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Destiny, Agency, and Adaptation: Climate Change from a Historical Perspective

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Destiny, Agency, and Adaptation

Climate Change from a Historical Perspective

A virtual keynote lecture and roundtable
Event is free and open to public.

Join the live event: [Go to Link](#)

FRIDAY, 12 FEBRUARY 2021

1:00-3:00PM

Department of History
Seton Hall University



COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

Destiny, Agency, and Adaptation: Climate Change from a Historical Perspective

1:00-3:00pm, Friday, 12 February 2021

PROGRAM

1:00-2:00pm—Keynote Lecture and Q&A

Dipesh Chakrabarty (Lawrence A. Kimpton Distinguished Service Professor of History, South Asian Languages and Civilizations, and the College at the University of Chicago)

“Scale and Agency in the Anthropocene”

Questions of scale have been at the heart of humanist debates on Climate Change and the Anthropocene. My lecture will touch on the history of historians' concern with human agency and discuss how older historiographical practices are being challenged by recent post-humanist calls for attention to agency as something distributed between humans and nonhumans and to the role nonhumans play in shaping human history.

2:00-3:00pm—Roundtable Discussion

Roundtable Participants:

- **Dipesh Chakrabarty** (Lawrence A. Kimpton Distinguished Service Professor of History, South Asian Languages and Civilizations, and the College at the University of Chicago)
- **Deborah R. Coen** (Professor of the Program in History of Science and Medicine, Yale University)
- **Joshua P. Howe** (Associate Professor of History and Environmental Studies, Reed College)
- **Sam White** (Associate Professor of History, Ohio State University)

Roundtable Moderator:

- **John L. Brooke** (Arts and Sciences Distinguished Professor of History and Anthropology; Warner Woodring Chair in American History, Ohio State University)

Participants' Biographies

John L. Brooke is the Warner Woodring Chair and Arts & Sciences Distinguished Professor of History and Anthropology at Ohio State, where he directs the Center for Historical Research. He received his Ph.D. in Early American History at the University of Pennsylvania in 1982 and has since published a number of books in that field, most recently *There is a North: Fugitive Slaves, Political Crisis, Cultural Rupture, and the Coming of the Civil War*. Of his earlier books, *The Heart of the Commonwealth: Political Culture in Worcester County, Massachusetts, 1713-1861* won the Merle Curti Prize in intellectual history from the Organization of American Historians, *The Refiner's Fire: The Making of Mormon Cosmology, 1644-1844* won the Bancroft Prize in American history, and *Columbia Rising: Civil Life on the Upper Hudson from the Revolution to the Age of Jackson* garnered the best book prize from the Society for Historians of the Early American Republic. In the early 1990s, building on a background in archaeology, demography, and ecology, he began to teach a course in "Global Environment History, which became the launch-point for his 2014 *Climate Change and the Course of Global History: A Rough Journey*. Since then, he has been writing widely in global environmental, material, and climate history, in preparation for a significant revision of *A Rough Journey*, now under way.

Dipesh Chakrabarty is the Lawrence A. Kimpton Distinguished Service Professor of History, South Asian Languages and Civilizations, and the College at the University of Chicago. He holds a courtesy appointment in the School of Law. His books include *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* published by the Princeton University Press. He is the recipient of the 2014 Toynbee Prize, which is given to a distinguished practitioner of global history and the 2019 West Bengal Government's Tagore Memorial Prize for his book, *The Crises of Civilization: Explorations in Global and Planetary Histories* (2018). His most recent book, *The Climate of History in a Planetary Age* will be published in March 2021 by the University of Chicago Press. He currently serves as the Faculty Director for the University's Center in Delhi.

Deborah R. Coen is professor of History and Chair of the Program in History of Science & Medicine at Yale University, where she is also a member of the steering committee of the Environmental Humanities Program. Her research focuses on the history of the modern physical and earth sciences and the intellectual and cultural history of central Europe. She is the author, most recently, of *Climate in Motion: Science, Empire, and the Problem of Scale*, and *The Earthquake Observers: Disaster Science from Lisbon to Richter*.

Joshua P. Howe is associate professor of history and environmental studies at Reed College in Portland, Oregon, where he chairs the history department. His publications include the books, *Behind the Curve: Science and the Politics of Global Warming* (University of Washington Press, 2014) and *Making Climate Change History: Documents from Global Warming's Past* (University of Washington Press, 2017), which explore the political history of climate change since the 1950s. He has held fellowships with the National Science Foundation's John Tyndall Correspondence Project at Montana State University in Bozeman and at Scripps Institute of Oceanography. His current work investigates relationships between American foreign policy and the distribution of heavy metals toxicity from the early 1950s through the second American war in Iraq. Josh holds a B.A. in history and creative writing from Middlebury College and a Ph.D. in history from Stanford University.

Sam White is associate professor of environmental history at the Ohio State University. His research focuses on how we can use natural and human records to reconstruct past climates and extreme weather and how societies coped with them. He is author of the books *The Climate of Rebellion in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge University Press, 2011) and *A Cold Welcome: The Little Ice Age and Europe's Encounter with North America* (Harvard University Press, 2017) and various chapters and articles on world history, and on climate, disease, and animals in history. Prof. White is also lead editor of the *Palgrave Handbook to Climate History*, co-founder and website administrator of the *Climate History Network*, and steering committee member of the Past Global Changes (PAGES) *Climate Reconstruction and Impacts from the Archives of Society* (CRIAS) working group.