



Universität  
Basel

Departement  
Altertumswissenschaften



# CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE BREADBASKET OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

## RECONSTRUCTING NILE FLOODS FOR THE ROMAN PERIOD

An interdisciplinary conference held at the  
Swiss Institute in Rome – January 23/24, 2020

Organizer: Sabine R. Huebner, Institute of Ancient History, University of Basel (Switzerland)



### Location:

Istituto Svizzero di Roma  
Villa Maraini, Via Ludovisi 48, Rome (Italy)  
[ancientclimate.philhist.unibas.ch](http://ancientclimate.philhist.unibas.ch)

### Registration:

There is no conference fee, but please  
register with Sabine R. Huebner  
[sabine.huebner@unibas.ch](mailto:sabine.huebner@unibas.ch)

Image: »Blue Nile Falls« by Justin Clements, 28.08.2005, shared on Flickr (CC BY 2.0)

# Program

## January 23, 2020

### Session 1:

**The Nile over the longue durée**  
(chair: Markus Stoffel, Geneva)

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**14:30–15:00**    **Welcome and Introduction**

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**15:00–15:30**    **Henry F. Lamb (Aberystwyth):**  
Lake Tana and the Blue Nile:  
the last 150,000 years

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**15:30–16:00**    **Cecile Blanchet (Potsdam):**  
Flood dynamics during the  
last Saharan Humid Period:  
clues from a laminated record  
from the Nile deep-sea fan

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**16:00–16:30**    **Elena Xoplaki (Giessen):**  
Precipitation variability and  
changes in monsoonal  
Africa - Associations with  
northern Egyptian  
hydroclimate in new  
comprehensive earth  
system models prior to CE 700

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**16:30–17:00**    **Coffee**

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**17:00–17:30**    **Judith Bunbury (Cambridge):**  
Evidence for Graeco-Roman  
Climate and environment;  
tying climate records to  
observations from the field

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**17:30–18:00**    **Response by Irene Soto Marín**  
(Basel) and General Discussion

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**20:00**            **Dinner**

# Program

## January 24, 2020

### Session 2:

**Historical case studies of Nile flood  
extremes during Roman times**  
(chair: Marco Maiuro, Rome)

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**9:30–10:00**    **Anna Arpaia (Pavia):**  
The Nile breaks the banks:  
unfavorable floods in some  
documents from the 1st  
century BC Herakleopolite

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**10:00–10:30**    **Katherine Blouin (Toronto):**  
Good Flood, Bad Flood:  
Environmental entanglements  
in the Roman Northeastern  
Delta

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**10:30–11:00**    **Sabine R. Huebner (Basel):**  
Did shifts in the African  
Monsoon lead to the decline of  
the Roman Fayum from the  
third century CE?

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**11:00–11:30**    **Coffee**

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**11:30–12:00**    **Christophe Corona (Clermont):**  
Multi-proxy approach provides  
insights into climate variability  
in Central Italy at the End of  
the Roman Empire: Insights of  
Work in the Nile river

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**12:00–12:30**    **Response by Elio Lo Cascio**  
(Rome) and General discussion

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**12:30–13:30**    **Lunch**



# Program

## January 24, 2020

### Session 3:

**Natural proxies for reconstructing Nile floods during the Roman period (chair: Sabine R. Huebner, Basel)**

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**13:30–14:00** **Matthieu Ghilardi (Aix-en-Provence):**  
Nile River evolution during Graeco-Roman times in Egypt: what we learn from sediment archives?

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**14:00–14:30** **Markus Stoffel (Geneva):**  
Tracking changes in Nile floods with tree rings: Possibilities and limitations

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**14:30–15:00** **Coffee**

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**15:00–15:30** **Kevin Anchukaitis (Tucson):**  
Inference from the periphery: large-scale climate variability and Nile floods during the Common Era

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**15:30–16:00** **Response by Federico de Romanis (Rome) and General Discussion**

# Organization

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