



CLIMATE IN MEDIEVAL TIME

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The original argument for a Medieval Warm Epoch (MWE) was made by Lamb (1965) based largely on evidence from western Europe. Much of the evidence he cited was anecdotal but he suggested that temperatures between A.D. 1000 and 1200 were about 1-2°C "above present values" (probably meaning the 1931-60 average). Hughes and Diaz (1994) reviewed a wide range of paleoclimatic data about the MWE, much of it reported since Lamb's classic work. They found no clear support for there having been a globally extensive warm epoch in the MWE, or indeed within a longer interval stretching from the 9th to the early 15th century. However, there is evidence for strong hydrological variability during this interval.

What is our current understanding of the climate in Medieval time? Here, we examine recently reported data, with an emphasis on regions beyond the North Atlantic margins, and provide a summary of how climate in Medieval time may have differed from that in the 20th century.

Hughes, M.K. and H.F. Diaz 1994. Was there a "Medieval Warm Period" and if so, where and when? *Climatic Change* 26, 109-142.

Lamb, H.H. 1965. The early Medieval warm epoch and its sequel. *Palaeogeography, Palaeoclimatology, Palaeoecology*, 1, 13-37.