

ENS288 Environmental History I

Spring semester 2018

The main goal of the course is to familiarize students with environmental history, that is, with the study of the interactions that have played out between humans and the environment over the course of our history as a species. In doing so, students should gain a good understanding of how the past has affected the environment we live in and depend on today. Students will be able to understand and explain various topics currently popular within the field of environmental history. They will also gain an idea of the various methods used in this interdisciplinary field. The course will include a fieldtrip to a nearby location to learn how to 'read' cultural landscapes.

Osnova

(lectures by P. Szabó, except when indicated otherwise. LK=Lubor Kysučan)

- 19 February: Introduction to environmental history – definition, methodology, sources, main topics
 - 26 February: After the ice: connections between humans and the environment in prehistory
 - 5 March: Environmental disasters and collapses in the ancient Mediterranean, Middle East, India, Far East and Pre-Columbian America. Climatic changes and environmental migrations in ancient history (LK)
 - 12 March: The cultural landscape of the ancient world. Attitudes toward the nature in the civilizations of ancient Greece and Rome (LK)
 - 19 March: Environmental problems of the ancient Mediterranean. Deforestation. The globalization of the economy and the globalization of the economic problems. Ancient agriculture in a socio-economic and environmental context. Care about environment in the antiquity – administration and legislation (LK)
 - 26 March: Attitudes towards nature vs working nature in the Middle Ages. The environmental aspects of medieval agricultural expansion
 - 2 April – national holiday (*Easter Monday*), no class
 - 9 April: Black Death, Great Famine and the 'crisis' of the 14th century
 - 16 April: Columbian exchange – the expansion of Europe into the New Worlds and how environmental factors played a key role
 - 23 April: Science, the Enlightenment and the environment. New attitudes and practices in the Early Modern Period. The birth of 'sustainability'
 - 30 April: Something new under the sun – the industrial revolution and its long-term environmental consequences.
 - 7 May: guest lecture by Martin Schmid (Institute of Social Ecology, Alpen-Adria Universität Klagenfurt): Vienna's environmental history – a view from the river Danube
 - 14 May: Conclusion, written test
- + field trip, date to be determined by agreement

Literature

Hughes, J. Donald. *An Environmental History of the World: Humankind's Changing Role in the Community of Life*. London: Routledge, 2001.

Brown, Neville. *History and Climate Change: A Eurocentric Perspective*. London: Routledge, 2001.

Thommen, Lukas. *An Environmental History of Ancient Greece and Rome*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Richard C. Hoffmann. *An Environmental History of Medieval Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Alfred W. Crosby. *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900–1900*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

Peter Coates. *Nature: Western Attitudes since Ancient Times*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.

McNeill, John R. *Something New Under the Sun: An Environmental History of the Twentieth-Century World*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2001.