



Climate and Cultural Change in Prehistoric Europe and the Near East (SUNY Series, The Institute for European and Mediterranean Archaeology Distinguished Monograph Series)

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Rich case studies examining responses to climatic events in ancient Europe and the Near East.

The subject of climate change could hardly be more timely. In *Climate and Cultural Change in Prehistoric Europe and the Near East*, an interdisciplinary group of contributors examine climate change through the lens of new archaeological and paleo-environmental data over the course of more than 10,000 years from the Near East to Europe. Key climatic and other events are contextualized with cultural changes and transitions for which the authors discuss when, how, and if, changes in climate and environment caused people to adapt, move or perish. More than this publication of crucial archaeological and paleo-environmental data, however, the volume seeks to understand the social, political and economic significance of climate change as it was manifested in various ways around the Old World. Contrary to perceptions of threatening global warming in our popular media, and in contrast to grim images of collapse presented in some archaeological discussions of past climate change, this book rejects outright societal collapse as a likely outcome. Yet this does not keep the authors from considering climate change as a potential factor in explaining culture change by adopting a critical stance with regard to the long-standing practice of equating synchronicity with causality, and explicitly considering alternative explanations.

Peter F. Biehl is Professor and Department Chair of Anthropology at the University at Buffalo, State University of New York, and the coeditor (with Douglas C. Comer, Christopher Prescott, and Hilary A. Soderland) of *Identity and Heritage: Contemporary Challenges in a Globalized World*.

Olivier P. Nieuwenhuys is Assistant Professor of Archaeology at Leiden University, Netherlands.

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