The Medieval Climate Anomaly in South America

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Abstract :

The Medieval Climate Anomaly (MCA) is a climatic perturbation with a core period of 1000-1200 AD that is well-recognized in the Northern Hemisphere (NH). Its existence in the Southern Hemisphere (SH) and the level of synchronicity with the NH is still a matter of debate. Here we present a palaeotemperature synthesis for South America encompassing the past 1500 years based on multiproxy data from 76 published land and marine sites. The data sets have been thoroughly graphically correlated and the MCA trends palaeoclimatologically mapped. The vast majority of all South American land sites suggest a warm MCA. Andean vegetation zones moved upslope, glaciers retreated, biological productivity in high altitude lakes increased, the duration of cold season ice cover on Andean lakes shortened, and trees produced thicker annual rings. Similar MCA warming occurred in coastal seas, except in the year-round upwelling zones of Peru, northern Chile and Cabo Frio (Brazil) where upwelling processes intensified during the MCA due to changes in winds and ocean currents. MCA warming in South America and the NH appears to have occurred largely synchronous, probably reaching comparable intensities. Future studies will have to address major MCA data gaps that still exist outside the Andes in the central and eastern parts of the continent. The most likely key drivers for the medieval climate change are multicentennial Pacific and Atlantic ocean cycles, probably linked to solar forcing.

Keywords : Climate change, Late Holocene, Little Ice Age, Temperature reconstructions, Palaeoclimatology, El Nino-Southern Oscillation, Medieval Warm Period, Southern Hemisphere

47 Introduction

48 South American climate has been warming over the past 100 years, similar as most other 49 parts of the world (Aguilar et al., 2005; Collins et al., 2009; Vincent et al., 2005). The fastest 50 temperature rise has been recorded in Brazil, whilst the extratropical Andes and Patagonia 51 have experienced lower warming rates (IPCC, 2007; Salvador and de Brito, 2017; Saurral et 52 al., 2018; Soares et al., 2017; Vuille et al., 2015). Since the beginning of the 21st Century the 53 warming trend has paused in many parts of the continent and locally even changed to 54 cooling (Collins et al., 2009; Rosso et al., 2015; Schauwecker et al., 2014; Vuille et al., 55 2015). The long-term climatic warming of the past 100 years resulted in a significant retreat 56 of Andean glaciers, whereby Venezuela already lost almost all its glaciers (Braun and 57 Bezada, 2013; Chevallier et al., 2011; Salzmann et al., 2013; Schauwecker et al., 2014). As 58 glaciers are continuing to shrink, it is projected that river discharge from glacierized 59 catchments will eventually decrease, leading to water supply shortage in the tropical Andes 60 during the dry season (Vuille et al., 2018). 61 Modern glacier retreat commenced after the peak of the Little Ice Age (LIA), which (besides 62 the 8.2k event) represents the coldest phase in the global climate evolution of the past 63 10,000 years (Chambers et al., 2014; Marcott et al., 2013; PAGES 2k Consortium, 2013). 64 Many Andean glaciers reached their maximum extension with their furthest down-valley positions in the mid-17th to early 18th century (Jomelli et al., 2009; Masiokas et al., 2009; 65 66 Rabatel et al., 2013), corresponding to the lowest global LIA temperatures. In some parts of

67 the Andes, such as in northern Patagonia, the most extensive glacial expansion occurred

towards the end of the LIA, between the late 1700s and the 1830–1840s (Masiokas et al.,

69 2010). The first LIA glacier advance episodes in the Andes occurred already around 1200-

1350 AD (Jomelli et al., 2009; Masiokas et al., 2009), marking the transition from warm

71 medieval conditions associated with Andean glacier retreat, to cooling and glacier advance of

the LIA. The overall timing of Andean glacier evolution appears to be generally in line with

the glacier history in other parts of the world which also began to advance around the 13th
Century (Solomina et al., 2016).

75 The Andean warm phase that preceded the LIA is known as the Medieval Climate Anomaly 76 (MCA), a recognized period of natural pre-industrial climate change associated with marked 77 temperature and hydroclimatic variability in many parts of the world (e.g. Graham et al., 78 2011; Lüning et al., 2018; Lüning et al., 2017; Mann et al., 2009). The anomaly was first 79 described by Lamb (1965) as 'Early Medieval Warm Epoch', which subsequently changed in 80 the literature to 'Medieval Warm Period' (MWP), and later to MCA. It is generally agreed 81 today that the core period of the MCA encompasses ca. 1000-1200 AD, even though 82 different time schemes and durations have historically been used in the literature (e.g. 83 Crowley and Lowery, 2000; Esper and Frank, 2009; Mann et al., 2009). The MCA represents 84 the most recent natural warm phase and provides crucial context information for our Current 85 Warm Period (CWP) and its warming process.

86 The first temperature reconstruction published for (southern) South America covering the last 87 millennium was published by Neukom et al. (2011). In their reconstruction of summer 88 temperatures the period 900-1350 AD showed significantly elevated values that even partly 89 exceeded modern levels. The second half of the MCA, however, was suggested to be rather 90 cold and the later part of the LIA rather warm. As the reconstruction only included two proxy 91 series that reached back to the MCA (Quelccaya ice core [our site 27] and Laguna Aculeo 92 [our site 33]), the early part of the reconstruction is only weakly supported by data and 93 therefore awaits further refinement. In particular, mismatches with the Andean glacier history 94 need to be clarified. Likewise, the subsequently published South America reconstruction by 95 the PAGES 2k Consortium (2013) only included the same two proxy series. Southern 96 Hemisphere temperature reconstructions by Mann et al. (2008) and Neukom et al. (2014) 97 employed a few more MCA sites which at least in part, however, represent more likely 98 hydroclimate proxies (see discussion part).

99 The field of palaeoclimatology has made major progress over the past 15 years during which 100 a great number of high- and medium-resolution case studies were published, reconstructing 101 climate change of the past millennia. In many parts of the world, regional data coverage has 102 now reached a point which allows compiling palaeoclimate maps for well-defined time 103 intervals. In this contribution we are attempting to integrate all available published 104 quantitative and qualitative palaeotemperature records of the MCA in South America based 105 on 76 land and marine study sites (Table 1). We are combining the conventionally used ice 106 core and lake productivity data with palaeotemperature proxies from palynology (e.g. Flantua 107 et al., 2016), tree rings, moraine age dating, marine cores as well as various other 108 methodologies and palaeoclimatic archive types (e.g. McGregor et al., 2015; Moy et al., 109 2009). Detailed site descriptions and discussions can be found in the Data Supplement to 110 this paper. South America is of particular interest as it was long unclear whether the MCA 111 was also developed in the Southern Hemisphere, and if typical MCA warming could be found 112 here, like already documented in some detail for the Northern Hemisphere (Diaz et al., 2011; 113 Mann, 2002). This data review aims to help answer (1) if MCA climate change followed any 114 regional patterns across the continent, (2) whether the MCA temperature evolution in South 115 America was synchronous or significantly different to events on the Northern Hemisphere, 116 and (3) which are the possible drivers of multicentennial medieval climate change in South 117 America.

118

119 Modern Climate Elements of South America

120 Climate zones

121 According to the Köppen-Geiger climate classification (e.g. Köppen, 1918), South America

122 can be grouped into tropical, arid and temperate climate zones. The northern half of the

- 123 continent is generally tropical, whilst the southern half is dominated by subtropical,
- 124 temperate/highly seasonal climate (Fig. 1). The tropical wet climatic zone is characterized by

125 high rainfall and high temperatures throughout the year. Most of this region is covered by the

126 Amazon rain forest, but tropical wet climate also occurs in the Guayanas, along the

- 127 southeastern Brazilian coast and in southwestern Venezuela. The tropical rain forests are
- 128 flanked by large areas of tropical wet and dry climate. These savannahs are associated with
- 129 warm climates and seasonal rainfall. They are are located in southern Brazil, Venezuela and
- 130 northern Colombia. Humid subtropical climate occurs in southern Paraguay, southern Brazil,
- 131 Uruguay, and northeastern Argentina where summers are warm and humid, with rainy
- 132 winters. Mediterranean climate is found in central Chile with warm, dry summers and cool,
- 133 rainy winters. The Chilean Matorral vegetation consists of a shrubland plant community,
- 134 composed of hard-leaved shrubs, small trees, cactus, and bromeliads. Cool, rainy winters
- 135 and mild, rainy summers occur along the Patagonian coast in southern Chile and southern
- 136 Argentina, representing marine west coast climate. High altitude climatic conditions prevail in
- 137 the high Andes, where in some places local ice caps and ice fields exist. Temperatures are
- 138 moderate to cold, depending on elevation. Semiarid conditions in northern Argentina and
- 139 eastern Brazil form the basis of a Steppe climate which is associated with grass-covered
- 140 plains and desert shrub vegetation. Desert climate occurs along the Pacific coast in central
- 141 and northern South America, including the Atacama Desert, the driest desert of the world.
- 142 The Andes act as a barrier to moisture-bearing Easterlies, whilst on the western side the cold
- 143 Peru Current prevents the formation of coastal clouds. Another arid region is the Patagonian
- 144 Desert in Argentina which is a large cold winter desert. Humid Westerlies originating from the
- 145 Pacific transport large amounts of rain to the southern coastal portions of Chile before
- 146 colliding with the Andes. The eastern side of the southern Andes lies in the rain shadow.



149 Fig. 1. Climatic zones and air masses in South America. Air masses: mE=maritime

150 equatorial, *mT=maritime tropical*, *mP=maritime polar*.

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152

153 Winds and air masses

- 154 The Equator crosses northern South America in the Brazilian Amazon Basin, Colombia and
- 155 Ecuador (Fig. 1). The Hadley Cells on either side lead to the development of Northeast and
- 156 Southeast Trade Winds in the northern and southern hemispheres, respectively. The
- 157 southern limit of the Southeast Trades is formed by a belt of atmospheric high pressure
- 158 around latitudes of 30°S in southern Brazil and northern Argentina, the subtropical ridge. To
- 159 the south of this ridge, Westerlies dominate in southern Argentina and southern Chile,
- 160 associated with the Ferrel Cell. Three types of maritime air masses surround South America.

- 161 An equatorial air mass is associated with the equatorial low pressure zone, tropical air
- 162 masses occur in the Carribbean and along the Subtropical Ridge, and polar air masses of
- 163 subantarctic origin affect Patagonia (Fig. 1). Rainfall in central South America is strongly
- 164 dependent on the South American Summer Monsoon (SASM) which is influenced by the
- 165 Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) and the South Atlantic Convergence Zone (SACZ)
- 166 (Novello et al., 2017). The SASM was relatively strong during the LIA but much weaker
- 167 during the MCA and Current Warm Period (Vuille et al., 2012).

169

170 Currents and Upwelling zones

Oceanography of the seas around South America is controlled by several important currents
and upwelling zones which need to be taken into account in the interpretations of
palaeotemperature records from marine cores. The upwelling systems comprise a relatively
small portion of the world oceans, therefore, any climatic MCA trend needs to be regionally
weighted accordingly.

176 Southern Caribbean Upwelling. The southern Caribbean Sea experiences strong wind-driven 177 seasonal coastal upwelling along the coasts of Trinidad, Venezuela and Colombia which 178 maintains a highly productive ecosystem (Kämpf and Chapman, 2016; Rueda-Roa and 179 Muller-Karger, 2013). Upwelling is concentrated in two regions, namely a western area (N 180 Colombia, NW Venezuela) and an eastern area (central Venezuelan coast). Upwelling is 181 driven by alongshore trade winds that come from easterly directions and push the water 182 offshore by means of northern hemisphere to-the-right Ekman transport. Beginning in June 183 or July, when the ITCZ migrates north to a position near the Venezuelan coast, the trade 184 winds diminish, and upwelling over the basin weakens or is shut off (Black et al., 2004). 185 Peru Upwelling. The Peru coastal upwelling occurs year-round and forms part of the global 186 Eastern Boundary Upwelling Systems (EBUS) that are located on the eastern margins of the

Pacific and Atlantic (Tarazona and Arntz, 2001). Upwelling is caused by tradewinds blowing from southeast to northwest which push the coastal waters offshore by way of southern hemisphere to-the-left Ekman transport. The warm, usually nutrient-depleted surface water is replaced by cooler, nutrient-rich water that rises from the deep. The upwelling zone lies at the northern end of the Humboldt (Peru) Current which brings cold Antarctic water to the region and takes a westward turn off Peru towards the open Pacific. During the last 50 years, Peru upwelling has been intensifying (Narayan et al., 2010).

194 Galapagos Upwelling and Current Systems. Waters of the archipelago show a wide range of 195 temperature and salinity due to the interaction of several different current systems. The 196 western part of the Galapagos Islands experiences upwelling. Here, the eastward-flowing 197 Pacific Equatorial Undercurrent (Cromwell Curent), a subsurface current, collides with the 198 western Galapagos seamounts at a water depth of 50 m (Liu et al., 2014; Martínez-Ortiz et 199 al., 2015). As a result relatively colder, nutrient-rich water is forced to the surface, causing 200 major upwelling associated with the highest biological production in the archipelago. The eastern side of the islands receive cool upwelled water from the Peru Upwelling System 201 202 through the westward-flowing South Equatorial Current. The far northern Galapagos region is 203 characterized by warmer, fresher water with the greatest mixed layer depth as a result of 204 Panama Current waters entering from the northeast (Liu et al., 2014).

205 Chile Upwelling. Coastal upwelling along the Chilean coast forms the basis for one of the 206 world's biologically most productive ocean regions. Along the coast of northern and central 207 Chile, upwelling is localised and its occurrence changes from being mostly continuous 208 (aseasonal) in northern Chile to a more seasonal pattern in central and southern Chile, 209 including Patagonia (Escribano and Schneider, 2007; Letelier et al., 2009; Oyarzún and 210 Brierley, 2018; Thiel et al., 2007). In the seasonal upwelling regions, upwelling-favorable 211 winds predominate during austral spring and summer, concurring with the southernmost 212 position of the subtropical anticyclone in the East South Pacific. Downwelling occurs in 213 winter. Large-scale climatic phenomena (El Niño Southern Oscillation, ENSO) are

214 superimposed onto this regional pattern, which results in a high spatiotemporal

215 heterogeneity.

216 Brazil Upwelling. Coastal upwelling occurs on the Brazilian shelf in three different regions, 217 namely off southern Bahia, off Cabo Frio and off Cabo de Santa Marta (Kämpf and 218 Chapman, 2016). These seasonal upwelling systems represent an anomaly in that they are 219 located on the western side of the Atlantic Ocean. Northeasterly winds run parallel to the 220 coastline and push surface water offshore by way of to-the-left southern hemisphere Ekman 221 transport (Mahigues et al., 2005; Valentin, 2001). The water is replaced by upwelling of deep, 222 cold South Atlantic central water (Palóczy et al., 2014). Cabo Frio upwelling is most intense 223 in the spring and summer season (Coelho-Souza et al., 2012). 224 Brazil Current / Malvinas Current interaction zone. The Brazil Current is the Western 225 Boundary Current of the South Atlantic Ocean and flows southwards along the Brazilian 226 coast. The current carries warm and salty waters poleward. At a position off Uruguay the 227 Brazil Current collides with a northward branch of the Antarctic Circumpolar Current, the 228 Malvinas (Falkland) Current, which transports cold and relatively fresh subAntarctic waters 229 equatorward (Piola and Matano, 2017). The collision between these distinct water masses, 230 together with the freshwater discharge from Río de la Plata, generates one of the most 231 energetic regions of the world ocean: the Brazil/Malvinas Confluence (BMC). The collision of 232 the Brazil and Malvinas currents spawns one of the most spectacular eddy fields of the 233 global ocean (Piola and Matano, 2017). The Brazil Current underwent major changes during 234 the transition from the latest Pleistocene to the Holocene (Gu et al., 2018).

235





237 Fig. 2. Location map of studied sites. Key to site numbers in Table 1. Red lines mark

²³⁸ correlation panels illustrated in Supplement (with respective figure number). For zoom

²³⁹ location maps see Supplement Figs. S1, S3, S6, S9, S11, S18.

242 Material and Methods

243 *Literature review*

The mapping project is based on an intense iterative literature screening process during which a large number of published South American palaeotemperature case studies were evaluated towards their temporal coverage, type of climate information and data resolution. Suitable papers including the MCA core period 1000-1200 AD were selected for a thorough analysis. A total of 76 South American localities with one or more MCA palaeotemperature proxy curves or related data were identified (Fig. 2, Tables 1 and S1).

250

251 Palaeoclimate archives and data types

252 MCA climate reconstructions of the high-graded publications comprised of several natural 253 and historical archives, namely (1) sediment cores from offshore marine, lakes, peatlands, 254 (2) ice cores from Andean ice caps, (3) age dating of glacier moraines, (4) tree rings, and (5) 255 historical accounts. Data types include (a) palaeontology: pollen assemblages tracking 256 vertical shifts in tree line and Andean vegetational belts, opal phytoliths, chironomid-inferred 257 lake temperatures, diatom assemblages as proxies for ice cover and precipitation, tree rings, 258 planktic foraminifera assemblages in marine cores; (b) inorganic geochemistry: Mg/Ca planktonic foraminifera sea surface temperature (SST), δ¹⁸O and δD in ice cores, NH₄-based 259 temperatures of ice cores, δ^{18} O in foraminifera, δ^{18} O of *Mytilus edulis* shells, δ^{13} C-based 260 261 stalagmite temperatures, chlorine as sea water proxy; (c) organic geochemistry: total organic 262 carbon, hydrogen index, Uk'37 SST, brGDGT lake temperatures, pigment-based lake 263 temperatures, bSi-based temperatures; (d) geophysics: magnetic susceptibility, radiocarbon ¹⁴C and ¹⁰Be age dating of glacier moraines; (e) sedimentology: Fe, K, Ca, Sr, Zr, Ti as 264 265 glacier activity proxy of clastic sediments in proglacial lakes, clay-based temperatures, 266 deposition time as ice cover duration proxy, varve-based temperatures, sortable silt.

267

268 Data processing and visualisation

269 Qualitative. Key information of the identified publications were captured on a georeferenced 270 online map which is freely available to all interested members of the palaeoclimate science 271 community for research and reference purposes (http://t1p.de/mwp). The MCA 272 palaeotemperature was visually assessed and compared to the phases preceding and 273 following the anomaly. The MCA conditions were colour-coded with red dots marking a trend 274 towards warmer conditions while blue dots represent cooling. The colour-coding provides 275 much-needed initial orientation in the complex global MCA climate puzzle. 276 Quantitative. In order to robustly document, visualise and analyse MCA palaeoclimatic 277 variability, all relevant climate curve data were collected in digital form for flexible plotting and 278 curve correlation. The tabulated data were retrieved (a) from palaeoclimate online data 279 repositories (mainly Pangaea, NOAA's National Climatic Data Center NCDC, and data 280 supplements of papers), (b) from authors by email request and (c) by digitizing and 281 vectorising using WebPlotDigitizer (https://automeris.io/WebPlotDigitizer/). Data sources for 282 each site are listed in Table S1. All curve data have been loaded into Lloyd's Register's software IC[™] which serves as a common database and correlation tool in the MCA mapping 283 project. IC[™] was originally developed for geological well correlations in the areas of water, 284 285 minerals and petroleum exploration. The software reliably handles large amounts of fully 286 customizable curve data types related to georeferenced wells. By way of technology transfer 287 we are introducing well correlation software to the field of the climate sciences which allows 288 fast and flexible comparison of climate curves. Another advantage is the advanced 289 visualisation and shading of peak and trough curve anomalies, a functionality which lacks in 290 most standard spreadsheet software packages. See Lüning et al. (2017) for details on the 291 workflow. The vectorized South America base map in this paper was sourced from 292 http://www.d-maps.com.

293

294 Challenges

295 Like any other regional palaeoclimatic synthesis, the current South America

296 palaeotemperature MCA mapping effort is subject to a number of challenges.

- 297 Palaeoclimatology is not an exact mathematical science, nevertheless provides crucial proxy
- data for the palaeoclimatological context and model calibration. A probabilistic approach is
- 299 needed whereby the most likely scenario is selected from the set of available proxies. Issues
- 300 identified in the current synthesis include (1) low resolution palaeoclimate data, (2) limited
- 301 age control, (3) conflicting information from multiple proxies. See Lüning et al. (2017) for a
- 302 more detailed discussion.

303

304 Results

- 305 A total of 76 study sites have been identified in South America which are mostly
- 306 concentrated along the Andes, but with patchy data also from other areas (Fig. 2, Table 1).
- 307 Detailed site descriptions and palaeotemperature correlation panels are shown in the
- 308 Supporting Information to this paper (texts S1-S6, figures S1-S20, Table S1). A correlation
- 309 panel with 6 representative sites and the southern South American summer temperature
- 310 composite by Neukom et al. (2011) from the study area is illustrated in Figure 3. Proxy plots
- 311 start at 500 AD in order to also document the climate trends preceding the MCA and place
- 312 the anomaly in a multi-centennial context.
- 313

No.	Locality	Region	Country	Archive	Proxies	Studies
					10	
1	CAR7-2 and MC-4	Cariaco Basin	Venezuela	Marine core	Uk'37 SST, δ'°Ο	Goni et al. (2004), Black
					of Globigerina	et al. (2004)
					bulloides	
2	PL07-39PC	Cariaco Basin	Venezuela	Marine core	Mg/Ca SST	Lea et al. (2003)
3	Laguna de Mucubaji	Cordillera de	Venezuela	Lake core	Fe	Stansell et al. (2005),
		Mérida, Andes				Stansell et al. (2014)

4	Paramo de Piedras	Cordillera de	Venezuela	Peat core	Pollen as	Rull et al. (1987)
	Blancas	Mérida, Andes			treeline proxy	
5	Laguna de Los	Cordillera de	Venezuela	Lake core	Fe	Stansell et al. (2014)
	Anteojos	Mérida, Andes				
6	Laguna de Montos	Cordillera de	Venezuela	Lake core	Magnetic	Stansell et al. (2014)
		Mérida, Andes			susceptibility	
7	Llano Grande peatbog	Páramo de	Colombia	Peat core	Pollen as	Muñoz et al. (2017),
		Frontino			treeline proxy	Velásquez-Ruiz and
						Hooghiemstra (2013)
8	El Triunfo wetland	Central	Colombia	Peat core	Pollen as	Giraldo-Giraldo et al.
Ū		Cordilloro	e e l e l e l e l e l e l e l e l e l e			(2018)
		Cordinera			treenne proxy	(2018)
9	Laguna Chingaza	Eastern	Colombia	Lake core	brGDGT	Bixler (2012)
		Cordillera			temperatures	
10	Laguna La Cocha	Eastern	Colombia	Lake core	Pollen as	González-Carranza et
		Cordillera			treeline proxy	al. (2012)
11	Guandera peat bog	Eastern	Ecuador	Peat core	Pollen as	Moscol Olivera and
		Cordillera			treeline proxy	Hooghiemstra (2010)
12	Lagunas de Mojanda	northern	Ecuador	Lake marsh	Pollen as	Villota et al. (2017)
	complex	Ecuadorian		core	treeline proxy	
		Andes				
13	Laguna Pindo	Ecuadorian	Ecuador	Lake core	Chironomid	Matthews-Bird et al.
		Andes			temperatures	(2016)
14	Tres Lagunas	Western	Ecuador	Peat core	Isoetes	Jantz and Behling
		Cordillera				(2012)
15	M772-056	Gulf of	Peru	Marine core	Uk'37 SST	Seillès et al. (2016)
		Guayaquil				
16	M772-059	Gulf of	Peru	Marine core	Uk'37 SST,	Nürnberg et al. (2015)
		Guayaquil			SubSST Mg/Ca	
					derived from N	
					derived normal.	
					dutertrei	
17	El Junco Lake	Galápagos	Ecuador	Lake core	Tychoplankto-	Conroy et al. (2008),
		Islands			nic to epiphytic	Conroy et al. (2009)
					diatom ratio	
18	KNR195-5 MC42C	Galápagos	Ecuador	Marine core	Mg/Ca SST	Rustic et al. (2015)
		Islands				
19	Huascarán ice core	Cordillera	Peru	Ice core	δ ¹⁸ Ο	Thompson et al. (1995),
		Blanca				Thompson (1995)
20	Laguna	Cordillera	Peru	Lake core	Ca, Sr, Zr, ms	Stansell et al. (2013)

	Queshquecocha	Blanca				
21	Laguna Jahuacocha	Cordillera	Peru	Lake core	K, Ca, Ti, ms	Stansell et al. (2013)
		Huayhuash				
22	Laguna Lutacocha	Cordillera	Peru	Lake core	Ca, Ti, Fe, ms	Stansell et al. (2013)
		Raura				
23	G10	central	Peru	Marine core	TOC, HI	Salvatteci et al. (2016)
		Peruvian				
		continental				
		shelf				
24	Marcacocha lake	Cusco region	Peru	Lake core	Pollen	Chepstow-Lusty et al.
	basin					(2009), Sterken et al.
						(2006)
25	Tarn Challpacocha	Southern	Peru	Lake core	Total Organic	Stroup et al. (2015)
		Peruvian			Matter	
		Andes				
26	Qori Kalis outlet	Southern	Peru	Moraine	¹⁰ Be moraine	Stroup et al. (2014)
	glacier	Peruvian		ages	chronology	
		Andes				
27	Quelccaya ice cap	Southern	Peru	Ice core	δ ¹⁸ Ο	Thompson et al. (2013),
		Peruvian				Thompson et al. (1986),
		Andes				Bird et al. (2011b)
28	Tarn Yanacocha	Southern	Peru	Lake core	Total Organic	Stroup et al. (2015)
		Peruvian			Matter	
		Andes				
29	Nevado Illimani ice	Cordillera Real	Bolivia	Ice core	NH ₄ -based	Kellerhals et al. (2010),
	core				temperatures,	Ramirez et al. (2003)
					δD	
30	Nevado Sajama ice	Bolivian Andes	<mark>Bolivia</mark>	Ice core	δ ¹⁸ O, 3 decade	Thompson et al. (2003)
	core				running mean	
31	Inglesa Bay	Atacama	Chile	Marine core	Uk'37 SST	Castillo et al. (2017)
		region				
32	Laguna Chepical	high central	Chile	Lake core	Clay-based	de Jong et al. (2013),
		Andes of Chile			temperatures,	Martel-Cea et al. (2016)
					diatom-based	
					ice cover length	
33	Laguna Aculeo	Coastal	Chile	Lake core	Pigment-based	von Gunten et al. (2009)
		Cordillera			temperatures	
34	Laguna San Pedro	Chilean Andes	Chile	Lake core	Deposition time	Fletcher and Moreno

						(2012)
35	Captren	Chilean Andes	Chile	Tree rings	Tree rings	Aguilera-Betti et al.
						(2017)
36	Rio Alerce	Northern	Argentina	Tree rings	Tree Rings	Villalba (1994), Villalba
		Patagonia				et al. (1990)
37	Costa del Osorno	Coastal	Chile	Tree rings	Tree Rings	Rigozo et al. (2008a)
		central Chile				
38	GeoB 3313-1 and	offshore	Chile	Marine core	Uk'37 SST	Lamy et al. (2002), Euler
	ODP 1233	central Chile				and Ninnemann (2010)
39	Abtao	Coastal	Chile	Tree rings	Tree Rings	Jalabert (2002)
		central Chile				
40	GeoB 7186-3	Offshore Chile	Chile	Marine core	Uk'37 SST	Mohtadi et al. (2007)
41	CF7-PC33	Jacaf Channel	Chile	Marine core	Uk'37 SST	Sepúlveda et al. (2009)
42	Laguna Escondida	Northern	Chile	Lake core	bSi-based	Elbert et al. (2013b)
		Patagonia			temperatures	
43	MD07-3088	Aysen fjords	Chile	Marine core	δ ¹⁸ Ο <i>G</i> .	Siani et al. (2013)
					bulloides	
44	Soler Glacier	Northern	Chile	Glacier	radiocarbon	Glasser et al. (2002)
		Patagonian		dating	ages of In situ	
		Icefield			tree remains	
45	Lago Plomo	Northern	Chile	Lake core	Varve-based	Elbert et al. (2013a)
		Patagonian			temperatures	
		Icefield				
46	Glaciar Jorge Montt	Southern	Chile	Glacier	radiocarbon	Rivera et al. (2012)
		Patagonian		dating	ages of recently	
		Icefield			exposed trees	
47	Lago del Desierto	Southern	Argentina	Lake core	Ca/Ti, ms	Kastner et al. (2010)
		Patagonian				
		Icefield				
48	Herminita Peninsula	Southern	Argentina	Moraine	Moraine age	Kaplan et al. (2016),
		Patagonian		dating	dates	Strelin et al. (2014)
		Icefield				
49	Patagonian Icefield	Southern	Chile	Moraine	age dating of	Aniya (2013)
		Patagonian		dating	glacial elements	
		Icefield				
50	JPC-42	Europa and	Chile	Marine core	Uk'37 SST	Caniupán et al. (2014)
		Penguin fjords				
51	MD07-3124	Canal	Chile	Marine core	Uk'37 SST	Caniupán et al. (2014)

52 Laguna Las Vizcachas Southern Patagonia Argentina Lake core with the complexition onoplanktic diatoms. Bisi Fey et al. (2009) 53 Tyndall Glacler Southern Patagonia Chile Moraine dating radicatron ages of wood, roots and other organic material Aniya (1995) 54 CHURR Churuca fjort Chile Marine core UK37 SST Canlupán et al. (2014) 55 Marcelo Arevalo cave southernmost Chile Chile Cave o"C-based Muhlinghaus et al. (2008) 56 Glaclar Lengua Gran Campo Nevado complex Chile Moraine Dendro moraine dating Koch and Kilian (2005) 57 Seno Skyring Glacler Southernmost southermost Chile Moraine age dates Kilian et al. (2017) 58 Seno Otway Fjord Seno Otway Chile Marine core UK37 SST Aracena et al. (2013) 59 MD07-3132 Strait of fjord Chile Marine core UK37 SST Aracena et al. (2015) 61 JPC67 Arimatazgo fjord Chile Marine core UK37 SST Bertrand et al. (2017) 62 Beagle Channel Tierra del Fuego Chile Marine core UK37 SST Bertrand et al. (2017) 63 Isla de los Estados Tierra d			Concepción				
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foraminifera						foraminifera	

67	CF10-01B	Cabo Frio	Brazil	Marine core	Planktic	Lessa et al. (2016;
					foraminifera	2014)
68	LaPAS-KF02	Santos Basin	Brazil	Marine core	SST based on	Pivel et al. (2013)
					planktic foram.	
					assemblages	
69	GeoB6211	Pelotas Basin	Brazil	Marine core	Mg/Ca SST	Chiessi et al. (2014)
					based on	
					planktic foram.	
70	Pena Lagoon	Coastal	Uruguay	Lake core	opal phytoliths	del Puerto et al. (2013)
		Uruguay				
71	Laguna Blanca	Coastal	Uruguay	Lake core	opal phytoliths	del Puerto et al. (2006)
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12	South American Plains	point	Argentina, Uruguay,	Landscape age dating	Landscape age dating	Triondo (1999)
12	South American Plains	point	Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil	Landscape	Landscape age	Iriondo (1999)
72	Pampean Plain	point Central	Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil Argentina	Landscape	Landscape age dating Landscape age	Cioccale (1999)
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73	Pampean Plain	point Central northern Argentina Western Pampas	Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil Argentina	Landscape age dating Landscape & history Lake core	Landscape age dating Landscape age dating & history <i>Celtis</i> pollen	Cioccale (1999) Vilanova et al. (2015)
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316 points and source of tabulated data see Table S1 in Supplement.

Table 1. MCA study sites in South America. For site coordinates, information on age control



Fig. 3. Temperature development in South America during the past 1500 years based on
palaeoclimate proxies of selected study sites (site number stated on top). 8: El Triunfo
(Giraldo-Giraldo et al., 2018); 15: M772-056 (Seillès et al., 2016); 27: Quelccaya ice cap,
Summit Dome (SD) (Thompson et al., 2013); 33: Laguna Aculeo (von Gunten et al., 2009);
42: Laguna Escondida, LST=lake surface temperature (Elbert et al., 2013b); 60: Ema Glacier
(Strelin et al., 2008); southern South America, 30 year LOESS filter (Neukom et al., 2011).
Location map in Fig. 2.

- 328 Discussion
- 329 The North

330 Cariaco Basin, off Venezuela

331 A warm MCA has been documented in two marine cores from this basin, namely CAR7-2

based on Uk'37 SST (site 1, Goni et al., 2004) and the lower data resolution PL07-39PC

- based on Mg/Ca planktonic foraminiferal SST (site 2, Lea et al., 2003) (Fig. S2). The two
- 334 cores are located in the eastern area of the Southern Caribbean Upwelling System which

335 experiences seasonal upwelling that typically ceases in northern hemisphere summer 336 (Rueda-Roa and Muller-Karger, 2013). Goni et al. (2004) originally interpreted the warming 337 as a sign of reduced local upwelling during the MCA due to weakened easterly trade winds. 338 This might have resulted from a multi-century northward shift of the ITCZ, as already 339 suggested by previous studies (Apaéstegui et al., 2014; Bird et al., 2011b; Haug et al., 2003; 340 Haug et al., 2001; Novello et al., 2012; Novello et al., 2018; Novello et al., 2016; Trouet et al., 341 2012; Vuille et al., 2012). This MCA warming effect might have been similar to the modern 342 seasonal pattern. When the ITCZ migrates northwards during the boreal summer, trade 343 winds over the basin weaken and upwelling is interrupted, resulting in SST warming 344 (Peterson and Haug, 2006).

345 Surprisingly, however, the Cariaco SST development of the past 1500 years matches quite 346 well with temperature trends observed in many other northern Andean land studies (sites 3-347 8, 11-13). The general pattern comprises of a warm MCA, followed by major LIA cooling and 348 a fast modern temperature rebound. Lea et al. (2003) had already noted the great 349 synchronicity of the Cariaco SST with the international reference site of the Greenland 350 GISP2 ice core temperature record for the past 25,000 years. The SST changes in the 351 Cariaco Basin are therefore unlikely to represent a response to upwelling alone. Black et al. 352 (2007) suggested that the Carioca Basin palaeotemperature changes are not necessarily 353 related to local upwelling variability but instead represent rather wider regional conditions in 354 the Caribbean and western tropical Atlantic. A comparison of the Mg/Ca SST record to 355 Globigerina bulloides abundance - a proxy for upwelling and trade wind variability in the 356 Cariaco Basin - reveals a very low similarity between the two records (Black et al., 2007; 357 Black et al., 1999; Lea et al., 2003). The reconstructed SST signal may be dominated by the 358 non-upwelling season which could explain the mismatch between SST and upwelling proxies 359 (Goni et al., 2004). Likewise, temperature differences observed in the Uk'37 and Mg/Ca SST 360 reconstructions before and after the MCA may be due to similar seasonal proxy bias and/or 361 poor data resolution of site 2.





trade winds weakened

365 Fig. 4. Palaeotemperature trends during the MCA with color-coded study sites showing 366 changes to warmer (red) and colder (blue) climate. Yellow dots mark locations with mixed 367 MCA climate signals, conflicting proxies, low data resolution or lack of information. Numbers

362

368 refer to study sites as shown in Table 1. Dark grey regions mark present-day upwelling

369 systems as mapped by elevated concentration of ocean chlorophyll (Capone and Hutchins,

- 370 2013). Winds are illustrated by green (after Lechleitner et al., 2017) and ocean currents by
- 371 black arrows. For zoom location maps see Supplement Figs. S1, S3, S6, S9, S11, S18.

372

373

374 Northern Andes

375 The vast majority of studies in the northern Andes show a warm MCA. Stansell et al. (2014) 376 studied three lakes in the Andean Cordillera de Mérida in NW Venezuela at heights ranging 377 from 3500 to 4100 m asl. that are well situated to record changes in glacial activity in the 378 respective updip valleys and catchment areas (sites 3, 5, 6; Figs. S1 and S2). Clastic 379 sediment influx decreased during the MCA which is thought to reflect reduced glacier erosion 380 during an ice margin retreat phase. According to Stansell et al. (2014) the freezing height of 381 the glaciers might have dropped several hundred metres in the Venezuelan Andes during the 382 LIA, compared to the warmer phases before and after this prominent cooling episode. A 383 warm MCA is also indicated by a peat bog in the Páramo de Piedras Blancas (site 4) in the 384 same mountain massif. Rull and Schubert (1989) documented here a marked increase in 385 Montane Forest and non-herbaceous Páramo indicator pollen during the period 700-1300 386 AD, indicating a rise, i.e. upslope shift, of the tree line (Figs. S1, S2). The two pollen groups 387 decrease during the subsequent LIA and are replaced by Cyperaceae, suggesting very 388 scarce regional vegetation around the site.

MCA warming is also documented in five cores from lakes and wetlands in the Andes of
Colombia and Ecuador. In the Llano Grande peatbog (site 7) Velásquez-Ruiz and
Hooghiemstra (2013) documented generally high concentrations of *Quercus*, representing
Andean forest, during the period 500-1400 AD. Pollen of the higher elevation vegetation
zones Subparamo and Paramo were reduced during the MCA, pointing to an upslope rise in

394 the upper forest line (UFL). Similar MCA upslope shifts in the UFL have been reported from 395 the El Triunfo wetland (site 8, Giraldo-Giraldo et al., 2018) and the Guandera peat bog (site 396 11, Moscol Olivera and Hooghiemstra, 2010) (Figs. S3, S4). An upward shift of the forest 397 vegetation belt has also occurred in the Lagunas de Mojanda complex, as evidenced by an 398 increase of pollen associated with the Lower Montane Rainforest during the period 500-1350 399 AD (site 12, Villota et al., 2017). Likewise, MCA temperatures were elevated at Laguna Pindo 400 (site 13), as indicated by a temperature reconstruction based on locally calibrated 401 chironomids (Matthews-Bird et al., 2016). Significant cooling commenced after 1600 AD 402 during the LIA.

403 The MCA temperature signal of three other sites of the region is more ambiguous and 404 deviates from the general regional trend. Bixler (2012) presented a temperature 405 reconstruction based on distributions of branched Glycerol Dialkyl Glycerol Tetraethers 406 (brGDGTs) in a sediment core from Laguna Chingaza (site 9) which is located 180 km ESE 407 of site 8. According to his reconstruction, temperatures were only midly elevated during the 408 period 1000-1200 AD, and significantly cooler than parts of the LIA and Current Warm Period 409 (Fig. S4). However, such results have to be treated with caution because the geochemical 410 method employed has further evolved since then and issues have been identified (see Text 411 S2 in Supplement for details). Laguna La Cocha (site 10) lies 85 km NE of site 11 and 412 suggests a cold MCA (Fig. S4). González-Carranza et al. (2012) based their temperature 413 estimation on vegetation belts and the percentage of arboreal pollen which, however, may 414 have been also influenced by human activities or changes in rainfall. Furthermore, an upward 415 or downward shift in the age model by 200 years would place the MCA in a warm period. 416 Finally, Jantz and Behling (2012) reported a cold spike during the MCA in the Tres Lagunas region (site 14), which lies 220 km SW of site 13, based on an abundance peak in Isoetes 417 418 and Poaceae (Fig. S5). The authors associate this cooling explicitly with the LIA, possibly 419 pointing to age model issues (see Supplement Text S2 for detailed discussion on all three 420 locations). Considering the proximity to the other sites and their characteristic MCA warming

pattern, we recommend re-study of sites 9, 10 and 14 with refined proxy methodology andimproved chronology.

423

424 Off Peru & northern Chile and Galapagos Islands

425 Cores M772-056 and M772-059 were taken in the Peru upwelling zone (Nürnberg et al.,

426 2015; Seillès et al., 2016) (Figs. 2, 4, S3). The MCA appears to have been generally cold,

427 followed by warmer SST commencing 1200 AD (Fig. S5). Upwelling seems to have been

428 intensified during the MCA and reduced during the LIA. The trend is somewhat reversed for

429 the subsurface ocean temperature in 200 m water depth at this site which shows a warm

430 subSST MCA, followed by a cold subSST LIA (Fig. S5). Influx of cold subsurface water was

431 reduced during the MCA as the eastward-flowing Equatorial Undercurrent weakened

432 (Nürnberg et al., 2015). Emplacement of warmer tropical waters appears to have led to the

433 observed MCA warming of the subsurface waters in the Gulf of Guayaquil.

434 Marine core G10 (site 23) is located in the southern part of the Peruvian upwelling zone (Fig.

435 4). Also here, upwelling increased during the MCA as evidenced by more intense water

436 column denitrification and higher oxygen-deficiency (Salvatteci et al., 2016) (Fig. S8). Similar

437 trends were observed in the aseasonal upwelling zone of northern Chile in a marine core in

438 Inglesa Bay (site 31). Castillo et al. (2017) documented generally cooler SST, more frequent

439 anoxic sediment conditions and a higher biological productivity for the MCA at this location

440 (Figs. 4, S10).

The only Pacific marine core in northern South America that lies outside upwelling systems is KNR195-5 MC42C (site 18) (Rustic et al., 2015). This core is located on the eastern side of the Galapagos Archipelago which is largely unaffected by upwelling (Fig. 4). Foraminiferal Mg/Ca-derived SST data show a warm MCA, followed by a mostly cold LIA and warm CWP (Fig. S5). The MCA temperature development of this core may be the best available and most representative for the tropical Pacific off South America. Even though modern SSTs are

447 the highest of the millennium, yet they are within error of peak MCA values and thus are not 448 unprecedented (Rustic et al., 2015). Sites 15, 16, 23 and 31 also yield important data, which 449 however are spatially characteristic only for the narrow Peruvian and northern Chilean 450 coastal upwelling belt. Note that the much-cited SST reconstruction from the El Junco 451 volcanic crater lake (site 17) from the eastern Galapagos Archipelago (Conroy et al., 2008) 452 primarily represents a lake water level reconstruction, hence delivers hydroclimatic 453 information in the first place. The assumed relationship between precipitation and 454 temperature may be temporally and spatially too complex to allow an SST interpretation for a 455 well-defined sea area based on these data (for details see Supplement Text S2). If taken at 456 face value, the cold MCA SST anomaly suggested by the El Junco data may refer to the 457 intensified Peruvian upwelling where a lot of the moisture may have come from via easterly 458 trade winds.

459

460 Central Andes

This Andean area comprises Peru, Bolivia and central Chile. MCA palaeoclimate studies from this region focus on three different proxy families: 1) Concentration of organic matter and other biological components reflecting lake and agricultural productivity which typically increases in high altitude areas under warmer conditions; 2) proxies tracking glacier retreats and advances; and 3) stable oxygen and deuterium isotopes in ice cores.

466

467 Andean MCA productivity boost

468 Elevated amounts of organic matter were found in the MCA section of two lakes in the

469 southern Peruvian Cordillera Central, Tarn Challpacocha (site 25) and Tarn Yanacocha (site

470 28) indicating MCA warming (Stroup et al., 2015) (Fig. S8). Warm MCA temperatures also

471 allowed high altitude agriculture in the Marcacocha lake area (site 24) as reflected by an

472 abundance peak of Chenopodiaceae which has been - and still is - an important component

473 of the Andean diet (Chepstow-Lusty et al., 2009) (Fig. S8). Likewise, Laguna Aculeo (site 33)

474 in central Chile during the MCA saw an increase in chlorophyll that is primarily from

475 autochthonous primary productivity (von Gunten et al., 2012) (Fig. S10). This is thought to be

476 predominantly an effect of temperature on the duration of the ice-free period and the

477 productive season.

478

479 <u>Reduced MCA glacier activity</u>

480 In the central Peruvian Cordillera Blanca Stansell et al. (2013) studied the geochemical 481 elemental composition of three high altitude lakes that reflect changes in the extent of 482 climate-mediated up-valley ice cover, Laguna Queshquecocha (site 20), Laguna Jahuacocha 483 (site 21), and Laguna Lutacocha (site 22). The MCA was characterized by generally low 484 clastic input during the MCA which is interpreted as a glacier retreat phase with lower amounts of erosional detritus (Fig. S7). ¹⁰Be moraine age dating in the Qori Kalis outlet 485 486 glacier in the southern Peruvian Cordillera Central (site 26) shows that the glacier was short 487 throughout the MCA and commenced to advance sometime after the MCA, possibly around 488 1200 AD (Stroup et al., 2014). The glacier reached its maximum downslope extent during the 489 period 1400-1650 AD which corresponds to the LIA.

490

491 <u>Ice cores</u>

492 Four tropical ice core sites have been studied in South America that include the MCA

493 interval. These are the Peruvian Huascarán (site 19) and Quelccaya (site 27) ice cores, as

- 494 well as the Bolivian Nevado Illimani (site 29) and Nevado Sajama (site 30) ice cores. The
- 495 MCA is typically characterized by more positive δ^{18} O and δ D values, which have been
- traditionally interpreted as reflecting warming (Ramirez et al., 2003; Thompson et al., 2003;
- 497 Thompson et al., 1995; Thompson et al., 2013) (Figs. S7, S8, S10). The isotopes most likely
- 498 reflect changes in the cloud top temperatures at the mean level of condensation of

499 precipitation, rather than surface temperatures (pers. comm. Lonnie Thompson, March 500 2018). A warm MCA is also suggested for the Nevado Illimani ice core by an ammonium 501 anomaly in the ice core which Kellerhals et al. (2010) interpreted as a proxy for temperature 502 in the Amazon Basin. The overall pattern of a warm MCA, cold LIA and modern CWP 503 warming that is documented by many non-ice-core proxies in South America is replicated in 504 all four cores (Figs. S7, S8, S10). This gives confidence that the oxygen and deuterium 505 isotopes may indeed to some extent represent temperature proxies. The Nevado Sajama ice 506 core is an exception in that the modern warming is only poorly reflected by the stable oxygen 507 isotopes. Thompson et al. (2003) suggested that the temperature signal may be mixed with 508 an additional hydroclimate component here due to the extreme dryness of the region 509 associated with the proximity to the Atacama Desert. Nevertheless, the validity of $\delta^{18}O$ and δD as temperature proxies is still a matter of scientific 510 511 debate. Several authors consider that deuterium and oxygen isotopes of the tropical South 512 American ice cores reflect changes in precipitation rather than temperature (Hardy et al., 513 2003; Sturm et al., 2007a; Sturm et al., 2007b; Vimeux et al., 2009; Vuille and Werner, 514 2005). The isotope signal is thought to represent an integrated composite of precipitation 515 over a large region along air masses pathways, instead of local precipitation in the glacier 516 area (Villacís et al., 2008). The correlation between isotopes and local precipitation is almost

- 517 zero at the interannual time-scale (pers. comm. Françoise Vimeux, April 2018). For the time
- 518 being, it may be safe to assume that the ice core isotopes reflect both temperature and
- 519 precipitation without fully quantifying the individual contributions. See Supplement texts S3
- 520 and S4 for detailed discussion (sites 19, 27, 29, 30).

521

522 Laguna Chepical

523 The only study site that deviates from the generally warm MCA pattern in the Central Andes

- 524 is Laguna Chepical (site 32) in central Chile. Both clay and diatom temperature proxies
- 525 suggest a cold MCA (de Jong et al., 2013; Martel-Cea et al., 2016) (Fig. S10). It is unclear

whether this represents a local climate anomaly at this site or whether it results from age
model issues. The sedimentation rate during the last 1000 years initially declined and then
increased rapidly again after construction of a dam. A radiocarbon age data point of about
1220 AD was rejected. Therefore, major age uncertainty has to be taken into account for the
MCA in Laguna Chepical, and it cannot be fully ruled out that the period of reduced summer
ice recorded during the period 1150-1400 AD might in fact be 150 years older and represent
the MCA itself (Fig. S10). For detailed discussion see Supplement Text S4.

533

534

535 Patagonia

Patagonia has the greatest density of MCA studies on the South American continent with a
total of 30 land and marine sites based on a diverse set of proxy types (Fig. 2). The vast
majority of the sites document a warm MCA (Figs. 4, S11-S17).

539

540 <u>Marine</u>

The majority of Patagonian marine cores of the main coast and in fjords have been studied by means of Uk'37 alkenone SST (sites 38, 40, 41, 50, 51, 54, 59 and 61). The temperature reconstruction of two sites is based on stable oxygen isotopes, namely of the planktic foraminifer *Globigerina bulloides* (site 43) and of *Mytilus edulis* shells (site 62). In one case chlorine was taken as a proxy to distinguish between sea water and fresh water in an area where glaciers are thought to cut-off fjords from marine influence during ice advance phases (site 62).

548 All sites suggest climatic warming during the MCA, except two. One of the exceptions is core

549 GeoB 7186-3 off Chile (site 40) where Mohtadi et al. (2007) inferred a long-term cooling

trend over the past 1400 years, rather than the regionally characteristic centennial-scale

551 climatic fluctuations. As this appears to be an outlier, it may be worth re-studying this location 552 with an additional core and/or complementary methodology. Higher resolving data are 553 needed for core CHURR in the Churruca fjord, western Strait of Magellan (site 54). Caniupán 554 et al. (2014) published a Uk'37 SST dataset which suggests warming during the period 500-555 1100 AD, followed by cooling (Fig. S10). However, it cannot be excluded that the second half 556 of the MCA here was also warm, because the only cold data point is dated as 1200 AD, after 557 the MCA had ended. Even though the Patagonian Pacific coast lies in an upwelling zone, the 558 predominantly warm nature of the MCA here indicates that SST is dominated by regional 559 climate, rather than changes in upwelling. This may be due to the seasonally restricted 560 upwelling, whilst in Peru it occurs year-round.

561 Core GeoB 3313-1 suggests a southward shift of the Westerlies during the MCA, as

562 indicated by an increase in iron content in the sediment (Lamy et al., 2002). Latitudinal shifts

563 of the Southern Westerly Winds have been identified as a key driver to Holocene climatic

and oceanographic changes in Patagonia and central Chile (Jenny et al., 2002; Kaplan et al.,

565 2016; Mohtadi et al., 2007; Sepúlveda et al., 2009).

566

567 <u>Lakes and Wetlands</u>

568 The MCA in Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego has been studied in five lakes and one wetland 569 using diverse methodologies. These include duration of the cold season ice cover based on 570 depositional rates (Laguna San Pedro, site 34), biogenic silica as biological productivity 571 indicator (Laguna Escondida, site 42; Laguna Las Vizcachas, site 52), summer layer 572 thickness in varves (Lago Plomo, site 45), intensity of meltwater flux and change in clastic 573 source terrain (Lago del Desierto, site 47), and Nothofagus pollen abundance at its southern 574 distribution limit (Isla de los Estados, site 63) (Figs. S12-S17). All results point to a warm 575 MCA. This is also supported by age-at-death profiles of hunter-gatherers in Southern 576 Patagonia (Suby et al., 2017). Life appears to have been easier under warmer conditions as

the population percentage of people reaching the age 35-50 years nearly halved from theMCA to the LIA, from 25% to 14%.

579

580 Glacier Moraine Dating

581 Moraine ages have been determined in various glaciers of Patagonia and Tiera del Fuego

582 based on radiocarbon and dendrochronological dating of trees (Soler Glacier, site 44; Glaciar

583 Jorge Montt, site 46; Glaciar Lengua, site 56), ¹⁰Be moraine ages (Herminita Peninsula, site

48) and other radiocarbon or integrated techniques (Patagonian Icefield synthesis, site 49;

585 Tyndall Glacier, site 53; Seno Skyring Glacier lobe, site 57; Ema Glacier, site 60). All studies

point to a warm MCA with shortened glaciers (Text S5; Figs. S15, S17). Glaciers re-

587 advanced a few decades after 1200 AD when the MCA ended.

588

589 Tree Rings

590 Four tree rings sites have been described in the literature from the greater Patagonian region

that reach back to the MCA. Three sites are based on *Fitzroya cupressoides* (Rio Alerce, site

592 36; Costa del Osorno, site 37; Abtao, site 39), and one refers to Araucaria araucana

593 (Captren, site 35). Three of the sites (Captren, Rio Alerce and Abtao) show a clear warming

signal for the MCA (Fig. S12). The trend in Costa del Osorno is unclear with intermediate ring

595 thicknesses during the MCA.

596

597 <u>Caves</u>

598 At the Marcelo Arevalo cave (site 55), Mühlinghaus et al. (2008) reconstructed temperatures

599 of two stalagmites using a Combined Stalagmite Model (CSM) that is based on δ^{13} C and

 δ^{18} O profiles along the growth axis. The authors documented a warm phase for the MCA

601 (Fig. S16).

603

604 Atlantic Margin and South American Plains

605 <u>Marine</u>

606 Six marine MCA cores have been studied from the South American Atlantic margin. SST 607 have been reconstructed based on planktonic foraminifera assemblages for core GS07-150 608 17/2 in the Potiguar Basin (site 64), and based on the Mg/Ca ratio of Globigerinoides ruber 609 (white, sensu stricto) for core GeoB6211 off southernmost Brazil (site 69). Both sites are 610 located outside upwelling zones and show a warm MCA that probably represents regional 611 MCA oceanic warming (Fig. S19). Sites 66-68 are located in the Cabo Frio and South Brazil 612 Bight upwelling zone of the Santos Basin (Palma and Matano, 2009) (Fig. 4). Planktonic 613 foraminifera have been studied as upwelling markers and SST assemblages (Lessa et al., 614 2016; Pivel et al., 2013; Souto et al., 2011) and document a cold MCA with intensified 615 upwelling of South Atlantic Central Water (SACW) (Fig. S19). 616 Core GeoB13862-1 (site 76) from the Mar del Plata Canyon in northern Argentina indicates a 617 southward shift of the Brazil-Malvinas Confluence (BMC) and of the westerly winds as well 618 as progressive strengthening of the Antarctic Intermediate Water during the MCA, based on 619 oxygen isotopes of the planktonic foraminifer *Globorotalia inflata* and sortable silt (Voigt et 620 al., 2016; Voigt et al., 2015) (Fig. S20). The southward shift of the BMC might have also 621 intensified the formation of South Atlantic Central Water (SACW) that is then transported 622 counter-clockwise through the South Atlantic Subtropical Gyre to Cabo Frio where it forms 623 the source of the upwelling waters (Coelho-Souza et al., 2012; Souto et al., 2011). Stronger 624 SACW transport onto the Cabo Frio shelf during the MCA might have resulted in increased 625 upwelling and biological productivity in the Brazilian upwelling zones.

626

627 <u>Land</u>

628 A peatland study from the Brazilian state of Minas Gerais (site 65) based on plant 629 composition changes suggests a warm and wet MCA (Schellekens et al., 2014). A warm 630 MCA is also indicated in four lake studies in coastal Uruguay and the Argentinian Pampas. 631 Temperature reconstruction in Pena Lagoon (site 70) and Laguna Blanca (site 71) in 632 Uruguay are interpreted from opal phytoliths (del Puerto et al., 2013; del Puerto et al., 2006), 633 whilst Laguna Nassau (site 74) and Lake Lonkov (site 75) in the Argentinian Pampas were 634 studied by means of palynology (Stutz et al., 2012; Vilanova et al., 2015) (Fig. S20). MCA 635 warming is also suggested by two regional analyses of the South American Plains (listed 636 here as sites 72 and 73). More robust methodologies are needed to better understand the 637 late Holocene temperature changes in the South American regions outside the Andes, e.g. 638 geochemical biomarkers, in order to close these data gaps.

639

640

641 Summary of MCA trends in South America

642 The vast majority of all South American sites suggest a warm MCA (Fig. 4). Andean 643 vegetation zones moved upslope, glaciers retreated, biological productivity in high altitude 644 lakes increased, the duration of cold season ice cover on Andean lakes shortened, and trees 645 produced thicker annual rings. Sea surface temperatures of non-upwelling regions were 646 generally elevated during the MCA. The same trend is found in some seasonal upwelling 647 zones such as the Southern Caribbean and Pacific Patagonian upwelling systems where the 648 regional warming signal appears to dominate the reconstructed SST values. In contrast, 649 MCA cooling associated with intensified upwelling productivity occurred in the year-round 650 Peruvian upwelling system, as well as in the seasonal Brazilian Cabo Frio and northern 651 Chilean upwelling zones. Most of the MCA cooling documented in the literature so far is 652 restricted to these spatially limited high productivity systems. A few exceptions exist on land,

which either represent local MCA anomalies or have issues related to age model, proxy
methodology or anthropogenic landuse activities. MCA studies indicate that some of the key
climatic elements of South American have shifted during the MCA. The westerly winds and
the Brazil / Malvinas Confluence (BMC) appear to have shifted southwards, whilst the ITCZ
shifted northwards (Fig. 4). The Pacific Equatorial Undercurrent weakened and the South
Atlantic Central Water strengthened.

659 The integration of all available different methodologies helps to draw a more robust 660 palaeoclimatic picture than by relying on just selected data types. A typical challenge is the 661 differentiation between temperature and precipitation effects on climate proxies, e.g. in ice 662 cores, glacier length variations, tree rings and pollen assemblages. Comparison between 663 these proxies as well as with proxies that are less affected by precipitation (e.g. non-664 upwelling SST data) helps to make the regional palaeoclimatic picture more reliable. 665 Unfortunately, there are still large regional data gaps. Only few MCA studies exist for the 666 South American continental interior outside the Andes and for the Atlantic margin. The 667 Guyanas, onshore Brazil and Paraguay are essentially unstudied in terms of medieval 668 temperature development. This turns about half of the continent into 'palaeoclimatic white 669 space' which requires intense future study. Indirect evidence from the Bolivian Nevado 670 Illimani ice core (site 29) suggests MCA warming also for the Amazon Basin. The analyzed 671 ice core ammonium is thought to have originated from here as temperature-dependent soil 672 and vegetation emissions.

673

674 Climate Drivers

The documented MCA temperature change in South America occurred in pre-industrial times and therefore requires suitable climate drivers other than anthropogenic greenhouse gasses. A good starting point is the study of ocean cycles which are responsible for modern climate variability (e.g. Flantua et al., 2016). South American climate is heavily influenced by El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO), Southern Annular Mode (SAM), and Pacific Decadal

Oscillation (PDO) (e.g. Flantua et al., 2016; Garreaud et al., 2009; Jomelli et al., 2009; Martin
et al., 1993; Moy et al., 2009; Stansell et al., 2013; Villalba, 1994; Wills et al., 2018). These
ocean cycles operate on a wide range of time scales starting from yearly and reaching to
multicentennial. On the Atlantic side the Atlantic Multidecadal Oscillation (AMO) is a good
candidate as climate driver (e.g. Baker et al., 2001). The various ocean cycles are partly
interlinked (Wyatt and Curry, 2014).

686

687 <u>ENSO</u>

688 The El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) is a naturally occurring phenomenon in which 689 ocean temperatures in the equatorial Pacific fluctuate between two states: warmer than 690 normal central and eastern equatorial Pacific sea surface temperatures (El Niño) and cooler 691 than normal central and eastern equatorial Pacific sea surface temperatures (La Niña). 692 Typically, sea surface temperatures (SSTs) are used to identify the ENSO oscillation. During 693 El Niño, Peru upwelling typically is reduced and SST increase. According to the majority of 694 ENSO reconstructions, the MCA was characterized by more El Niño-dominated conditions 695 (Conroy et al., 2010; Conroy et al., 2008; Henke et al., 2017; Moy et al., 2002; Rustic et al., 696 2015; Yan et al., 2011) (Figs. 5, 6). The Walker Circulation appears to have been weaker or 697 reversed during the MCA.

698 In contrast to interannual El Niño events, the interdecadal ENSO development leads to

699 different oceanographic changes. According to Vargas et al. (2007), interdecadal El Niño-

dominated conditions, associated with a generally warm Pacific, favor the intensification of

southerly winds that boost coastal upwelling and productivity along the Peruvian Chilean

702 coast. This mechanism fits well with the MCA cooling documented for this upwelling system

(sites 15, 16, 23, 31) and the proposed El Niño-dominated interdecadal ENSO of the MCA.

Recent intensification of upwelling over the past few decades (Gutiérrez et al., 2011;

Narayan et al., 2010) coincides with the present-day El Niño-dominated interdecadal ENSO

706 phase (Figs. 5, 6).

707 During interannual El Niño events, the upwelling-favorable winds also increase but are

compensated by a shoreward geostrophic near-surface current. Thermocline and nutricline

- 709 deepen significantly, reducing nutrient content which, along with a mixed layer depth
- 710 increase, impact the phytoplankton growth (Espinoza-Morriberón et al., 2017). Note, that
- other groups have previously suggested a more La Niña-dominated MCA (Cobb et al., 2003;
- 712 Khider et al., 2011; Mann et al., 2009) (Fig. S1).
- 713
- 714



Fig. 5. Reconstructions of key drivers of natural climate variability. Southern Annular Mode,
SAM, 70 year loess filter (Abram et al., 2014); El Niño-Southern Oscillation, ENSO (Conroy
et al., 2008); Atlantic Multidecadal Oscillation, AMO (Mann et al., 2009); Pacific Decadal
Oscillation, PDO (MacDonald and Case, 2005); solar activity changes (Steinhilber et al.,
2012); volcanic eruptions (Sigl et al., 2015).



Fig. 6. Changes in El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) during the past 1500 years
according to different reconstructions (Conroy et al., 2008; Henke et al., 2017: temperature
ensemble; Mann et al., 2009; Moy et al., 2002; Rustic et al., 2015; Yan et al., 2011)

727 <u>SAM</u>

728 The Southern Annular Mode (SAM) is also known as Antarctic Oscillation (AAO) and forms a 729 low-frequency mode of atmospheric variability of the SH (e.g. Ekaykin et al., 2017; Gillett et 730 al., 2006). The SAM is measured as atmospheric pressure difference between subpolar high 731 latitudes (lower pressure) and subtropical mid latitudes (higher pressures), and describes the 732 north-south movement of the westerly wind belt that circles Antarctica. In its positive phase 733 (SAM+), the westerly wind belt shifts towards Antarctica and strengthens, while in its 734 negative phase the belt moves towards the Equator (Liau and Chao, 2017). The ocean cycle 735 has a marked influence on eastern Pacific SST (e.g. Ancapichun and Garces-Vargas, 2015). 736 SAM reconstructions for the past 1000 years illustrate a general tripartition. Between 1000 737 and 1350 AD the SAM fluctuated around a neutral (or slightly negative) level, followed by a

pronounced negative phase 1350-1700 AD during the LIA and a more positive phase since

739 1700 AD (Abram et al., 2014; Dätwyler et al., 2017; Hessl et al., 2017; Huang et al., 2010)

(Fig. 5). The strongest positive SAM type circulation that is similar to the past few decades

may have occurred during 1100-1220 AD (Goodwin et al., 2014).

742

743 <u>PDO</u>

- The Pacific Decadal Oscillation (PDO) is an ocean cycle based on switching ocean
- temperature anomalies in the northeast and tropical Pacific Ocean. When SSTs are
- anomalously cool in the interior North Pacific and warm along the eastern Pacific Coast, the
- 747 PDO has a positive value. When these climate anomaly patterns are reversed the PDO has
- a negative value. Andean climate and east Pacific upwelling are influenced by the PDO (e.g.
- Ancapichun and Garces-Vargas, 2015; Castillo et al., 2017; Elbert et al., 2013a; Veettil et al.,
- 750 2017; Vuille et al., 2015). A PDO reconstruction by MacDonald and Case (2005) suggests a
- 751 negative PDO phase for the MCA.

752

753 AMO

754 The Atlantic Multidecadal Oscillation (AMO) is an ocean cycle with an estimated period of 60-755 80 years that is based upon the average anomalies of SST in the North Atlantic basin, 0-756 80°N. The AMO influences South American climate in various ways (e.g. Kayano and 757 Capistrano, 2014; Martínez et al., 2015). A reconstruction by Mann et al. (2009) shows that 758 the AMO has been positive during the MCA and CWP and negative during the LIA (Fig. 5). 759 South American temperature development of the past 1500 years shows a surprisingly high 760 degree of similarity to the AMO changes. The AMO has been documented to modulate South 761 American summer monsoon activity and therefore rainfall in northeastern Brazil (Novello et 762 al., 2012) and the northwestern Amazon Basin (Apaéstegui et al., 2014) during the past few 763 millennia.

765 Solar Activity Changes

766 Solar activity varied during the past millennia, as reconstructed based on cosmic-ray 767 produced radionuclides, such as ¹⁰Be and ¹⁴C which are stored in polar ice cores and tree 768 rings (Lean, 2018; Muscheler et al., 2016; Steinhilber et al., 2012; Usoskin et al., 2016). The 769 MCA is characterized by generally high solar activity that lasted from 725-1250 AD, except 770 for the brief Oort Minimum at the beginning of the MCA at 1010-1050 AD (Fig. 5). Solar 771 activity and ocean cycles show several similarities in their development. Most ocean cycles 772 turned positive during the solar-active MCA, except the PDO which appears generally 773 inverted compared to the others (Fig. 5). During the subsequent LIA, solar activity decreased 774 and most ocean cycles turned negative. When studied in detail, characteristic time lags and 775 patterns exist for the different ocean cycles.

776 The physical processes that may link solar activity, ocean cycles and climate are still very 777 much unclear but are being actively researched (e.g. Arblaster and Meehl, 2006; Hassan et 778 al., 2016; Kuroda and Kodera, 2005; Li and Xiao, 2018; Mehta and Lau, 1997; Nuzhdina, 779 2002; Roy and Haigh, 2011; Salas et al., 2016; Yan et al., 2011). Nevertheless, a large 780 amount of empirical evidence has been published which suggests a significant solar-forced 781 component in South American climate. Timing of several LIA glacier advance phases in the 782 Venezuelan and Bolivian Andes coincides well with solar minima (Polissar et al., 2006; 783 Rabatel et al., 2005). SH Westerly Winds typically shift southwards during of higher solar 784 activity and show a 250 year periodicity that falls into the solar Suess-de Vries cycle (Turney 785 et al., 2016; Varma et al., 2011; Varma et al., 2012). Circulation in the western tropical South 786 Atlantic and South American tropical rainfall show multi-centennial to millennial oscillations 787 that are associated with typical solar cyclicities (Baker et al., 2005; Chiessi et al., 2014; 788 Novello et al., 2016; Santos et al., 2013; Stríkis et al., 2011). Prominent solar minima have 789 resulted in major hydroclimatic disruptions on the continent and are interpreted to have 790 shifted the ITCZ southwards, possibly affecting the Atlantic Meridian Overturning Circulation

791 (Chambers et al., 2014; Moreira-Turcq et al., 2014). The 11 and 22 years Schwabe and Hale 792 solar cycles have been found in South American palaeohydroclimatic archives (Black et al., 793 2004; Gusev and Martin, 2012; Heredia and Elias, 2013; Hernández et al., 2010; Mauas et 794 al., 2011), as well as in tree rings (Nordemann et al., 2005; Perone et al., 2016; Prestes et 795 al., 2011; Rigozo et al., 2008a; Rigozo et al., 2007; Rigozo et al., 2008b). 796 Variability in the Peru-Chile upwelling appears also to be influenced by solar activity 797 changes, especially by the solar Gleissberg cycles with a periodicity of 80-100 years 798 (Agnihotri et al., 2008; Guiñez et al., 2014). Higher solar activity is thought to shift the 799 Westerlies wind system and South Pacific High towards the south (Varma et al., 2011) which 800 leads to an intensification of upwelling (Salvatteci et al., 2014; Salvatteci et al., 2016).

801 Likewise, a recent southward displacement of the South Pacific High during the beginning of

the 21st century resulted in stronger upwelling and water column cooling over the continental

shelf off central-south Chile (Ancapichun and Garces-Vargas, 2015; Schneider et al., 2017).

804

805 <u>Volcanism</u>

The reconstructions of global volcanic forcing (Sigl et al., 2015) and global volcanic aerosol optical depth (Crowley and Unterman, 2013) suggest low volcanic activity during the early part of the MCA (950-1100 AD), and increased volcanic activity in the second half (1100-1350 AD), followed by low volcanic activity (1350-1600 AD) (Fig. 5). Comparison with South American temperature proxy records does not reveal a climate signal in the MCA and early LIA climate data that would correspond to this global volcanic activity pattern.

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813

814 South America in continent-wide and global temperature reconstructions

815 The best existing temperature reconstruction published for South America covering the last 816 millennium comes from by Neukom et al. (2011). In their reconstruction of summer 817 temperatures, that is spatially restricted to southern South America, the period 900-1350 AD 818 showed significantly elevated values that even partly exceeded modern levels (Fig. 3). 819 Notably, the later part of the MCA appears rather cold which may be due to local fluctuation 820 at one of the two used proxy records, Laguna Aculeo (site 33). The majority of all other MCA 821 records from South America do not show such a marked late MCA cold episode (Figs. S2-822 S20). Future continent-wide reconstructions will have the benefit to use a much greater 823 number of sites which will help to average out such local effects. Several records used in 824 previous SH temperature reconstructions have meanwhile turned out to be more likely 825 hydroclimate proxies. For example, Mann et al. (2008) included the Ecuadorian Lake 826 Pallcacocha (Moy et al., 2002), whilst Neukom et al. (2014) added the three Peruvian sites 827 Cascayunga Cave (Bird et al., 2011b; Reuter et al., 2009), Laguna Pumacocha (Bird et al., 828 2011a; Bird et al., 2011b) and marine core CO147-106KL (Rein et al., 2004; Salvatteci et al., 829 2014). The MCA temperature anomaly map published by Mann et al. (2009: their fig. 2) 830 needs to be treated with caution, as it is unclear how such a detailed temperature anomaly 831 pattern can be deduced from just two proxy series (Quelccaya ice core and Lake 832 Pallcacocha). Furthermore, both records may actually represent hydroclimate proxies rather 833 than temperature series.

The latest South America temperature reconstruction by the PAGES 2k Consortium (2013)

suggests a significant delay of MCA warming that commences only around 1200 AD. This

appears to be mostly related to one of the two used proxy records, Laguna Aculeo (site 33)

837 which is not fully characteristic for the continent-wide MCA temperature development, neither

matches with the Andean glacial activity data that sees an earlier onset of warming and a

return to cooling after 1200 AD. Meanwhile, the PAGES 2k Consortium (2017) has updated

840 its proxy database and added the two Chilean sites Laguna Escondida (our site 42) and

841	Laguna Chepical (our site 32). Whilst Laguna Escondida matches well with the regional MCA
842	development, Laguna Chepical shows a rare cold MCA and therefore appears to be
843	representative for only a small area. Nearby Laguna Aculeo (site 33) already displays a
844	much warmer MCA (Figs. 3, S10). Future composite temperature curves will have to take
845	areal representativeness into account when weighting the various proxies.
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848	

850 Conclusions

851 The vast majority of all 76 studied South American land and marine sites suggest a warm 852 MCA. An exception are the year-round upwelling zones of Peru, northern Chile and Cabo 853 Frio (Brazil) where upwelling intensified during the MCA due to changes in winds and ocean 854 currents. MCA warming in South America and the NH appears to have occurred largely 855 synchronous, probably reaching comparable intensities. The MCA climate map provides 856 important input data to climate models which are now tasked to replicate the observed MCA 857 climate patterns and their possible natural climatic drivers, i.e. multi-centennial Pacific and 858 Atlantic ocean cycles and changes in solar activity.

As is typical for such a data review, occasional issues with data resolution, robustness of age models and validity of temperature proxies have been identified. These are discussed in detail in the site descriptions of the Supplement to this paper. Several perceived outlier sites may warrant a re-study with the objective to reproduce the age model and add independent complementary temperature proxy types. A fully quantitative comparison of MCA and CWP temperatures is still complicated. Some sites suggest that the CWP may have been warmer than the MCA, whilst others indicate the opposite. In yet other sites, the two warm phases

866 reached a similar temperature level. Part of these discrepancies may be attributable to 867 regional variations across the continent, whilst another part may be due to incompletely 868 understood proxies. Further studies are needed to investigate competing influences of 869 temperature and precipitation changes on key climate archives and proxies such as ice 870 cores, palynology, tree rings, speleothems, marine cores and lake records. 871 The majority of MCA publications focus on the high altitude Andean mountain belt. Data from 872 regions outside the Andes are still scarce, especially from the central and eastern parts of 873 South America. Concerted research efforts are needed to document the MCA climate history 874 of these areas. Palaeoclimate proxy methodologies need to be developed and tested that are 875 effective in these lower altitude settings, e.g. biomarker-based lake palaeotemperature 876 reconstructions. Multi-proxy based research should become a mandatory strategy for all 877 further investigations (Flantua et al., 2016). Future quantitative temperature reconstructions 878 for South America need to diversify their regional data basis, as existing composites still 879 depend on too few MCA sites which then introduce local bias.

880

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