WARWICK-HOPKINS DOCTORAL SUMMER SCHOOL, 2024
RENAISSANCE EUROPE AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL HUMANITIES: VENICE AND BEYOND
JUNE 3-JUNE 12, 2024 – VENICE, ITALY

ELIGIBILITY:
All students currently enrolled in a doctoral programme in the Humanities are eligible to apply, but priority will be given to Warwick and Johns Hopkins students. Fifteen (15) places will be available in total.

COSTS:
All participants selected to join the Summer School will pay a registration fee of no more than $500 USD / £400 GBP. Lodging in Venice (in twin rooms) will be covered for all participants, and students from Warwick and JHU will also have their travel costs covered. Participants will have to pay for their meals, entry to museums, and local travel in Italy (other than programme-related travel). The programme is supported by generous funding from the Institute for Advanced Study at the University of Warwick and the Charles Singleton Center for the Study of Premodern Europe at Johns Hopkins University. N.B.: Final details about registration, costs, and program will be circulated early in 2024.

FOCUS:
The annual Warwick-Hopkins Doctoral Summer School for 2024 will focus on ‘Renaissance Europe and the Environmental Humanities: Venice and Beyond’. Scholarship on early modern Venice has been transformed in recent decades by the existential threat posed by rising sea levels, climate change, pollution, and the decay of civic and economic life through the monoculture of tourism. As such crises are no longer just a predicament for Venice alone, consideration of the Republic’s environmental history has acquired a new urgency. Environmental historians have shown how Venice, for more than a millennium, dealt with the risks of a fragile ecology, the interdependency of the lagoon and the terraferma, of waterways and woodlands. A city founded on water recognized that its people’s own actions had an impact on the natural world: that exploitation had to be balanced with maintenance and control – from reforestation to quarantine.

The Warwick-JHU Summer School, in association with the University of Ca’ Foscari, will be an extended interdisciplinary workshop in History of Art, History of Science and Medicine, Literature and History of the Book, with an emphasis on how literature, art, religion, urban planning, and forms of knowledge culture, religion, and politics were shaped by the constant threats of flood, land degradation, epidemic disease, resource depletion, and overpopulation, and shaped cultural responses and understandings of these crises in turn. The Republic’s artistic and intellectual prominence, its stylized urban design, its geopolitical impact on the mainland and the Mediterranean, will be seen through the lens of its successes and failures in managing the natural world. We will consider the implications for the humanities of work in ecocriticism and in environmental history to carve out new ways of attending to pre-modern Europe, and thinking together about how we can develop new ways to listen and to look for the enmeshed and multifaceted relationship between pre-modern culture and its multiple ecologies. We will also think about how ecocriticism and environmental history in the pre-modern period can inform our culture today, with the conviction that the humanities play just as vital a role as STEM in addressing our current juncture of climate crisis.

Although the Summer School will take place in Venice, it is not intended to focus exclusively on Italy, but rather to treat Venice as a window onto developments taking place across Europe in the Renaissance. It should therefore also be appealing to those studying Renaissance topics in other geographical contexts and such students would be very welcome to bring their expertise to our conversations and site visits. Together with staff members from the respective institutions, students will study the theme above through lectures and site visits, culminating in a miniature conference in which they will each give concise presentations about their doctoral research.

To register your interest and be alerted to when the application form will open, please complete the following brief form: https://forms.office.com/e/b7TK3MBrZ1