadke proizvodstva krayevedcheskikh rabot na territorii RSFSR. (1927) *Izvestia TSBK, (8)*, pp. *272-273*.

Proyekt postanovleniya SNK o krayevedenii. (1927). GARF A 259/11b/275. [Document] Moskva.

Proyekt programmy Yakutskogo oblastnogo muzeya. (1911). CGA YASSR 490/1/26. [Document] Yakutsk

Protokoly, plany, tezisy dokladov o sostoyanii nauchno-issledovatelskoy raboty, partiynoy raboty, krayevedcheskogo dvizheniya sredi narodnostey Sovetskogo Soyuza, (1929). GARF A/2307/13/7. [Document]. Moskva.

Protokoly zasedaniya metodicheskoy komissii po krayevedeniyu. (1930). GARF A 2307/14/20. [Document]. Moskva.

Protokoly zasedaniya metodicheskoy komissii po krayevedcheskim muzeyam. (1928). GARF 2307/13/13. Moskva.

Protokoly zasedaniy o deyatelnosti Tsentralnogo byuro krayevedeniya, chast' 2. (1925). GARF A 2307/10/245. [Document]. Moskva.

Rossiyskaya Muzeynaya Entsyklopediya (2018). [online] Available at http://www.museum.ru/ [Accessed 17 Feb. 2018].

Simkin, M.P.(1959). *Pokaz kultury i byta trudyashchikhsya v otdele sovetskogo perioda krayevedcheskogo muzeya*. GARF 10010/4/446. [Manuscript]. Moskva.

Skhema postroyeniya tematicheskogo i ekspozitsionnogo plana dlya istoricheskikh otdelov krayevedcheskikh muzeyev, razrabotannaya institutom. (1939). GARF 10010/1/85. [Document] Moskva.

Struktura otdela istorii krayevedcheskogo muzeya. (1934). GARF 10001/4/3. [Document]. Moskva.

Takoyeva N.F. (1949). *Pokaz etnograficheskikh materialov v krayevedcheskom muzeye.* GARF 10010/4/396. [Manuscript]. Moskva.

Tematicheskiy plan otdelov istorii krayevedcheskikh muzeyev, razrabotannyy institutom (1944). GARF 10010/1/286. [Manuscript]. Moskva.

Toletov, S.P. (1947). *Osnovy sovetskogo krayevedeniya. Lektsiya V. Krayevedeniye i natsionalnosti SSSR*. GARF 10010/4/337. [Manuscript]. Moskva.

Ushakov, A.V. (1963). *Krayevedcheskaya rabota muzeyev v sovetskikh usloviyakh.* [Manuscript] GARF 10010/4/755. Moskva.

Yakovlev, A.A. (1936) *Soderzhaniye krayevednoy raboty*. GARF 10010/4/19. [Manuscript]. Moskva.

Yakovlev, A.A. and Giller, A.S. and Shiryamov, A.A. (1939) *Struktura otdela prirody oblastnogo krayevedcheskogo muzeya*. GARF 10010/4/70. [Manuscript] Moskva.

Other primary sources

VI sessiya - plenum Tsentralnogo byuro krayevedeniya. (1926) *Izvestia TSBK*, (1), p. 4

Baranova O.S., ed. (2005). *Tri veka Permskogo muzeya, kratkaya letopis' 1890-2005.* Moskva: Khudozhnik i kniga

Bogdanov,V. (1921). Zadachi krayevedeniya i istoriya krayevedeniya v Rossii. *Dnevnik Vserossiyskoy konferentsii* (1), pp. 10-11.

Bolshakov, A. (1930). 'Ob opredelenii krayevedeniye'. *Sovetskoye krayevedeniye* (1). p.4-13

Chernyak, E.I., ed. (2003). *Tomskiy krayevedcheskiy muzey: iz proshlogo v budushcheye. Albom*. Tomsk: izd-vo Tomskogo Universiteta.

Chetvertaya Vserossiyskaya Konferentsiya po krayevedeniyu. (1930). Moskva: Rabotnik Prosveshcheniya.

Dikov, N.N. (1989). *Istoriya Chukotki s drevneyshikh vremen do nashikh dney*. Moskva.

Efimov, A.V. (1949). *Iz istorii velikikh russkikh geograficheskikh otkrytiy*. Moskva

Gorkiy, A.M. (1940). Lubi svoy kray! *Pravda* newspaper (25/05/1940)

Gulagmaps.org (2013). [online] Available at http://gulagmaps.org/ [Accessed 7 Mar. 2019]

Ivanov, V.F. (1981). *Rabota vtoroy kamchatskoy expedicii po sboru predmetov materialnoy kultury narodov Yakutii*, *Razvitie gumanitarnykh issledovaniy v Yakutii*. Novosibirsk.

Izmaylova, M.M. (1926). *K 35-letiyu Yakutskogo oblastnogo Muzeya. Sbornik Trudov Issledovatelskogo Obshchestva Sakha Kaskillea.* Yakutsk.

Katrin-Yarcev, V.N. (1925). *Katorga and Ssylka*, 3(16), pp. 189 - 192

Kitova, L.U. (2007). *Istoriya Sibirskoy Arkheologii (1920-1930): Izucheniye pamyatnikov epokhi metalla.* Novosibirsk: Izd-vo Insituta Arkheologii i Etnografii SO RAN.

Kontseptsiya razvitiya muzeya (2011). Internal document of Yakutsk museum.

Krayevedenie, (1924) (1), main article, untitled p.219

Mestnikova, M.V. (1966). *Yakutskiy krayevedcheskiy muzey imeni Em. Yaroslavskogo (k 75 letiyu osnovaniya) . Kalendar' znamenatelnykh i pamyatnykh dat*. Yakutsk.

Natsionalnyy muzey respubliki Tatarstan.(2014) National museum of Tatarstan republic [online] Available at: http://tatmuseum.ru/istoriya-muzeya/. [Accessed on 01/10/2018]

Nikolaev, M.P. (1912). *Yakutskiy Oblastnoy Muzey*. Yakutsk: Izdatelstvo obl. stat. komiteta, p. 4-5.

Novgorodov, I.D. (1966). Yakutskomu Muzeyu 75 let. *Sbornik Nauchnykh Statey YARKM*, (4), p. 3.

Prokhorov, A.M., ed. (1987). *Sovetskiy Entsyklopedicheskiy Slovar',* 4th ed. Moscow: Sovetskaya Entsyklopediya.

Shmidt, S.O. (1990). «Zolotoye desyatiletiye» sovetskogo krayevedeniya*. Otechestvo. Krayevedcheskiy al'manakh (1),* pp. 11-27.

Shishigin, E.S. (1978). Em. Yaroslavskiy i Yakutskiy krayevedcheskiy muzey. *Polarnaya Zvezda*. (3), pp. 112-115.

Shumyatskiy, B.N. ed. (1931-32). *Sovetskaya Sibirskaya Entsiklopediya*, Zapadno-Sibirskoe otdeleniye OGIZ*,* tom 3*.*

Smidovich, P. (1930). Na putyakh sotsialisticheskogo stroitel'stva. *Sovetskoe krayevedeniye* (1).

*Sovetskoye krayevedeniye, (*1930), nn 3-4, p.4

Sovetskoe krayevedeniye, (1932), nn 11-12, p.7

Stalin, I.V. (1950). *Marksizm i natsional'nyy vopros*. Moskva: Politizdat.

Tomskiy krayevedcheskiy muzey: iz proshlogo v budushcheye. Albom. (2003) Otv. Redactor E.I. Chernyak. Tomsk: izd-vo Tomskogo Universiteta.

Tomskiy krayevedcheskiy muzey (2013). *Tomsk museum official website*. [online] Available at http://old.tomskmuseum.ru/ru/53/current/106/. [Accessed 1 Mar. 2018].

Varnakova, O., ed. (2015). *Khraniteli istoricheskoy pamyati.* Berezniki

Vinokurov, P.V. (1991). *Muzei Yakutii. Y*akutsk

Vladimirovskiy, N.N.(1924). *Krayevedeniye* newspaper. pp.2-5. Moskva.

Il'ina, I.N. (2000). *Obshchestvennyye organizatsii Rossii v 1920-e gody.* Moskva: Institut rossiyskoy istorii RAN.

Scholarship

Adey, P. (2013). 'Air/Atmospheres of the Megacity.' *Theory, Culture & Society,* 30(7), pp. 291–308.

Ahonen, S. (2001). 'Politics of identity through history curriculum: Narratives of the past for social exclusion - or inclusion?' *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 33(2), pp.179–194.

Anderson, B. (2006). Becoming and being hopeful: Towards a theory of affect. *Environment and Planning D*, 24(5), pp. 733–752.

Anderson, B. (2009). Affective atmospheres. *Emotion, Space and Society* 2(2), pp. 77–81.

Asma, S.T., (2001). *Stuffed animals & pickled heads: the culture and evolution of natural history museums*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Baird, O.A. (2008). 'I want the people to observe and to learn! The St Petersburg Kunstkamera in the eighteenth century.' *History of Education*, 37(4), pp. 531-547.

Baron, N. (2007). 'New Spatial Histories of Twentieth Century Russia and the Soviet Union: Surveying the Landscape.' *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, New Series, 55(3), pp. 374-400.

Barthes, R. (1957). *Mythologies.* Paris: Éditions du Seuil.

Bassin, M. and Bouzarovski, S. (2011). 'Energy and Identity: Imagining Russia as a Hydrocarbon Superpower. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*,' 101(4), pp. 783-794.

Bennett, T. (1995). *The birth of the museum: history, theory, politics*. London: Routledge**.**

Bocock, R. (1993) *Consumption*. London: Routledge**.**

Bonney, R., Ballard, H., Jordan, R., McCallie, E., Phillips, T., Shirk, J. and Wilderman, C.C. (2009). *CAISE Report on Public Participation in Scientific Research. A CAISE Inquiry Group Report.* Washington, D.C.: Center for Advancement of Informal Science Education (CAISE).

Bonney, R., Cooper, C. B., Dickinson, J., Kelling, S., Phillips, T., Rosenberg, K. V., et al. (2009b). 'Citizen science: A developing tool for expanding science knowledge and scientific literacy.' *BioScience*, 59(11), pp. 977–984.

Boym, S. (1994). *Common places: mythologies of everyday life in Russia*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bradley, J. (2009). *Voluntary associations in Tsarist Russia: science, patriotism, and civil society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Ciofi, L. and Bannon, L.J. (2007). 'Designing hybrid places: Merging interaction design, ubiquitous technologies and geographies of the museum space.' *CoDesign,* 3(3), pp. 159-180.

Confino, A. (1997). *The Nation as a Local Metaphor: Württemberg, imperial Germany and the national memory, 1871-1918*. London: University of North Carolina Press.

Congdon, L. (2000). 'Prague Spring - Prague Fall: Blank spots of 1968.' *East European Politics and Societies*, 14(1), pp.203–210.
Cvetkovski, R. and Hofmeister, A. (2014). *An empire of others: creating ethnographic knowledge in imperial Russia and the USSR*. Budapest: Central European University Press

Daily Zooniverse. (2014). 'Citizen science' added to Oxford English Dictionary. Resource Document. The Zooniverse. [online] Available at: https://daily.zooniverse.org/2014/09/16/citizen-science-in-dictionary. [Accessed 13 May 2018].

Deetz, J., (1978). 'In Small Things Forgotten: The Archaeology of Early American Life.' *American Art Journal*, 10(1), p.116.

Dickerman, L. and King, D. (1998). 'The Commissar Vanishes: The Falsification of Photographs and Art in Stalin's Russia.' *The Art Bulletin*, 80(4), p.755.

Dienes, L., (2005). 'Observations on the Russian Heartland.' *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, 46(2), pp.156–163.

Dienes, L., (2002). 'Reflections on a Geographic Dichotomy: Archipelago Russia.' *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, 43(6), pp.443–458.

Doel, Wråkberg and Zeller (2014). 'Science, environment and the New Arctic.' *Journal of Historical Geography,* (44), pp.2–14.

Donovan, V. (2015). 'How Well Do You Know Your Krai? The Kraevedenie Revival and Patriotic Politics in Late Khrushchev-Era Russia.' *Slavic Review,* 74(3), pp. 464-483.

Ellman, M. and Maksudov, S. (1994). 'Soviet deaths in the great patriotic war: A note.' *Europe-Asia Studies*, 46(4), pp.671–680.

Evtuhov, C. (2012). Voices from the region: kraevedenie meets grand narrative. *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, 13(4), pp. 877-887.

Fairclough, N. (2003) Analysing *discourse : textual analysis for social research*, London: Routledge.

Fein, J. (2012). *Cultural curators and provincial publics: Local museums and social change in Siberia, 1887-1941*. Doctoral thesis. University of Chicago.

Fitzpatrick, S. (1999). *Everyday Stalinism: ordinary life in extraordinary times: Soviet Russia in the 1930s*. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Foucault, M. (1970). *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. London: Tavistock.

Foucault, M. (1974) *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. London: Tavistock Publications.

Foucault, M. (1979*) Governmentality,* Ideology and Consciousness, 6, pp.5– 21.

Fromm, A.B., Golding, V. and Rekdal, P.B. (2014). *Museums and truth*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Geoghegan, H. (2010). 'Museum Geography: Exploring Museums, Collections and Museum Practice in the UK.' *Geography Compass,* 4(10), pp. 1462–1476.

Graham, L.R. (1973). *Science and philosophy in the Soviet Union*. London: Allen Lane.

Gregory, D. (1994). *Geographical imaginations*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Halbwachs, M. (1980). *The Collective Memory*. New York: Harper & Row.

Harvey, D. (1973). *Social Justice and the City.* London: Edward Arnold.

Herminghouse, P. (1991). 'Confronting the "Blank Spots of History": GDR Culture and the Legacy of Stalinism.' *German Studies Review* 14 (2), pp. 345–65.

Hinsley, S.D. (1991). *The World as Marketplace: Commodification of the Exotic at the World's Columbian Exhibition*. In Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display, edited by Ivan Karp and Steven Lavine. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press.

Hirsch, F. (2000). 'Towards an empire of nations: Border-making and the formation of Soviet national identities.' *The Russian Review*, 59(2), pp.201–226.

Hirsch, F. (2005). *Empire of nations: ethnographic knowledge & the making of the Soviet Union*. London: Ithaca.

Hodder, I. (1991) *The meanings of things: material culture and symbolic expression*. London: Routledge.

Hooper-Greenhill, E. (1992). *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge*. London: Routledge.

Hooper-Greenhill, E. (2000). *Museums and the interpretation of visual culture*, London: Routledge.

Hooson, D.J.M., (1964*). A new Soviet heartland?*. Princeton, N.J.; London: D. Van Nostrand.

Hoskins, G. (2004). ‘A place to remember: Scaling the walls of Angel Island immigration station.’ *Journal of Historical Geography,* 30(4), pp. 685–700.

Hoskins, G. (2007). ‘Materialising memory at Angel Island Immigration Station, San Francisco.’ *Environment and Planning A*, 39(2), pp. 437–455.

Howes, D. (2014). Introduction to sensory museology. *The Senses and Society,* 9(3), pp. 259–267.

Irwin, A. (1995). *Citizen science: a study of people, expertise and sustainable development*. London: Routledge.

Johnson, E.D. (2006). *How St. Petersburg Learned to Study Itself: The Russian Idea of Kraevedenie*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press.

Johnson, N.C. (1999a). ‘The spectacle of memory: Ireland’s remembrance of the Great War, 1919.’ *Journal of Historical Geography* 25(1), pp. 36–56.

Johnson, N.C. (1999b). ‘Framing the past: Time, space and the politics of heritage tourism in Ireland.’ *Political Geography,* 18(2), pp. 187–207.

Kaganovsky, L. (2017) ‘The arctic in the Russian imagination’ in Körber, L.-A., MacKenzie, S. & Stenport, A.W., 2017. Arctic environmental modernities: from the age of polar exploration to the era of the Anthropocene, Cham, Switzerland.

Kaplan, F., ed. (1996). *Museums and the Making of ‘Ourselves’: the Role of Objects in National Identity.* London: Leicester University Press.

Khazanov A. M. (2000) ‘Selecting the Past: the politics of memory in Moscow's history museums.’ *City & Society*. XII (2), pp. 35-62.

Koch, N. (2016) ‘Is a Critical Area Studies Possible?’ *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space,* 34 (5), pp. 807-815.

Kornilova, I.V., and Magsumov, T.A. (2015). ‘The Soviet Society in Focus of a *Regionalistika’. European Researcher, Series A*, 90(1), pp. 4-16.

Könneker, C. and Lugger, B. (2013). ‘Public Science 2.0—Back to the Future.’ *Science,* 342(6154), pp. 49-50.

Krupnik, I. and Chlenov, M. (2007). The end of "Eskimo land": Yupik relocation in Chukotka, 1958-1959. *Études Inuit* (31(1/2)), pp.59–81.

Lidchi, H. (1997). The Poetics and Politics of Exhibiting Other Cultures. *S. Hall, ed., Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. London: Sage, pp. 151-222.

Livingstone, D. (1992). *The Geographical Tradition: Episodes in the History of a Contested enterprise*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Livingstone, D. (2003). *Putting science in its place: geographies of scientific knowledge*. Chicago, Ill.; London: University of Chicago Press.

Lord, B. and Piacente, M. (2014). *Manual of museum exhibitions Second*. Maryland: Lanham.

Loskutova, M. (2009). 'Uyezdnoe ucheniye: samoorganizatsiya s nauchnoy obshchestvennost'yu v rossiyskoy provintsii vo vtoroy polovine XIX – pervoy treti XX vv.' *Ab Imperio*, (3/2009), pp. 119-169.

Loskutova, M. (2011). 'Nauka oblastnogo masshtaba: ideya yestestvennykh rayonov v russkoy geografii i istoki krayevedcheskogo dvizheniya 1920-kh godov.' *Ab Imperio*, (2/2011), pp. 83-121.

MacDonald, S. (2007). 'Interconnecting: Museum visiting and exhibition design.' *CoDesign: International Journal of CoCreation in Design and the Arts* 3(1), pp. 149–162.

Martin, G.J., (2005). *All possible worlds: a history of geographical ideas* 4th ed., New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press.

McCormack, D.P. (2008). 'Engineering affective atmospheres on the moving geographies of the 1897 Andrée expedition.' *Cultural Geographies,* 15(4), pp. 413–430.

Melnikova, E. (2012). 'Sblizhalis' narody kraya, predstavitelem kotorogo yavlayus ya: krayevedcheskoye dvizheniye 1920-1930 i Sovetskaya natsionalnaya politika', *Ab Imperio*, (1/2012), pp. 209-240.

Miller, D. (1995) *Acknowledging Consumption*. London; New York: Routledge

Miller, A. (2011). Russia, *Russian Social Science Review*, 52(3), pp. 28-54.

Morozova, N. (2009). Geopolitics, Eurasianism and Russian Foreign Policy Under Putin. *Geopolitics*, 14(4), pp. 667-686.

Moser, S. (2010). The Devil Is in the Detail: Museum Displays and the Creation of Knowledge. *Museum Anthropology*, 33(1). pp.22-32

Muir, R. (1999). *Approaches to Landscape.* Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Müller, M. (2019). 'In Search of the Global East: Thinking between North and South.' *Geopolitics*, Forthcoming.

Murawski M. (2018). 'Actually-Existing Success: Economics, Aesthetics and the Specificity of Still-Socialist Urbanism.' *Comparative Studies in Society and History,* 60(4), pp.907-937.

Neverov, O. (1985) 'His Majesty's Cabinet' and Peter I's Kunstkammer, *The Origins of Museums: The Cabinet of Curiosities in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Europe*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Oldfield, J.D and Shaw, D.J.B. (2015). 'A Russian geographical tradition? The contested canon of Russian and Soviet geography, 1884–1953.' *Journal of Historical Geography* (49), pp.75–84.

Oxford Russian–English Dictionary, (1972). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Paglin, T. (2009). *Blank Spots on the Map: The Dark Geography of the Pentagon's Secret World*. London: Dutton.

Pallot, J. and Moran, D. (2000). Surviving the Margins in Post-Soviet Russia: Forestry Villages in Northern Perm' Oblast. *Post-Soviet Geography and Economics*, 41(5), pp. 341-364.

Pearce S.M. (1992) *Museums, Objects, and Collections: A Cultural Study.* Leicester University Press.

Pearce S.M. (1994) *Interpreting objects and collections*. London; New York: Routledge

Pearson, C. (2012). Researching Militarized Landscapes: A Literature Review on War and the Militarization of the Environment. *Landscape Research* 37 (1), pp. 115–133.

Popper, K.R., (1945). *The open society and its enemies.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Popper, K.R., (1986). *The poverty of historicism.* London: Routledge.

Pred, A.R. (2000) *Even in Sweden: racisms, racialized spaces and the popular geographical imagination*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Prince, H.C. (1962). 'The Geographical Imagination.', *Landscape* (2), pp. 22-25.

Remnick, D. (1993). *Lenin's tomb: the last days of the Soviet Empire*. London: Viking.

Romanova, I.I. (2005). *Osnovnye etapy razvitiya muzeynogo dela i sozdaniya etnograficheskikh kollektsiy na Chukotke*. Sankt-Peterburg: MAE (Kunstkamera)

Shanks, M. and Tilley, C.Y. (1987). *Social theory and archaeology*. Cambridge: Polity

Shaw, D.J.B. and Oldfield, J.D. (2007). 'Landscape Science: A Russian Geographical Tradition'. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 97(1), pp.111–126.

Shevtsova, L. (2003). *Putin's Russia*. Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Slezkine, Y. (1991). 'The Fall of Soviet Ethnography, 1928-38'. *Current Anthropology*, 32(4), pp.476–484.

Slezkine, Y. (1994). *Arctic mirrors: Russia and the small peoples of the North*, Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press.

Smith-Peter, S. (2004). 'How to write a region: Local and Regional Historiography.' *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History, New Series* 5(3), pp. 527-542.

Agnew, J.A. and Livingstone, D.A. (2011) *The SAGE Handbook of Geographical Knowledge*. London: SAGE Publications.

Thrift, N.J. (2007). *Non-representational theory: space, politics, affect*. New York; London: Routledge.

Tilley, C.Y. (1991) *Material culture and text: the art of ambiguity.* London: Routledge

Tishkov, V.A. et al. (1992). 'The Crisis in Soviet Ethnography [and Comments]'. *Current Anthropology*, 33(4), pp.371–394.

Tsygankov, A.P. (2003). 'Mastering space in Eurasia: Russia's geopolitical thinking after the Soviet break-up.' *Communist and Post-Communist Studies,* (36), pp. 101–127.

Turner, J. and Kimberly, P. (2015). 'Unlocking carceral atmospheres: designing visual/material encounters at the prison museum.' *Visual Communication*, 14(3), pp. 309-330.

Weber, R.L. and Ames, M.M. (1996). 'Cannibal Tours and Glass Boxes: The Anthropology of Museums.' *American Indian Quarterly*, 20(1), p.126

Weiner, D.R. (2000). *Models of nature: ecology, conservation and cultural revolution in Soviet Russia*. Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: University of Pittsburgh Press

Weizman, E. (2007). *Hollow Land: Israel's Architecture of Occupation.* London: Verso.

Wertsch, J.V. (2008) 'Blank Spots in Collective Memory: A Case Study of Russia'. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (617), pp. 58-70

Williams, P. and McConnell, F. (2011). Critical Geographies of Peace. *Antipode* (4), pp. 927–931.

Woodward, R. (2005). 'From Military Geography to militarism's geographies: Disciplinary engagements with the geographies of militarism and military activities.' *Progress in Human Geography* (29), pp. 718–740.

Woodward, R. (2014). 'Military landscapes: Agendas and approaches for future Research'. *Progress in Human Geography*, 38(1), pp. 40–61.

Yurchak, A. (2005). *Everything was forever, until it was no more: the last Soviet generation*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.