## Contents

ist	of Tables	ix		
ist	of Figures	х		
Гhе	he Authors			
Pref	reface			
Ack	Acknowledgements			
1	Quaternary Environments: An Introduction	1		
	Prelude to the Quaternary	1		
	Quaternary glaciations	3		
	Quaternary sea-level changes	3		
	Evidence from the oceans	4		
	Rivers, lakes and groundwater	5		
	Evidence from the deserts	5		
	Evidence from terrestrial flora and fauna	6		
	Human origins, innovations and migrations	6		
	Atmospheric circulation during the Quaternary	6		
	Environmental changes: past, present, future			
	Quaternary chronology	7		
	Reconstructing Quaternary environments	9		
	Quaternary environmental analogues	12		
	Practical relevance of Quaternary research	13		
	Further reading	13		
2	Prelude to the Quaternary	15		
	Introduction	15		
	The lithospheric plates and their motion	15		
	Tectonic control of the oceans and continents	17		
	Effects of plate evolution on the atmosphere and oceans	19		
	Global cooling and growth of the Antarctic ice cap	21		
	Onset of Ice Age conditions in the Quaternary	22		
	Possible causes of Quaternary instability	24		
	Conclusions	27		
3	Quaternary Glaciations	29		
	Introduction	29		
	The cryosphere	29		
	The development of ideas about the Quaternary			
	glaciations	33		
	Chronology	33		
	Evidence of glaciation	34		
	Quaternary cryosphere reconstruction	37		
	Dating cryosphere growth and retreat	49		
	Ice-core records	52		
	Holocene glacier records	58		

	Causes of ice-sheet growth and decay Insights from global climate models Pattern of glacial—interglacial cycles	60 66 66
4	Quaternary Sea-Level Changes	69
	Introduction Causes of sea-level fluctuation The timing of sea-level fluctuations Land bridges: a product of Quaternary low sea levels Verifying the sea-level record from ice-volume studies Recent and historic changes in sea level	69 72 75 80 82 83
5	Evidence from the Oceans	85
	Introduction Properties of sea water and of the different water masses Microfossils as tools for palaeoenvironmental	85 86
	reconstruction	92
	Oxygen isotopes Transfer functions	94 98
	Cadmium, barium and germanium analyses	100
	Aeolian dust and pollen	102
	Ice-rafted material	103
	The Atlantic and its significance	103
6	Rivers, Lakes and Groundwater	105
	Introduction	105
	Rivers of the present day	106
	Rivers of the present day Characteristics of some contemporary rivers	
	Rivers of the present day Characteristics of some contemporary rivers Factors influencing river environments during the	106 107
	Rivers of the present day Characteristics of some contemporary rivers Factors influencing river environments during the Quaternary	106
	Rivers of the present day Characteristics of some contemporary rivers Factors influencing river environments during the	106 107 108
	Rivers of the present day Characteristics of some contemporary rivers Factors influencing river environments during the Quaternary Examples of Quaternary riverine environmental change	106 107 108 110
	Rivers of the present day Characteristics of some contemporary rivers Factors influencing river environments during the Quaternary Examples of Quaternary riverine environmental change River metamorphosis and climatic change Evaluating river hydrology from palaeochannel evidence Lake morphology and origin	106 107 108 110 118 119 120
	Rivers of the present day Characteristics of some contemporary rivers Factors influencing river environments during the Quaternary Examples of Quaternary riverine environmental change River metamorphosis and climatic change Evaluating river hydrology from palaeochannel evidence Lake morphology and origin Lake status	106 107 108 110 118 119 120 127
	Rivers of the present day Characteristics of some contemporary rivers Factors influencing river environments during the Quaternary Examples of Quaternary riverine environmental change River metamorphosis and climatic change Evaluating river hydrology from palaeochannel evidence Lake morphology and origin Lake status Aquatic organisms	106 107 108 110 118 119 120 127
	Rivers of the present day Characteristics of some contemporary rivers Factors influencing river environments during the Quaternary Examples of Quaternary riverine environmental change River metamorphosis and climatic change Evaluating river hydrology from palaeochannel evidence Lake morphology and origin Lake status Aquatic organisms Quaternary lacustrine records	106 107 108 110 118 119 120 127 127 129
	Rivers of the present day Characteristics of some contemporary rivers Factors influencing river environments during the Quaternary Examples of Quaternary riverine environmental change River metamorphosis and climatic change Evaluating river hydrology from palaeochannel evidence Lake morphology and origin Lake status Aquatic organisms Quaternary lacustrine records Lake histories	106 107 108 110 118 119 120 127 127 129 133
7	Rivers of the present day Characteristics of some contemporary rivers Factors influencing river environments during the Quaternary Examples of Quaternary riverine environmental change River metamorphosis and climatic change Evaluating river hydrology from palaeochannel evidence Lake morphology and origin Lake status Aquatic organisms Quaternary lacustrine records Lake histories Evidence from the Deserts	106 107 108 110 118 119 120 127 127 129 133
7	Rivers of the present day Characteristics of some contemporary rivers Factors influencing river environments during the Quaternary Examples of Quaternary riverine environmental change River metamorphosis and climatic change Evaluating river hydrology from palaeochannel evidence Lake morphology and origin Lake status Aquatic organisms Quaternary lacustrine records Lake histories Evidence from the Deserts Introduction	106 107 108 110 118 119 120 127 127 129 133 <b>138</b>
7	Rivers of the present day Characteristics of some contemporary rivers Factors influencing river environments during the Quaternary Examples of Quaternary riverine environmental change River metamorphosis and climatic change Evaluating river hydrology from palaeochannel evidence Lake morphology and origin Lake status Aquatic organisms Quaternary lacustrine records Lake histories  Evidence from the Deserts Introduction Present-day distribution of arid and semi-arid regions	106 107 108 110 118 119 120 127 127 129 133 <b>138</b> 138
7	Rivers of the present day Characteristics of some contemporary rivers Factors influencing river environments during the Quaternary Examples of Quaternary riverine environmental change River metamorphosis and climatic change Evaluating river hydrology from palaeochannel evidence Lake morphology and origin Lake status Aquatic organisms Quaternary lacustrine records Lake histories  Evidence from the Deserts Introduction Present-day distribution of arid and semi-arid regions Causes of aridity	106 107 108 110 118 119 120 127 127 129 133 <b>138</b> 138 139 140
7	Rivers of the present day Characteristics of some contemporary rivers Factors influencing river environments during the Quaternary Examples of Quaternary riverine environmental change River metamorphosis and climatic change Evaluating river hydrology from palaeochannel evidence Lake morphology and origin Lake status Aquatic organisms Quaternary lacustrine records Lake histories  Evidence from the Deserts  Introduction Present-day distribution of arid and semi-arid regions Causes of aridity The desert environment	106 107 108 110 118 119 120 127 127 129 133 <b>138</b> 138 140 142
7	Rivers of the present day Characteristics of some contemporary rivers Factors influencing river environments during the Quaternary Examples of Quaternary riverine environmental change River metamorphosis and climatic change Evaluating river hydrology from palaeochannel evidence Lake morphology and origin Lake status Aquatic organisms Quaternary lacustrine records Lake histories  Evidence from the Deserts Introduction Present-day distribution of arid and semi-arid regions Causes of aridity The desert environment Late Cainozoic cooling and desiccation	106 107 108 110 118 119 120 127 127 129 133 <b>138</b> 139 140 142 144
7	Rivers of the present day Characteristics of some contemporary rivers Factors influencing river environments during the Quaternary Examples of Quaternary riverine environmental change River metamorphosis and climatic change Evaluating river hydrology from palaeochannel evidence Lake morphology and origin Lake status Aquatic organisms Quaternary lacustrine records Lake histories  Evidence from the Deserts  Introduction Present-day distribution of arid and semi-arid regions Causes of aridity The desert environment	106 107 108 110 118 119 120 127 127 129 133 <b>138</b> 138 140 142

Contents

8	Evidence from Terrestrial Flora and Fauna	156
	Introduction	156
	Pollen	157
	Fine-resolution palynology	173
	Microscopic charcoal	175
	Plant macrofossils	177
	Tree rings	178
	Vertebrates	182
	Invertebrates	184
	A global synthesis	184
	Further reading	199
9	Human Origins, Innovations and Migrations	202
	The Miocene hominids of Africa and Eurasia	202
	The Pliocene hominids of Africa	203
	Homo habilis: the first stone toolmaker	205
	Late Pliocene environmental changes	205
	Prehistoric meat-eating and butchery sites	206
	Homo erectus: fire and the Acheulian tradition	207
	Migration of <i>Homo erectus</i> from Africa to Eurasia	209
	From Homo erectus to Homo sapiens	211
	From Early Stone Age to Middle Stone Age	211
	Middle Stone Age ritual and art	212
	Late Stone Age diversity and migrations	214
	Pleistocene faunal extinctions	214
	Isotropic evidence of palaeo-diet	217
	Neolithic plant and animal domestication	218
	Further reading	221
10	Atmospheric Circulation during the Quaternary	223
	Introduction	223
	Present-day global atmospheric and oceanic circulation	
	patterns	225
	Sea-surface temperatures during the last glacial	
	maximum	225
	Atmospheric circulation patterns during the late	
	Quaternary	231
	Global palaeohydrology and links between oceanic	
	and atmospheric circulation	236
11	Environmental Changes: Past, Present, Future	239
	Introduction	239
	Agriculture and accelerated soil erosion	242
	Drought, overgrazing and desertification	243
	Irrigation and salinization	246
	Human effects on the atmosphere	247
	Conclusion	255

viii

Appendix: Quaternary Dating Methods	256
Introduction	256
Radiocarbon dating	256
Thermoluminescence dating	261
ESR dating	264
Amino acid racemization	266
Uranium-series disequilibrium	268
Potassium-argon dating	272
Palaeomagnetism	276
Fission-track dating	280
Other dating methods	280
Bibliography	282
Index	322