**A close-up of a sun

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**TORCH Environmental Humanities Research Hub**

**Hilary Term 2024 Calendar**

**WEEK 3: Wed 31 January**

4:30-6:00, TORCH Colin Matthew Room

**Elizabeth Chatterjee (University of Chicago)**

"Passing the Planetary Torch: The 1970s Energy Crisis and the Global South"

The energy crisis of the early 1970s is now widely recognized as a turning point in global environmental history. Particularly hard hit, but still largely overlooked by historians, were poor oil-importing countries. This talk offers an expansive reinterpretation of the early 1970s crisis as seen from the global South, focusing especially on India. Many postcolonial nations experienced the first oil shock as merely one component of a broader climate-food-energy emergency that spanned the planet. Its effects were both political and ecological. By 1975 Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had resorted to imposing a constitutional dictatorship – the Emergency – for the first time in independent India’s history, one amongst a series of coups and authoritarian takeovers that swept the postcolonial world. Less noticed was a second transformation that would reverberate through the Earth’s atmosphere. The prolonged energy crisis impelled the Indian state to embrace coal, bankrolled in large part by the United States and western Europe. In this way, the 1970s energy crisis marked a world-historical passing of the torch. The exponential rise in global carbon emissions that had begun around 1950 barely slackened after the oil shocks, but its leading regional drivers shifted southwards and eastwards.

**WEEK 6: Tues 20 February**

12-2pm, TORCH Colin Matthew Room

“Unveiling Ecological Grief in Art Review Oxford's Special Edition”

To mark the publication of Art Review Oxford’s special issue on ecological grief, the Environmental Humanities Research Hub at TORCH is hosting a roundtable discussion with the editors and contributors. Scholars and artists will gather to discuss their interdisciplinary work in the issue, which dissects ecological narratives woven into reviews, letters, recipes and artwork. The panel will explore the role of art criticism in attending to nature and its various forms of loss.

**WEEK 8: Wed 6 March**

12-1:30pm, TORCH Third Floor Seminar Room

**Sam White (University of Helsinki)**

"Historical Perspectives on Climate, Disasters and Migration"

Accelerating global warming in the twenty-first century has raised alarms about large-scale migration driven by droughts, floods, heat waves, and other disasters. Current anthropogenic climate change and its impacts are unprecedented, human migration in the face of climate and weather disasters presents a much longer history. On the one hand, this history could serve as a valuable guide for understanding and responding to climate migration in the present. On the other hand, using this history creates risks of misleading narratives, faulty analogies, unexamined assumptions, and the distortion of history for political ends. This talk considers uses and misuses of history in discussions of climate migration and how histories of disasters and migration might help us or not.

All welcome! If you have any queries or would like to be added to the Hub mailing list, please email [envhums@torch.ox.ac.uk](mailto:envhums@torch.ox.ac.uk).