

Colloquium for Economic, Social, Environmental and Climate History

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DESCHGER CENTRE
CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCH

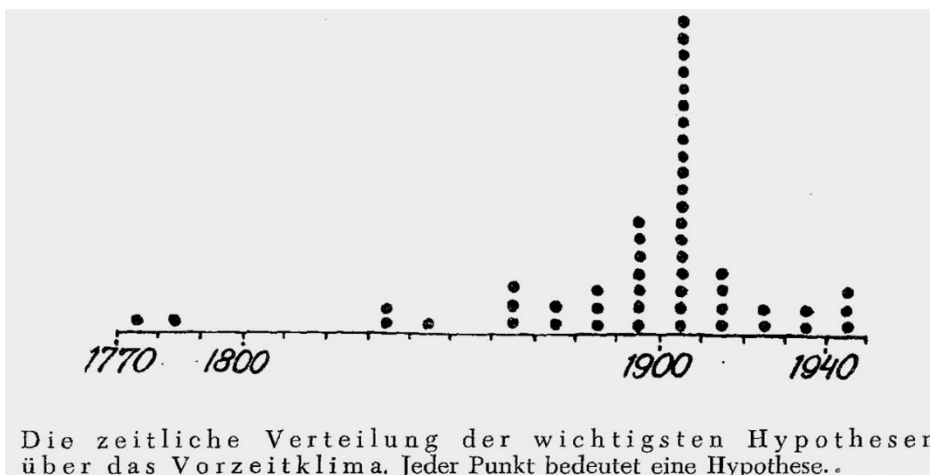
GUEST TALK

Christoph Rosol, Technical University Dresden and MPI Geoanthropology, Jena / currently
Forum Basiliense, Basel

VENUE: Room F 012, Unitobler, Lerchenweg 36

TIME: 12.05.2026, 18:15-19:30

The more causes, the more hypotheses: The “paleothermal problem” around 1900



Participation via Zoom:
[https://unibe-
ch.zoom.us/j/67068706422?
pwd=waDNtiHEvhSI43yHNF
KzKsWfhgPhTG.1](https://unibe-ch.zoom.us/j/67068706422?pwd=waDNtiHEvhSI43yHNFKzKsWfhgPhTG.1)

Source: Schwarzbach, Martin:
Das Klima der Vorzeit.
Stuttgart 1950.



Dr. Christoph Rosol is a historian of science currently residing in Basel as a fellow at the Forum Basiliense. Until recently he headed the research cluster *Anthropocene Formations* at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science while also working at Berlin's Haus der Kulturen der

Welt as a curator. His research is concerned with the history and epistemology of Earth (system) sciences, in particular the climate, paleoclimate, ocean and atmospheric sciences, the history of media and computing, and transdisciplinary methods for Anthropocene research.

With the exceptional increase in geological findings over the course of the 19th century, the variability of the climate over geological time scales became progressively apparent. In particular, the excessively warm climate of the Eocene stood out from the geological record. At the same time every single hypothesis regarding the causes of these vastly different climates – whether astronomical, solar, terrestrial, or atmospheric in nature – remained unsatisfactory. In the first decades of the 20th century, a certain resignation therefore prevailed in the face of the ‘paleothermal problem.’ This foundational crisis in paleoclimatology was neither fundamentally solved nor suspended but gave rise to a technological-epistemic pragmatism leading to novel fields such as paleoceanography and climate modeling.