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Kempe, Michael and Christian Rohr

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Floods, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, storm tides, hail and forest fires have always troubled humankind. Only in recent times, however, have serious historical studies been published about these and other natural disasters, and their effects on human life. So far, natural catastrophes have been largely neglected by historians as relevant factors in history, because in the nineteenth century historiography had begun to externalize natural phenomena as accidental facts, by focusing on man as the only or decisive actor of history.

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