



## “The Undesirable: How Parasites, Diseases, and Pests Shape Our Environments”

### Summer School in Environmental History

*Prague, Czech Republic, 28-31 August 2016*

The Working Group for Czech and Slovak Environmental History in cooperation with the Faculty of Science at Charles University in Prague and the Institute for Contemporary History of the Czech Academy of Sciences and with the support of European Society for Environmental History are pleased to announce a four-day graduate summer school in environmental history which will take place in Prague in late August 2016.

The summer school will offer graduate students and post-doctoral researchers the opportunity to present and discuss their projects with an international group of peers as well as experts in their field, and to network with other researchers working on related topics.

Parasites and diseases are an important and often overlooked part of ecosystems which influences our lives and landscapes in unexpected ways. We wish to explore their role as actors of history, as objects of cultural and moral evaluation, and as unexpected agents in human interactions with the environment. The topic's position at an intersection of disciplines like environmental and medical history, biology, or ecology offers an excellent opportunity for exploring the possibilities and limitations of interdisciplinary research.

Issues that we wish to focus on during the workshop include, but are not limited to:

- historical understanding of the origins of diseases and changes in medical theories over time
- why are pests pests? Ascribing cultural value to organisms
- role of the environment in the transmission and perception of diseases
- parasites, pests, and nature conservation: how cultural perceptions shape our conservation efforts
- diseases, epidemics control, and environmental justice
- influence of microbes on human behaviour on biological level

The summer school is meant to be broad and inclusive in terms of themes, time periods, geographic regions, and disciplines. Although the primary focus of the graduate school is historical,

we especially encourage candidates from other fields to apply in order to foster interdisciplinary dialogue.

We will offer a mix of sessions led by experts in the field and workshops where the students will have the opportunity to discuss their own work. Before the start of the summer school, all participants will be expected to submit a draft article (500 words) on their topic for the Arcadia project (<http://www.environmentandsociety.org/arcadia>) that will subsequently be edited and reworked during a writing workshop and submitted to Arcadia for publication.

Application for the graduate school should consist of

- 1) abstract of your presentation (max. 1 page)
- 2) CV
- 3) cover letter detailing your motivation for applying (max. 1 page)

Working language of the summer school is English.

We will provide the accepted participants with free accommodation (in shared rooms) and board during the four-day event. Unfortunately, we will not be able to provide for the participants' travel costs.

Application deadline is **20 May 2016**.

Please send your applications to Jiří Janáč: [jira.janac@gmail.com](mailto:jira.janac@gmail.com)

Organising committee:

Jiří Janáč (Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague)

Jana Piňosová (Sorbian Institute, Bautzen)

Michal Semian (Charles University, Prague)

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