

Abstract. The cold/wet anomaly of the 1310s (“Dantean Anomaly”) has attracted ~~a lot of~~ much attention from scholars, as it is commonly interpreted as a signal of the transition between the Medieval Climate Anomaly (MCA) and the Little Ice Age 10 (LIA). The huge variability ~~that can be~~ observed during this decade, ~~similar to~~ the high interannual variability observed in the 1340s, has been highlighted as a side effect of this rapid climatic transition. In this paper, we demonstrate that a multi-seasonal drought of almost two years occurred in the Mediterranean between 1302 and 1304, followed by a series of hot, dry summers north of the Alps from 1304 to 1306. We suggest that this outstanding dry anomaly, unique in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, together with cold anomalies of the 1310s and the 1340s, is part of the climatic shift from the MCA to the LIA. Our ~~15~~ reconstruction of the predominant weather patterns of the first decade of the fourteenth century—based on both documentary and proxy data—identifies multiple European precipitation seesaw events between 1302 and 1307, with similarities to the seesaw conditions which prevailed over continental Europe in 2018. ~~It can be debated to what extent the 1302–1307 period can be compared to what is currently discussed regarding the influence of the phenomenon of Arctic amplification on the increasing frequency of persistent stable weather patterns that have occurred since the late 1980s.~~ Additionally, this paper deals ~~20~~ with socioeconomic and cultural responses to drought risks in the Middle Ages, as outlined in contemporary sources, and provides evidence that there is a significant correlation between pronounced dry seasons and ~~blazes~~ that devastated cities.

**Commented [SG1]:** Long complicated sentence structure, needs tightening up

**Commented [SG2]:** Not suitable term...better to use the term 'fires'

## 1 Introduction & State of the Art

In recent decades, scholars of medieval studies have produced considerable research reconstructing the Little Ice Age (Pfister, Schwarz-Zanetti, Wegmann 1996) and appraising the impacts of cold events on premodern societies, but, apart from the notable exception of economic historians, few scholars have addressed the issue of droughts (Stone 2014). Almost two decades ago, Brown (2001) has highlighted the so-called “Dantean Anomaly” as a wet and cold anomaly lasting from 1315 to 1321, that led to famine over northwestern Europe (Jordan 1996). This climatic anomaly has been recently described more neutrally as “the 1310s event” (Slavin 2018). A distinctive “1300 event” has been found in proxy data, even around the Pacific rim (Nunn 2007). Historians have consistently focused on the cold, wet character of this decade, seemingly fascinated by continuous rains and their often detrimental impacts on food security. Much has been written, for example, about how excessive rain in 1315 and 1316 caused harvests to fail and ultimately resulted in a famine in northern Europe (Campbell 2016; Jordan 1996)