That the Nile was of crucial importance to Egypt, a country surrounded by desert, is obvious to all, and has been realized ever since Antiquity. Nevertheless, the river as an environmental and cultural factor has been less intensively studied by archaeologists and Egyptologists than might be expected.

More recent studies regarding the Nile show a growing awareness that we are facing a natural phenomenon, the study of which is fundamentally the domain of the natural sciences. On the other hand, available evidence also includes ancient and culturally biased material of a kind that is beyond the competence of most natural scientists. The problem in addressing this dispersed and incongruous information is that an intensive interaction between numerous disciplines with little tradition of collaboration is needed, a condition rarely fulfilled.

Nowadays, important progress is being achieved particularly in integrating earth sciences and Egyptian archaeology. By bringing together specialists working in different parts of Egypt, one aim of the conference is to enable natural scientists to compare the methods they deploy and the kinds of results they attain. Another aim will be to compare the results of regional interpreta-tions from different parts of the country to address broader issues (like the size of the floodplain, hypo-theses about the drift of the Nile bed, or the potential for economic and demographic analysis. Another aim is to assess material and written evidence and icono-graphy testifying to how the Egyptians reacted to the environmental conditions imposed by the nilotic environment. For this, archaeological indications could be the spatial distribution of sites in relation to landscape features with an impact on the local hydrology, or the date when certain changes in land form, land cover, or land use occurred. Religious ideas, customs and iconography illustrate the varied ways in which the Nilotic environment had an impact on the Egyptians’ mental outlook. Since, moreover, the Nile is a factor that continued to exert influence after the demise of pharaonic culture, Medieval and even later sources are also of direct relevance.

For reasons of available space in the Senatssaal the number of participants is restricted. We therefore request to register in advance before 1st February 2013. There is no registration fee. We will send you a confirmation.

All correspondence should be send to: jan-mic1@uni-mainz.de
Opening Coffee and Registration

09:00 Prof. Dr. Ulrich Försterman, Vizepräsident für Forschung (JGU)
Welcoming Speech
Prof. Dr. Stefan Müller-Stach, GFK-Leitungsgremium (JGU):
Welcoming Speech

Morning Session – Chair: Judith Bunbury

10:10 Luc Gabolde (CNRS Montpellier):
The Origins of Karnak – Archaeological, Astronomical, Textual and Theological Sources

11:10 Discussion

11:20 Gert Verstraeten (KU Leuven):
The Dynamic Nature of the Transition from the Nile Floodplain to the Desert in Central Egypt since the Mid-Holocene

11:50 Harco Willems (JGU Mainz/KU Leuven):
The Hare Nome – from Physical Geography to Social Archaeology.

12:20 Discussion

12:30 Lunch Break

Afternoon Session – Chair: Manfred Bietak

14:00 Cornelia Römer (DAI Kairo):
Irrigation Canals in the Fayum

14:30 Dirk Blaschta (Universität Leipzig):
Geoarchaeological Investigations of the Area Surrounding the Dahschur Necropolis

15:00 Discussion

15:10 Judith Bunbury (University Cambridge):
Migrating Memphis – The Development of a City in a River Floodplain

15:40 Ana Tavares (AERA):
The White Walls – The Landscape of the Capital Zone

16:10 Discussion

16:20 Tea break

16:40 Willem Toonen (RU Utrecht):
Implication of the Holocene Palaeoenvironment on Cultural Dynamics in the Western Nile Delta

17:10 Joshua Trampier (Oak Ridge Associated Universities):
Above, atop, and below – Integrated Methods for Reconstructing the Cultural and Natural Landscapes of the Western Nile Delta

17:30 Discussion

17:40 Break

Key Note Speech

18:00 Manfred Bietak (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften):
Harbours and Coastal Military Bases in Egypt in the 2nd Millenium: Avaris – Peru-Nefer-Piramesse

Discussion

Tea Break

Cornelia Römer (DAI Kairo):

Irrigation Canals in the Fayum

Dirk Blaschta (Universität Leipzig):
Geoarchaeological Investigations of the Area Surrounding the Dahschur Necropolis

Discussion

Closing Discussion