



Transcending Nature: the Anthropocene and environmental history of Northern Eurasia

Summer school

**University of Tyumen, Tyumen (Russian Federation),
27 July – 2 August 2020**

Call for applications

The beginning of the XXI century will be called 'the epoch of ecology' by the future generations of historians. Wild fires, floods, warm winters and rainy summers have caused the tempestuous debate on the role of humanity in the environment changes. A comparatively new term 'Anthropocene' has received widespread recognition and, it seems, it will be adopted as an official word at the 36th World Geological Congress in India to denote the current geological epoch. A present-day situation in science looks paradoxical: as Bruno Latour points out, the environmental issues is not purely scientific anymore. It is more than ever a matter of social struggle and controversy as well as political bargaining to ratify new interpretations of nature policy.

It means that the environment has left the Procrustean bed of the entirely technical issues of pollution regulations and would become a legitimate field of interest from the scholars of social sciences and humanities. An approach to resolve permanent contradiction between society and nature could be a new way to revisit the social world as well as the making of interdisciplinary scientific language.

We see an ultimate outcome of Summer school to develop the ideas on Anthropocene in the Northern Eurasia, its similarities and differences in comparison with the other regions.

Formation of this new language is impossible without study of specific cases in their relationship with up-to-date approaches of environmental humanities. As a result, the goal of the summer school is to discuss an idea of the North Eurasian Anthropocene, its similarity and differences from other regional variations of Anthropocene. To accomplish it, it is necessary to combine the regional case studies and the general theoretical frameworks of environmental humanities. The emphasis on the Anthropocene and environmental humanities will allow us to reveal the complicated relationships between global and local environmental transformations in Siberia.

At the school, we are going to discuss various aspects of environmental humanities:

- Environmental humanities as an approach
- An environmental history of northern Eurasia
- Global and regional dimensions of Anthropocene

We invite to apply historians, philosophers, anthropologists, sociologists, i.e. all graduate students and young researchers, whose interests lies in the field of environmental humanities. However, applications are not required to be limited to the topics listed above. To be supposed that during the Summer school the participants read intensively texts on the environmental studies and then discuss them.

Please send your application by **May 1, 2020**, to anthropoceneschool2020@gmail.com including a draft of your work (700 – 1000 words) and CV. Reimbursement of travel expenses and accommodation is possible for some participants. Please indicate whether you need compensation for your travel.



School overview

The aim of our school is to bring together young scholars (MA and PhD students) and specialists in the fields of environmental humanities and Russian/Soviet/Northern Eurasia history. We suppose that a problem of Anthropocene is widely discussed now, but the voice of historians is still not strong enough. To strengthen this voice, we want to discuss how could we study Anthropocene historically and what could regional cases contribute to this global phenomenon.

Structure of the school contains lectures, reading seminars, paper presentations and discussions. We perceive lectures and reading seminars as a sort of a guide to the problems of Anthropocene in general and its applicability to Russian/Soviet history and history of Eastern Europe as well. Paper presentations means the group work with theses of participants and discussion of their research in the lenses of environmental humanities. We also propose two collective discussions - one about the state of the environmental humanities and its place in the space of academia and one ending debate about the role of historical study of Northern Eurasia in debates on Anthropocene.

Venue

Tyumen is the first and the oldest Russian city in Siberia. It was founded in 1586 to support Russia's eastward expansion, and still remain one of the most important industrial centers of the region. Since 2018, Tyumen is recognized as the most comfortable city in Russia.

The University of Tyumen is among 15 best Russian universities. In July 2019 a research center "Humanet: Humane, Nature, Technology" was founded there. The center gathers a team of young scholars in the field of history and environmental humanities, who make the school's organizing committee. The goal of the center is to connect the area studies of Siberia and fields of environmental humanities.

The most part of planned events will be held in Lukashino, which is a part of university campus located near the city among picturesque landscapes. The school invitees will be provided with sleeping places in shared rooms with shared kitchen and showers. The university campus in Lukashino is equipped with a conference room, good recreation and sports infrastructure.

Cultural program

Excursions, hiking tours and informal meetings makes an important part of the school. They will be connected with the subject of the school and will make a good contribution to team building.

The school will be preceded by a guided tour over the city of Tyumen with



visiting of the main museums of the city: the Museum of the City Council (with a good collection about natural history of the region), the Museum of Local History and the Archaeological Museum.

Participants of the school will be offered with an opportunity to visit and swim in the geothermal hot springs near Lukashino, which are one of the visiting cards of Tymen. At the last day of the school, we plan to arrange the guided tour in Tobolsk - the city which used to be the "capital of Siberia" from the 17th to the 19th century. The tour will include picturesque landscapes, visits to the Tobolsk Kremlin (the last building of this kind in Russian history, constructed in the 18th century), ancient Orthodox churches and monasteries.

For further questions, please contact Timofey Rakov: timofey.rakov@gmail.com.