

Review of Eugene Linden's *The Winds of Change*

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Eugene Linden's book *The Winds of Change: Climate, Weather, and the Destruction of Civilizations* offers an interesting account of the impact of some of the most disastrous historical events over drastic climate change, notifying people about global warming. Eugene Linden, an environmental journalist, prefers to write about the environment, nature, and social issues. "Linden is the winner of numerous journalistic awards and in 2001 was named by Yale as a Poynter Fellow in honor of his work in environmental journalism" (Linden, 2006, p. 20). In his book, Linden explains some paleo-climatic and oceanographic issues, and proves that climate change and weather are the main causes for destruction of civilizations throughout centuries. The book is a real achievement and worth one's admiration.

In this book, Linden considers how disastrous historical events lead to climate change on the Earth, and how the climate and weather change affect the human society. The author provides lots of evidences of significantly deteriorated societies in the history, such as Greenland's Norse settlements, Byzantine, Peruvian and Central America's Mayan civilization, modern Syria's Akkadian Empire, Assyrians and Minoans, etc. After explaining the unfavorable results that climate change caused in the past, Linden considers the present and then the future with a whole number of questions. "The Winds of Change places climate change, global warming, and the resulting instability in historical context and sounds an urgent warning for the future" (Linden, 2006, p. 23).

Linden makes it very clear that sudden climate change led to the fall of many civilizations in the past. His emphasis on history along with reliable and highly precise data from new scientific techniques clearly reveals that climate change must have destroyed agriculture and economies, encouraged migrations and

spread of diseases, challenged the legitimacy of rulers, and may have been the reason to start wars (Hamilton, 2009, para 1). The author considers both scientific and historical record, and explores the evidences signifying that climate has been a cruel killer of the society. The author also suggests that “the same could happen to us. Evidence of climate change flickers bursts of extreme climate instability transitional to permanent change are already upon us” (Hamilton, 2009, para 2). Although the author comes to a conclusion using historical evidence, his motive to alarm people about the climate change and global warming must be appreciated.

The book is a well-structured and thought-provoking literary work containing lots of interesting information and potent arguments related to drastic climate change and its effect on society. “Linden’s presentation of scientists’ theories on historical climate change will provoke readers concerned about the implications of global warming for modern civilization” (Hamilton, 2009, para 2). Linden’s exploration about climate’s role in the past disasters will greatly help the readers understand, foresee, and avoid future risks. The present and future society being aware of the risks connected with climate change have fair chances to prevent and avoid future disasters. This ideas is revealed in the following lines “But we have a crucial advantage over past civilizations that were blindsided by climate change, Linden assures us – we can learn from their misfortunes” (The Winds of Change, n.d., para 1).

Overall, this book is a well-structured narrative that gives us an account of the impact of climate on civilization. Linden gracefully interlaces history and science through a thought-provoking narration. The book is worth reading because of its interesting and provocative style. This book is a must to read for everyone who is not indifferent to global warming, and, consequently, our future.

References

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