

## **The effects of climate changes on global health - a historical overview**

*RÁCZ LAJOS, University of Szeged*

*racz.lajos@szte.hu*

Environmental history research, established in the US, interprets the physical environment as an active agent in the formation of human history. In historical ecosystems unfolding on various scales throughout history, a network of complicated interactions was formed between local societies and their physical environment. In the lecture, we analyse three examples in which subsistence crises of historical significance were formed in the framework of extended historical ecosystems, frequently launching severe epidemics and pandemic situations. The first example is the age of the Black Death in the middle of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The plague epidemic was the apex of a subsistence crisis in the late Middle Ages, which had both social and natural causes. The experiences gained during the crisis and the efforts made at adaptation paved the way for the modernisation of the European civilisation. The second case study is about floodplain management, a typical Central European innovation, which optimised the usage of environmental resources in the Carpathian Basin. This innovation fell prey to modernisation in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The third case study is about humanity's biological coup d'état, starting in the last third of the 19th century, in which developed countries tried to take control of microorganisms, the basis of the biological pyramid, applying a technological arsenal created by the industrial revolution and modernisation. Finally, I summarise the general conclusions on the functioning and crises of historical ecosystems.