Environment & Society Portal

Multimedia Library Collection: Environment and History (journal)

"Divine Punishment or Object of Research? The Resonance of Earthquakes, Floods, Epidemics and Famine in the Correspondence Network of Albrecht von Haller"

Stuber, Martin

Stuber, Martin. "Divine Punishment or Object of Research? The Resonance of Earthquakes, Floods, Epidemics and Famine in the Correspondence Network of Albrecht von Haller." *Environment and History* 9, no. 2, "Natural Disasters and their Perception" special issue (May, 2003): 171–93. doi:10.3197/096734003129342818 .

The Enlightenment is a starting point for our current understanding of natural disasters. The present investigation examines the resonance of such catastrophes in the correspondence network of the universal scholar Albrecht von Haller (1708–77). In this European system of communication there is a very rapid exchange of widely dispersed individual observations and an intensive discussion about competing interpretations. Poetic, philosophical, scientific and administrative approaches overlap rather than contradict one another. A main topic is the earthquake of Lisbon 1755, with the important role of Voltaire, who embodied the Enlightenment like no other and who was the greatest ideological antipode of Haller. Although earthquakes are the main focus of attention, some comparison is made with letters discussing cattle diseases, plagues, famines and floods.

All rights reserved. © 2003 The White Horse Press

Download:
PDF: https://www.environmentandsociety.org/sites/default/files/key_docs/stuber-9-2.pdf

Related links:

- *Environment and History* at The White Horse Press
  http://www.erica.demon.co.uk/EH.html

Environment and History (journal) Collection, Multimedia Library, Environment & Society Portal
"Divine Punishment or Object of Research? The Resonance of Earthquakes, Floods, Epidemics and Famine in the Correspondence Network of Albrecht von Haller"
Source URL: http://www.environmentandsociety.org/node/3155
Print date: 03 November 2026 11:14:35

Websites linked in this text:

- http://dx.doi.org/10.3197/096734003129342818

Environment and History (journal) Collection, Multimedia Library, Environment & Society Portal
"Divine Punishment or Object of Research? The Resonance of Earthquakes, Floods, Epidemics and Famine in the Correspondence Network of Albrecht von Haller"
Source URL: http://www.environmentandsociety.org/node/3155
Print date: 03 November 2026 11:14:35