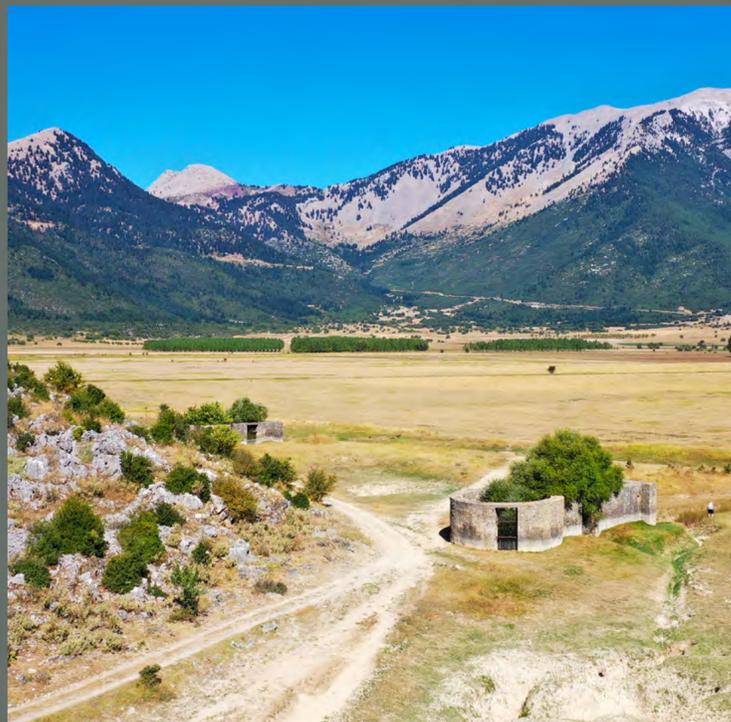


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SEPTEMBER 2025
18:30 – 20:00

Université du Luxembourg
Campus Belval, Maison des Sciences humaines, Black Box

LET'S
TALK ABOUT
HISTORY!



The Impact of Empire

Carrying capacity of Eastern Mediterranean landscapes under societal constraints

ABSTRACT

The lack of water is a serious threat to all societies at all times, especially in regions such as the Mediterranean. However, a simple, linear relationship between less rainfall and the decline of societies falls short of the mark. While archaeologists often approach the topic of water scarcity and its impact on socio-economic systems in terms of economic or political mechanisms, Ingmar Unkel focuses on natural water availability for plants and the consequences that follow. The resilience of societies to (hydrological) natural hazards depends on the land-use potential of the region: Which locations are suitable for which type of land use? What is the quality of the soil? How much agricultural land is available at all? Ultimately, it is a social question of how land-use potential was dealt with in the past in various areas of governance, and whether this can still be seen in ge archaeological archives.



Prof. Ingmar Unkel
*Professor for the Physical Geopgraphy of
the Anthropocene at Heidelberg University*

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Ingmar Unkel is Professor of Physical Geography of the Anthropocene at Heidelberg University, where he is also a Fellow of the Marsilius Kolleg, an interdisciplinary center that fosters exchange between the cultural and natural sciences. Previously, he was Professor of Environmental History at Kiel University for over ten years, serving on the executive board of the Cluster of Excellence ROOTS (“Social, Environmental, and Cultural Connectivity in Past Societies”) and as a principal investigator in the Collaborative Research Center 1266 (“Scales of Transformation”). He obtained his PhD from the Heidelberg Academy of Sciences with a dissertation on the radiocarbon chronology of the Nasca Culture.

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