



Ca' Foscari  
University  
of Venice

Department of Humanities



SCIENCE, SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE  
IN THE FIRST MILLENNIUM CE

THE NEW  
INSTITUTE

Centre for Environmental  
Humanities (NICHE)  
at Ca' Foscari  
University of Venice



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the European Union



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# People and their Environments in the First Millennium CE

This seminar series focuses on relationships between people and their environments in the Mediterranean in the first millennium CE. The papers explore social, intellectual, religious and political contexts from around the Mediterranean in the first millennium CE, and draw on evidence and methodologies from the disciplines of history, archaeology and environmental science. The seminars will all take place online; one seminar (10th November, Prof. Alessandro Fontana) will also be an in-person event (and therefore hybrid).

## Register for the seminar:



## Organisers:

Prof.ssa Helen Foxhall Forbes  
Dr Michele Abballe  
Dr Massimiliano Borroni  
Dr Jakub Sypiański  
Dr Vicky Manolopoulou

This seminar series is organised by the team members of SSE1K: Science, Society and Environmental Change in the First Millennium CE (ERC Consolidator Grant 101044437, PI Prof.ssa Helen Foxhall Forbes). Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Research Council Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

## Seminars

14/10/2025, 16.00 CEST

**Prof. Johannes Preiser-Kapeller**  
(Universität Wien)

*About volcanoes, icons, solar storms, and toads. The identification and interpretation of extreme events and celestial phenomena in 8th and 9th century Byzantium and in trans-Eurasian comparison.*

10/11/2025, 15.00 CET

**Prof. Alessandro Fontana** (Università di Padova)

*The Diluvium Aquarum: geoarchaeological constraints of extreme floods in Northeast Italy during the Early Middle Ages*

IN PERSON (HYBRID) – Aula B,  
Ca' Bottacin, Dorsoduro 3911, Venice

09/12/2025, 15.00 CET

**Prof. Paolo Squatriti** (University of Michigan)

*The Material Eucharist in the Early Middle Ages: Bread, Theology and Ecology*

12/01/2026, 15.00 CET

**Prof. Carole Nehme** (Université de Rouen)

*Climate pattern and social unrest in Cyprus*

09/02/2026, 17.00 CET

**Prof. Andrew Marsham** (University of Cambridge) and **Prof. Philip Booth** (St Peter's College, Oxford)

*Nile Floods and Delta Revolts in the Eighth and Ninth Centuries CE*

09/03/2026, 15.00 CET

**Dr. Dalia Hussein** (University of Edinburgh), **Georgi Obatnin** (University of Edinburgh), and **Dr. Marie Legendre** (University of Edinburgh)

*People and Taxes: The Functioning of the Fiscal Cycle in Abbasid Egypt*

12/05/2026, 16.00 CEST

**Dr. Carlo Scardino** (Heinrich Heine Universität Düsseldorf)

*The Role and Significance of Syriac and Arabic Translations of Late Antique Agricultural Treatises in the First Millennium CE around the Mediterranean*

09/06/2026, 16.00 CEST

**Prof. Edward Schoolman** (University of Nevada, Reno)

*New Resources and Shifting Landscapes: Human Activities and Environmental Change in Rieti and Lucca, 600-1000 CE*

15/07/2026, 15.00 CEST

**Dr. Rob Witcher** (Durham University)  
*Imperial ecologies in the northern hinterland of Rome: environment and society on the metropolitan doorstep*