



Call for Papers:

The History of War and Environmental History – Interconnections and Entanglements

Niepołomice (Poland), 21-23 September 2023

Organisers:

Institute of History, Jagiellonian University in Krakow
Faculty of History, University of Warsaw
The “Pola Chwały” Foundation in Niepołomice
Polish Academy of Sciences – Scientific Centre in Vienna

Deadline for submitting abstracts: 25 June

In May 2022, Russian shelling heavily damaged the seed bank in Kharkiv. Among the many atrocities caused by the Russian invasion, that particular event reminded us that the natural environment and biodiversity might also be victims of war. This does not only refer to contemporary conflicts. The relationship between war and the natural environment has almost as long a history as war itself.

Our conference in Niepołomice (near Kraków) is an annual event, dedicated to historical war studies: from antiquity to the 21st century. It aims to develop non-traditional studies on war and military history, especially linked with other disciplines and approaches (like psychology, migration studies, urban history, and archaeology). This year, our goal is to answer the question about the relationship between war studies and history on the one hand and the environment and environmental history on the other.

Environmental history, which has rapidly developed within the last four decades, thanks to its connections with biology and other sciences, has broadened the scope of historical methods and sources. As a result, it offers fresh insights into history: the *longe-durée* perspective, considering non-human actors and interactions between the environment and humans, and, last but not least, the potential for (positive) social change. With new methods and data, environmental history also encourages us to give well-known sources a fresh, wide-angle look and to pay attention to how they refer to environmental issues.

Our goal is to discuss, broaden and deepen the reflection on the history of war and its interconnection with environmental history throughout the centuries. Therefore, we invite scholars from various fields and disciplines (historians, biologists and environmentalists, archaeologists, and geographers) to participate in the conference. We welcome contributions that will touch upon one or more of the following problems:



- war's impact on the environment and its limit in pre-modern times
- nature's influence on war and the art of war (seasonal fluctuations of military conflicts, natural disasters, and their role in war and battles)
- depictions of environment in historical sources on wars and conflicts
- research methods in relation to the environmental history of war and their limitations
- war and biodiversity
- environmental pollution and contamination and its consequences – can we speak of “contaminated lands” concerning post-war areas?
- recultivation/reconstruction of the landscape and environment after the war
- war landscape and environment before/during/after warfare
- wartime archaeology in environmental research
- elements of the wartime landscape and their role in narrative, propaganda, and photography
- permanent and temporary changes in the natural landscape because of war

The contributions' abstracts (up to 300 words) and a short bio of the author should be sent by **25 June** to the address konferencja.polachwaly@gmail.com. We will inform the participants about the acceptance of their proposal by 5 July. Both the abstracts and the conference presentations should be delivered in English.

There is no conference fee. The organisers can accommodate the conference participants, but we do not cover the travel expenses.

The conference accompanies one of Poland's largest historical reenactment and wargaming festivals in Poland (the Pola Chwały festival), which takes place in Niepołomice on 22-24 September. The participants of the conference will have the opportunity to participate in the festival.

The Organising Committee:

- Dr Jan Błachnio (University of Warsaw)
- Dr Wojciech Duszyński (Jagiellonian University)
- Dr Marcin Jarzabek (Jagiellonian University)
- Dr Kamil Ruszała (Jagiellonian University)
- Professor Michał Stachura (Jagiellonian University / the Pola Chwały Foundation)
- Professor Piotr Szlanta (University of Warsaw / Polish Academy of Sciences – Scientific Centre in Vienna)