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Nota di contenuto	<p>Intro -- Title page -- Copyright -- About the Authors -- Preface -- Acknowledgements -- About the Companion Website -- Chapter 1</p> <p>Introduction -- 1.1 In the Beginning was the Great Flood -- 1.2 The Ice Ages of the Earth -- 1.3 Causes of an Ice Age -- Chapter 2 The Course of the Ice Age -- 2.1 When did the Quaternary Period Begin? -- 2.2 What's in Stratigraphy? -- 2.3 Traces in the Deep Sea -- 2.4 Systematics of the Ice Age -- 2.5 Günz, Mindel, Riss and Würm: Do They Still Apply? -- 2.6 Northern Germany and Adjacent Areas -- 2.7 The British Pleistocene Succession -- 2.8 Quaternary History of North America -- 2.9 The Course of the Ice Ages: A Global View -- Chapter 3</p> <p>Ice and Water -- 3.1 The Origin of Glaciers -- 3.2 Recent Glaciers: Small and Large -- 3.3 Dynamics of Ice Sheets -- 3.4 Meltwater -- Chapter 4 Till and Moraines: The Traces of Glaciers -- 4.1 Till -- 4.2 Moraines -- Chapter 5 Meltwater: From Moulins to the Urstromtal -- 5.1 Fjords, Channels and Eskers -- 5.2 Outwash Plains and Gravel Terraces -- 5.3 Ice-dammed Lakes -- 5.4 Kames: Deposits at the Ice Margin -- 5.5 Urstromtäler -- Chapter 6 Maps: Where Are We? -- 6.1 Digital Maps -- 6.2 Satellite Images: Basic Data for Ice-Age Research -- 6.3 Projections and Ellipsoids -- Chapter 7 Extent of the Glaciers -- 7.1 Exploring the Arctic by Airship -- 7.2 Glaciers in the Barents Sea -- 7.3</p>

Isostasy and Eustasy -- 7.4 Ice in Siberia? -- 7.5 Asia: The Mystery of Tibet -- 7.6 South America: Volcanoes and Glaciers -- 7.7 Mediterranean Glaciations -- 7.8 Were Africa, Australia and Oceania Glaciated? -- 7.9 Antarctica: Eternal Ice? -- Chapter 8 Ice in the Ground: The Periglacial Areas -- 8.1 Definition and Distribution -- 8.2 Extent of Frozen Ground during the Pleistocene -- 8.3 Frost Weathering -- 8.4 Cryoplanation -- 8.5 Rock Glaciers: Glaciers (Almost) Without Ice -- 8.6 Involutions.

8.7 Solifluction -- 8.8 Periglacial Soil Stripes -- 8.9 Frost Cracks and Ice Wedges -- 8.10 Pingos, Palsas and other Frost Phenomena -- Chapter 9 Hippos in the Thames: The Warm Stages -- 9.1 Tar Pits of Evidence -- 9.2 Development of Fauna -- 9.3 Development of Vegetation -- 9.4 Weathering and Soil Formation -- 9.5 Water in the Desert: The Shifting of Climate Zones -- 9.6 Changes in the Rainforest -- Chapter 10 The Course of Deglaciation -- 10.1 Contribution to Landforms -- 10.2 Ice Decay -- 10.3 The Origin of Kettle Holes -- 10.4 Pressure Release -- 10.5 A Sudden Transition? -- 10.6 The Little Ice Age -- Chapter 11 Wind, Sand and Stones: Aeolian Processes -- 11.1 Dunes -- 11.2 Aeolian Sand -- 11.3 Loess -- Chapter 12 What Happened to the Rivers? -- 12.1 River Processes and Landforms -- 12.2 Dry Valleys -- 12.3 The Rhine: Influences of Alpine and Nordic Ice -- 12.4 The Elbe: Once Flowed to the Baltic Sea -- 12.5 The Thames: Influence of British Ice -- Chapter 13 North and Baltic Seas during the Ice Age -- 13.1 Development of the North Sea -- 13.2 Development of the Baltic Sea -- Chapter 14 Climate Models and Reconstructions -- 14.1 Ice Cores -- 14.2 The Marine Circulation -- 14.3 Modelling the Last Ice Sheets -- 14.4 Modelling Glaciers and Climate -- Chapter 15 Human Interference -- 15.1 Out of Africa: Humans Spread Out -- 15.2 Neanderthals and Homo sapiens -- 15.3 The Middle Stone Age -- 15.4 The Neolithic Period: The Beginning of Agriculture -- 15.5 Bronze and Iron -- 15.6 The Romans -- 15.7 Middle Ages -- 15.8 Recent Land Grab -- 15.9 Drying Lakes, Melting Glaciers and other Problems -- 15.10 The Anthropocene: Defining the Human Age? -- References -- Index -- EULA.

Sommario/riassunto

This book provides a new look at the climatic history of the last 2.6 million years during the ice age, a time of extreme climatic fluctuations that have not yet ended. This period also coincides with important phases of human development from Neanderthals to modern humans, both of whom existed side by side during the last cold stage of the ice age. The ice age has seen dramatic expansions of glaciers and ice sheets, although this has been interspersed with relatively short warmer intervals like the one we live in today. The book focuses on the changing state of these glaciers and the effects of associated climate changes on a wide variety of environments (including mountains, rivers, deserts, oceans and seas) and also plants and animals. For example, at times the Sahara was green and colonized by humans, and Lake Chad covered 350,000 km² - larger than the United Kingdom. What happened during the ice age can only be reconstructed from the traces that are left in the ground. The work of the geoscientist is similar to that of a detective who has to reconstruct the sequence of events from circumstantial evidence. The book draws on the specialisms and experience of the authors who are experts on the glacial history of the Earth. Readership : Undergraduate and postgraduate students studying the Quaternary, researchers, and anyone interested in climate change, environmental change and geology. The book provides a rich collection of illustrations and photographs to help the readers at all levels visualise the dramatic consequences of glacier expansions during the Ice Age.
