Contemporary societies are built around resource extraction (Curtis, 2013). Extractive industries rework local topographies, land use and vegetation patterns and introduce new structures and meanings to the environment. Oil extraction and gold, copper and uranium mining move tonnes of earth, which profoundly impacts on and transforms the landscape, soils, vegetation and watercourses near industrial areas. Nonetheless, outside of Europe and the United States, the linkages between extractive industries and environmental change have only recently started to be explored.

This two-day workshop intends to compare the environmental dynamics of extractive industries across the globe (specifically in Africa, Asia and Latin America), from a historical perspective. Although the relationship between extractive industries and environmental change is significant and multifaceted, it remains under-researched (Ross, 2017). In light of debates on the Anthropocene and climate change, reflection on the longer history of environmental knowledge production, pollution and protest appears timely (Hecht, 2018).

This workshop seeks to highlight parallels and differences between extractive regions, natural resources, economic and political regimes and disciplinary approaches. How do the environmental dynamics of gold mining differ from oil extraction? Are Latin American extractive industries comparable to those in Africa or Asia? What role do colonialism and post-colonialism, capitalism and neoliberalism play in governing the environmental effects of resource extraction? Although this workshop is historical in focus, interdisciplinary approaches from geographers, anthropologists and political scientists are welcome. Time will be reserved to discuss methodologies for doing research on extractive industries and the environment.
Papers exploring the following issues are particularly welcome:

- How have extractive industries reworked environmental knowledge regimes and value systems? Did existing conceptualisations of the land and the water play a role in enabling, legitimising or discouraging resource extraction?

- To what extent can we trace a transition from ‘valuing nature’ to ‘valuing profit’? Economic motives were often paramount in resource extraction, but it is equally important to analyse their interaction with historical and local specificities and to determine what mattered and to whom.

- What is the role of technology in resource extraction? Beyond the ‘technological fixes’ proposed by engineers or the machines that enabled ‘mass destruction’ (LeCain, 2009), the interaction between technology and environmental change deserves more attention.

- How can ‘environmental (in)justice’ best be explored? Has the environmental damage caused by resource extraction been experienced differently by different groups of people (Bullard, 1990; Schlosberg, 2007)?

- What common patterns, if any, can we discern among protest movements against resource extraction? But also, how can we understand the lack of protest movements against extractive industries, by paying attention to subtle ‘resigned activism’ or ways of ‘learning to live with pollution’ (Lora-Wainwright, 2017)?

- When and why have regulatory practices governing extractive activities changed, and with what effects?

- How were extractive regimes shaped by transnational connections, whether through colonialism, capitalism or networks of knowledge?

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The intention is to publish the proceedings of this workshop, most likely in the journal *Extractive Industries and Society*. Those interested to speak should send in a short abstract of 300 words to iva.pesa@history.ox.ac.uk and claire.phillips@history.ox.ac.uk before 15 August 2019. Full papers will be circulated prior to the workshop, no later than 1 December 2019.

Organisers: Dr Iva Peša (Oxford), Prof. Miles Larmer (Oxford), Prof. Corey Ross (Birmingham)

Selected references:


