Lucidum Literature Review

Title **1177 B.C. The Year Civilisation Collapsed**
Author **Eric H. Cline**
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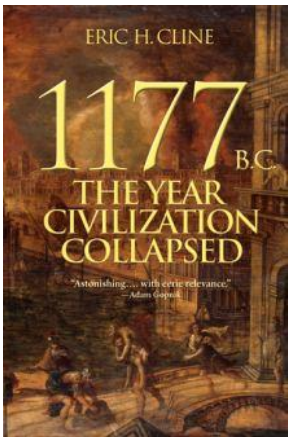

Lessons For		Relevance	Overall Rating
	Directors, Prescribed Officers, Executives	10	8.5
	Governance Officers, Company Secretaries	9	
	Ethics Officers, Risk Managers, Compliance Managers	10	
	Audit Professionals	5	
	Strategy Professionals	10	
	Line Managers	7	

Synopsis

The vibrant, international civilizations of the Bronze Age collapsed dramatically in 1177BC after nearly 2 000 years of cultural and technological evolution. Our world today shares many similarities with this period, including diplomatic embassies, economic trade embargoes, kidnappings, ransoms, murders, royal assassinations, magnificent marriages, unpleasant divorces, international intrigues, deliberate military disinformation, mounting internal conflicts, climate change, droughts and natural disasters. Instead of evaluating individual states' collapse (Minoans, Mycenaeans, Hittites, Assyrians, Babylonians, Mitannians, Canaanites, Cypriots, Egyptians, Kassites and Philistines), the author considers a globalised world with multiple, interacting civilisations becoming overdependent on capitalist enterprise and so contributing to economic instability. He urges us to learn hard lessons from processes, people and events coming together in a perfect storm that caused a systemic failure from which the globalised inter-societal network of the time could not recover. Meticulously researched and referenced, the study includes analysis of the butterfly, multiplier and domino effects, demonstrating that while individual factors may not be catastrophic, in combination they produce scenarios in which the consequence of each are magnified and failure of one leads to disintegration of the entire system. Afterwards, the system transitions to lower levels of socio-political integration with smaller entities in business for themselves with considerably more economic freedom. The author demonstrates (through social network and complexity theories) that, as systems become more complex with increasing degrees of interdependence between their constituent parts, keeping the overall system stable, becomes more difficult, causing hyper-coherence where parts of the system becomes so dependent upon each other that change in any part produces instability in the whole.

Word: Transnationalism Social phenomenon and academic research theme based on increased interconnectivity between people and receding economic and social significance of boundaries between nation states.

Practical Tips

- Identify areas in your entity's strategies, plans and risk registers that point to the ending of existing processes, social mandates and technologies. Focus on innovative ways to respond; utilise the uncertainty inherent in "endings" to create new opportunities.
- Consciously develop new capabilities as part of your risk culture to optimise the value of relationships between people, cultures, societies and their processes and systems. Use these capabilities to embed stakeholder inclusivity to benefit from uncertainty.
- When developing strategy and risk mitigation, consciously understand that our natural inclination to think of cause-and-effect as a linear progression, is often flawed – reality is always messy. There is almost never a single driving force or trigger, but often several different stressors, each of which prompts people and systems to react in different ways to accommodate change.

Quotes: "Generally, the rulers of the core…powers, treat the symptoms rather than the causes of instability…the violent destruction of the Late Bronze…civilizations…was, like many collapses, the inevitable result of limited foresight." "We should be aware that no society is invulnerable and that every society in the history of the world has ultimately collapsed. We are, in fact, more susceptible than we may wish to think. At the same time, we should be thankful that we are actually advanced enough to understand what is happening and can take steps to fix things, rather than simply passively accept things as they occur."

Think About

- Understanding our past enables us to understand our present. Studying "moments that matter" (where history took a totally new direction) helps us to avoid making the same mistakes and to direct our future positively.
- The 2008 economic crisis pales compared to the end of the Bronze Age but demonstrates a similar interconnectedness and potentially cataclysmic effects of the current global reach of many entities. In such a complex system, it may take very little for the overall system to destabilize and ultimately, collapse.
- The more complex a system is, the more liable it is to collapse and when it does, it decomposes into smaller entities which are much more difficult to direct.
- "Anything can happen, and if you wait long enough, it generally will."

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