Eagle Glassheim: "Four Towns that Moved: Mass Mining and the Transformations of Lives and Landscapes in the 20th Century"

Discussion published by Dylan Mohr on Wednesday, November 3, 2021
Type: Lecture
Date: November 4, 2021
Location: Minnesota, United States
Subject Fields: Eastern Europe History / Studies, Environmental History / Studies, American History / Studies, European History / Studies

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Four Towns that Moved: Mass Mining and the Transformations of Lives and Landscapes in the 20th Century

A public lecture by Eagle Glassheim

Without mass destruction mining, mass production and consumption would not be possible. The vastly increased scale of twentieth-century construction and consumption required technologies of equivalent scale to mine iron, coal, copper, asbestos, and other raw materials. The advent of highly-mechanized, high-throughput, mass-destruction mining led to surges in production that largely met the increasing global demand for metals and minerals in the mid-twentieth century. It also fundamentally changed landscapes, labor, and ways of life in mining regions. My talk will explore these changes through case studies of mining towns in Czechoslovakia, Quebec, Montana and Minnesota. The recent history of mass destruction mining helps us see hidden connections between ourselves, the materials of our consumption, and remote mining landscapes and communities.

Eagle Glassheim is the author of Noble Nationalists: The Transformation of the Bohemian Aristocracy (Harvard, 2005) and Cleansing the Czechoslovak Borderlands, (University of Pittsburgh, 2016). His ongoing research interests include the environmental history of the “Black Triangle,” an industrial and coal mining region spanning Poland, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany; and the history of open-pit mining in the twentieth century.

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Citation: Dylan Mohr. Eagle Glassheim: "Four Towns that Moved: Mass Mining and the Transformations of Lives and Landscapes in the 20th Century". H-Environment. 11-03-2021.
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