

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910964128103321
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Titolo	The collapse of the eastern Mediterranean : climate change and the decline of the East, 950-1072 // Ronnie Ellenblum, the Hebrew University of Jeruslaem
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Cambridge : , : Cambridge University Press, , 2012
ISBN	1-139-88905-2 1-139-56461-7 1-283-57497-7 1-139-55107-8 9786613887429 1-139-55603-7 1-139-55233-3 1-139-15105-3 1-139-54982-0 1-139-55478-6
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (xii, 270 pages) : digital, PDF file(s)
Classificazione	HIS010000
Disciplina	909/.09822401
Soggetti	Social change - Mediterranean Region - History - To 1500 Climate and civilization - Middle East - History - To 1500 Climatic changes - Social aspects - Middle East - History - To 1500 Mediterranean climate Islamic Empire Middle East Climate History To 1500
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Title from publisher's bibliographic system (viewed on 05 Oct 2015).
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Part I. The Collapse of the Eastern Mediterranean: 1. Presenting the events; 2. Deconstructing a 'collapse'; 3. 950-1027 -- An impending disaster; Part II. Regional Domino Effects in the Eastern Mediterranean, 1027-60 AD: 4. The collapse of Iran; 5. The fall of Baghdad; 6. A crumbling empire: the Pechenegs and the decimation of Byzantium; 7. Egypt and its provinces, 1050s-1070s; Part III. Cities and Minorities: 8. Jerusalem and the decline of classical cities; 9. Water supply, declining

cities and deserted villages; 10. Food crises and accelerated Islamization; 11. Reflections.

Sommario/riassunto

As a 'Medieval Warm Period' prevailed in Western Europe during the tenth and eleventh centuries, the eastern Mediterranean region, from the Nile to the Oxus, was suffering from a series of climatic disasters which led to the decline of some of the most important civilizations and cultural centres of the time. This provocative study argues that many well-documented but apparently disparate events - such as recurrent drought and famine in Egypt, mass migrations in the steppes of central Asia, and the decline in population in urban centres such as Baghdad and Constantinople - are connected and should be understood within the broad context of climate change. Drawing on a wealth of textual and archaeological evidence, Ronnie Ellenblum explores the impact of climatic and ecological change across the eastern Mediterranean in this period, to offer a new perspective on why this was a turning point in the history of the Islamic world.
