

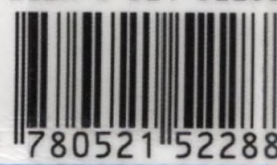
The Mountains of the Mediterranean World: An Environmental History examines five mountain areas in the Mediterranean: the Taurus in southern Turkey, the northern Pindus in Greece, the southern Apennines in Italy, the Sierra Nevada in Spain, and the Rif in Morocco. This work traces the history of settlement and population in each area, and its relation with the physical aspects of the land, especially the vegetation and soil. How the physical and social landscapes of the Mediterranean mountains were created, and the relation between them, are the central focus of these studies.

J. R. McNeill argues that despite a long tradition of human influence in the Mediterranean, the conspicuous degradation of the mountainous environments is a recent event, and that depopulation of these regions is in part a response to environmental decline. This decline did not occur without human influence, as both demographic pressure and a changing economy were important factors. The notable social and political unrest in the Mediterranean world of this period is also suggested to have derived some of its impetus from the desperation of these mountain people, whose forest and soil thinned with each passing generation.

Cover illustration: Springtime
(1988) in the *barranca* of
Paqueira.
Photograph by J. R. McNeill

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