CLIMATE HISTORY NEWS

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CLIMATE HISTORY NEWS IS THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE CLIMATE HISTORY NETWORK
– A NETWORK OF INTERDISCIPOLINARY SCHOLARS STUDYING PAST CLIMATE CHANGE –
TO CONTRIBUTE EMAIL NJCUNIGAN@GMAIL.COM

WINTER 2018

Letter from the Founders

Dagomar Degroot

Welcome to the latest installment of our quarterly newsletter on events, publications, and resources in climate history.

As you may have noticed, we have a diverse selection of new feature articles at HistoricalClimatology, on topics ranging from the environmental history of right whales to an expedition on an icebreaker; from activism at COP23 to the prosperity of the Dutch in the chilliest decades of the Little Ice Age. HistoricalClimatology.com now receives between 1,00 and 2,000 hits per day, and our social media accounts now both have well over 1,000 followers.

Sam White

We're also making steady progress within the academy. Following our meeting at the Past Global Changes Open Science Meeting (PAGES-OSM) in Zaragoza last summer, Martin Bauch, Chantal Camenisch, and Sam White submitted an application for a PAGES working group Climate Reconstruction and Impacts from the Archives of Societies (CRIAS). We're pleased to let you know that our working group has been accepted! Qing Pei (Education University of Hong Kong) has joined the steering committee, which is in the process of planning the first workshop for this fall. You can find out more at the PAGES-CRIAS website.

We targeted two international conferences this year for climate history panels. At the American Society for Environmental History in Riverside, California last week, we had three panels: "New Perspectives on Climate and History in the Little Ice Age"; "Drought and Flood, Adaptation and Resilience over the Longue Durée"; and "Changing Climates and Restoring Landscapes, People, and the Nation in Modern America." We're also pleased to note the many other papers and panels on climate at the ASEH this year, including a session on "Climate and the Geography of Slavery, 1550-1860." We'll also have several climate history sessions at the upcoming International Conference of Historical Geographers this July in Warsaw, where we plan to hold our next Climate History Network Planning meeting.

The last three months have seen many more high-quality and high-impact publications in climate history, including many from members of this network. Some highlights include review articles by George Adamson, Matthew J. Hannaford, and Eleonora J. Rohland, "Re-Thinking the Present: The Role of a Historical Focus in Climate Change Adaptation Research," *Global Environmental Change* 48 (2018): 195–205, and Martin Mahony and Georgina Endfield, "Climate and Colonialism," *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change* 9 (2018): e510; quantitative studies of climate and migration by Rüdiger Glaser, I. Himmelsbach, and A. Bösmeier, "Climate of Migration? How Climate Triggered Migration from Southwest Germany to North America during the 19th Century," *Climate of the Past* 13 (2017): 1573–92, and Qing Pei, Harry F. Lee, and David D. Zhang, "Long-Term Association between Climate Change and Agriculturalists' Migration in Historical China," *The Holocene* 28 (2018): 208–16; and Dagomar Degroot's monograph *The Frigid Golden Age: Climate Change, the Little Ice Age, and the Dutch Republic, 1560–1720* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018). For a quick summary of some of the book's big ideas, you can check out Dagomar's new article in the Washington Post. Now Dagomar can get tenured and put twice as much work into the Climate History Network!

Dagomar Degroot & Sam White

Climate History Podcast

Catch up on past episodes of the Climate History Podcast. You can hear co-founder Dagomar Degroot interview leading climate history scholars on topics including the Little Ice, the Anthropocene, geoengineering, and what climate history can tell us about the current climate crises. You can subscribe to the podcast here or listen here.

Upcoming Events

March 2018 – Riederalp Workshop

The University of Geneva together with Trinity College Dublin and Yale University will be organizing a workshop on exposure, vulnerability and resilience of human societies to climate- and weather-related disasters from the Holocene to the Anthropocene. The workshop will take place late March 2018 in Riederalp, Switzerland. Although research on weather extremes and related natural hazards is rich and thriving, more inter-disciplinary collaboration is needed to manage and reduce the risks of extreme climatic events, build more resilient communities, and prevent natural hazards from escalating into disasters. The 2018 Riederalp workshop thus calls for contributions from a wide range of scholars and practitioners representing various disciplines that may include archeology, climatology, economy, history, hydrology, geography, geology paleoclimatology and political science.

April 2018 – European Geophysical Union General Assembly

The EGU General Assembly 2018 will take place in Vienna from April 8-13, 2018. The Assembly brings together geoscientists from all over the world to one meeting covering all disciplines of the Earth, planetary and space sciences. The EGU aims to provide a forum where scientists, especially early career researchers, can present their work and discuss their ideas with experts in all fields of geoscience. Several sessions will be of particular interest to CHN members. More information can be found here.

June 2018 – Early Instrumental Meteorological Series Conference and Workshop

The goal of this conference and workshop is to discuss the state of knowledge on early instrumental meteorological series from the 18th and early 19th century. The first two days will be in conference-style and will encompass invited talks from different regions of the world (including participation by skype) on existing compilations and on individual records, but also on instruments and archives as well as on climate events and processes. Contributed presentations (most will be posters) are welcome. The third and fourth days target a smaller audience and are in workshop-style. The goal is to compile a detailed inventory of all early instrumental records: What has been measured, where, when and by whom? Is the location of the original data known? Have they been imaged, digitised, homogenised, or are they already in existing archives? This work will help to focus future data rescue activities. The workshop will be held in Bern, Switzerland from 18-21 June 2018. Registration and abstract submission are due by 15 March 2018. More information can be found here.

July 2018 – International Conference of Historical Geographers

The 17th International Conference of Historical Geographers will be held in Warsaw, 15-20 July. The conference is organized by the University of Warsaw and the Tadeusz Manteuffel Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences and includes nearly 500 papers on historical geography. The draft program includes eleven climate panels, including panels on the Little Ice Age, droughts, colonialism, alternative disciplinary histories of ecology and climate science; and the social and economic conditions in the Baltic Sea Basin. More information is available here.

Open Calls

Arcadia

Founded as a partnership between the European Society for Environmental History (ESEH) and the Rachel Carson Center, Arcadia is an online, peer-reviewed publication platform for short, illustrated, and engaging environmental histories. An Arcadia article tells a short (about 750 words) focused, engaging environmental history about any site, event, person, organization, or species as it related to nature and human society. Your text should focus on a specific problem/case and refer to a specific place and time. You should include 2-5 digital objects (videos, images, maps, or other materials).

We are currently seeking submissions for out Summer 2018 volume, the deadline is **May 1, 2018**. For more information please visit: http://www.environmentandsociety.org/arcadia/contribution.

INQUA 2019 Dublin

A call for scientific session proposals for INQUA 2019 Dublin is open and will be open until 31st March 2018. Full details of the information needed at this stage is available on the 20th INQUA Congress website's programme themes page, along with a list of currently proposed sessions. You can also keep in touch with developments by Facebook (INQUADUB2019) and Twitter (@INQUADUB19).

Please feel free to get in touch (sci-prog@inqua2019.org) about any aspect of this. We're working to make this a really strong and stimulating Congress, and welcome all ideas for scientific sessions that can contribute to that, in any area that touches on Quaternary research, including human dimensions.

Open Positions

Max Planck Research Group Leader

The Max Planck Institutes for Biogeochemistry, Chemical Ecology and The Science of Human History invite applications for a Max Planck Research Group Leader (W2) on extreme events in biological, societal and earth systems. Extreme events, such as extreme weather, pathogen attacks, technological transitions or even shocks in financial markets can induce highly non-linear responses with severe impacts that cascade across coupled biotic-social-earth systems. On the other hand, the earth system, and life in general, have persisted through a history of extreme events, and even adapted to become more resilient as a result. By definition extreme events are very rare, which implies an important scientific challenge to studying them. Deadline for applications including references is March 15, 2018. More information is available here.

News

Japan-Asia Climate Data Program

A new website devoted to Historical Climatology and Data Rescue activities in Japan has been launched. JCDP will provide information on all sorts of climate data in Japan and Asia from the past to the present. Climate Data available includes not only meteorological data, but also various kinds of climate information such as documentary records describing daily weather and seasonal phenomena during the historical period. Visit here.

Re-thinking the Present: The Role of a Historical Focus in Climate Change Adaptation Research

A recent article published in Global Environmental Change reviews the approaches that researchers have taken to historical climatology. Surveying major trends in the field over the past 25 years, it also argues that historical records have thus far been an underexploited tool and can provide a rich baseline for understanding the processes of adaptation. Historical analysis, the authors argue, can also draw attention to how institutional and individual agency and the uneven distribution of power shaped past responses to climate change. The article cautions that this power relationship is sometimes naturalized by the way that "adaptation" has been used in existing literature, and that historical climatologists need to draw attention to power relationships or else risk reproducing them. On the whole, the article should be a useful reference and teaching tool. Read the article here.

Launch of PAGES working group: Climate Reconstruction and Impacts from Archives of Society (CRIAS)

Written records, early instrumental observations, and artefacts such as flood markers - the archives of societies - play a vital role in high-resolution climate reconstruction. CRIAS aims to improve methods of analysing these sources and the data drawn from them in order to better understand historical climate variability and its human dimensions. For more information, visit the website here or sign up to the CRIAS mailing list.

Pitfalls of Glacier Chronologies in Arid Climates

A new study on glaciation in arid central Asia urges caution in reading glacial proxy sources. The study's authors emphasize that glacier growth in arid regions is more linked to local precipitation than temperature, as evidenced by the retreat of many central Asian glaciers during the global Last Glacial Maximum. While the vast majority of the world's glaciers are in retreat today, shifting precipitation patterns due to modern climate change has also brought growth to some of these glaciers, suggesting that glacier chronologies from arid areas need to be used carefully in reconstructions. Read the original paper here.

New Proxy Record for Southwestern Africa

A new article published in the International Journal of Climatology offers a document-based hydrochronology of southwestern Africa during the second half of the 19th century. Based on the journals of missionaries to central Namibia held in archives in Europe and Africa, the record demonstrates abnormally high interannual variability compared to contemporary records for other parts of Africa. Given the relative paucity of instrumental and proxy records for Africa, this article is a welcome addition to the body of historical climatology work. Read the full article here.

Solar Forcing and the Maunder Minimum

A new article in the Journal of Space Weather and Space Climate re-examines the role of solar forcing in the Maunder Minimum, concluding that decreased solar activity was one of many factors contributing to cooler weather during the period and is insufficient on its own to explain the shift. Drawing on updated models of solar activity and paleoclimate reconstructions, the authors argue that reduced solar irradiance was comparable to changing land use as a causal factor, in addition to significant volcanic forcing. Read the whole article here.

Feature Articles

North Atlantic Right Whales From Their Medieval Past To Their Endangered Present

Vicki Ellen Szabo, Western Carolina University

2017 was a calamitous year for the North Atlantic right whale. The final count of the 2017 "Unusual Mortality Event" was eighteen animals. Fourteen North Atlantic right whales were found dead from the Gulf of Saint Lawrence to Cape Cod between June and December, with an additional four strandings and entanglements through the year. More

A Frigid Golden Age: Can the Society of Rembrandt Teach Us About Global Warming?

Dagomar Degroot, Georgetown University

Earth's climate is changing with terrifying speed. Humanity has strengthened a greenhouse effect that has now warmed the planet by roughly one degree Celsius. The scale, speed, and causes of today's global warming have no precedent, but of course natural forces have always changed Earth's climate. We now know that these changes were big enough to shape the fates of past societies. Most confronted disaster, but a few seemed to prosper in spite of – and in some cases because of – climate changes. Perhaps the most successful of all emerged in the coastal fringes of the present-day Netherlands. More

Icebreaking in the Gulf of Bothnia: A Passenger's Perspective

Laura Eerkes-Medrano, University of Victoria

This past winter I was fortunate to join the Arctia *Otso* icebreaker in the Gulf of Bothnia, Finland, from March 2 to March 24, 2017. I had sailed the Northwest Passage aboard the Canadian Coast Guard ships *Sir Wilfrid Laurier* and *Louis S. St-Laurent* in 2015. Going to Finland to travel on an icebreaker for 20 days was my next big step as a Canadian scientist. More

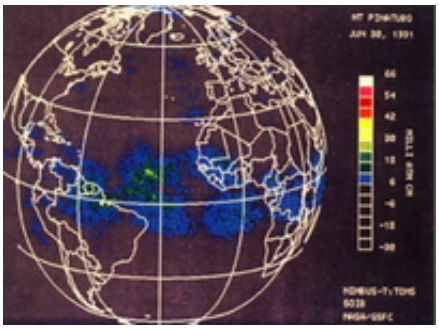
Looking Back, Looking Forward: A Historian Goes to COP23

Ruth Morgan, Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society

I joined the most recent UN Climate Change Conference in Bonn with a delegation from Monash University, which also included legal scholars, renewable energy specialists, and science communicators. The opportunity to observe and participate in the activities that accompany the negotiations was too good to pass up. More

Volcanoes, Climate Change, and Society: History and Future Prospects

Katrin Kleemann, Rachel Carson Center



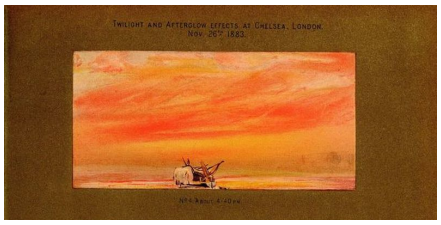
In June 1783, the residents of Kirkjubæjarklaustur, an Icelandic village, watched as the water of their local river Skaftá vanished and, days later, was replaced by a “fiery flood” of lava. They could not have imagined that this event would have consequences halfway around the globe, all the way to eastern Africa. More

Best of the Web

September 2017

When the Bullin Shrieked: Aboriginal Memories of Volcanic Eruptions Thousands of Years Ago. *The Conversation*
Frederic Tudor, the Ice King. *How Stuff Works*
Data Rescue Projects. *RealClimate*
Record-Shattering 2.7-million-year-old Ice Core Reveals Start of the Ice Ages. *Science*

October 2017



Speculating About the Weather: The Unusual Dry Fog of 1783. *NiCHE*
New Study Highlights "Hidden Figure" of Sun Watchers. *AGU*
Historical Data: Hidden in the Past. *Nature Jobs*
How Fashion Adapted to Climate Change – in the Little Ice Age. *The Conversation*
The Sixth Extinction and Our Unraveling World. *OSU Origins*
We Charted Arctic Sea Ice for Nearly Every Day Since 1979. You'll See a Trend. *NY Times*

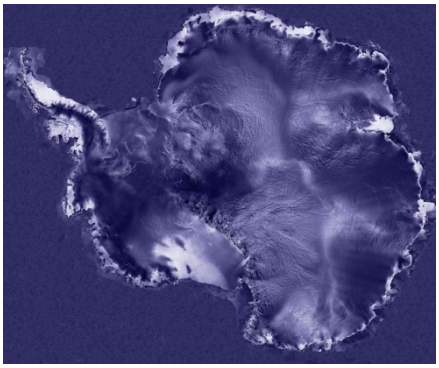
November 2017

Volcanoes Helped Violent Revolts Erupt in Ancient Egypt. *The NY Times*
Climate Change Might be Worse than Thought After Scientists Find Major Mistake in Water Temperature Readings. *The Independent*
An Icy Conquest. *New York Review of Books*
As Ice Retreats, Frozen Mosses Emerge to Tell Climate Change Tale. *Science News*
Extraordinary Antarctic Weather May Have Influenced Outcome of Early 20th Century Race to South Pole. *AGU*
Storms May Have Produced Most Mediterranean "Tsunami" Deposits. *EOS*

December 2017

Ice Apocalypse: Rapid Collapse of Antarctic Glaciers Could Flood Coastal Cities by the End of this Century. *Grist*
What the First Thanksgiving can Teach Us About Adjusting to Climate Shock. *The Washington Post*
Antarctica: The Ice Inferno. *Aeon*
Why Lost Ice Means Lost Hope for an Inuit Village. *New York Times*

January 2018



Rescued Radar Maps Reveal Antarctica's Past. *Nature*
The Stilling: Global Wind Speeds Slowing Down Since 1960. *Horizon*
Thinking About the Halifax Explosion in a Time of Climate Change. *Acadiensis*
How To Survive Climate Change? Clues Are Buried In The Arctic. *NPR*
Why Did Greenland's Vikings Vanish? *Smithsonian Magazine*
Human Influence on Climate Led to Several Major Weather Extremes in 2016. *Climate.gov*

February 2018

Melting Glaciers Could Reveal How Our Ancestors Dealt With Changing Climates. *National Geographic*
Meet the Amateur Scientist Who Discovered Climate Change. *Wired*
Seeking Answers on Climate Change, Scientists Venture Into the Vaults of the Past. *Ensia*
Memories and History: The 1998 Ice Storm. *Nature*
Climate Change and the Humanities: A Historical Perspective. *Items*
The Three-Degree World: The Cities that Will be Drowned by Global Warming. *The Guardian*

Recent Publications

Historical Climatology (including documentary and early instrumental reconstructions, and studies of climate and human history)

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History of Climate Science, Ideas, and Perceptions

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Paleoclimatology (high-resolution studies relevant to human history)

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Cai, Qiufang, Yu Liu, Han Liu, Changfeng Sun, and Yanchao Wang. "Growing-Season Precipitation since 1872 in the Coastal Area of Subtropical Southeast China Reconstructed from Tree Rings and Its Relationship with the East Asian Summer Monsoon System." *Ecological Indicators* 82 (2017): 441–50. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolind.2017.07.012.

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