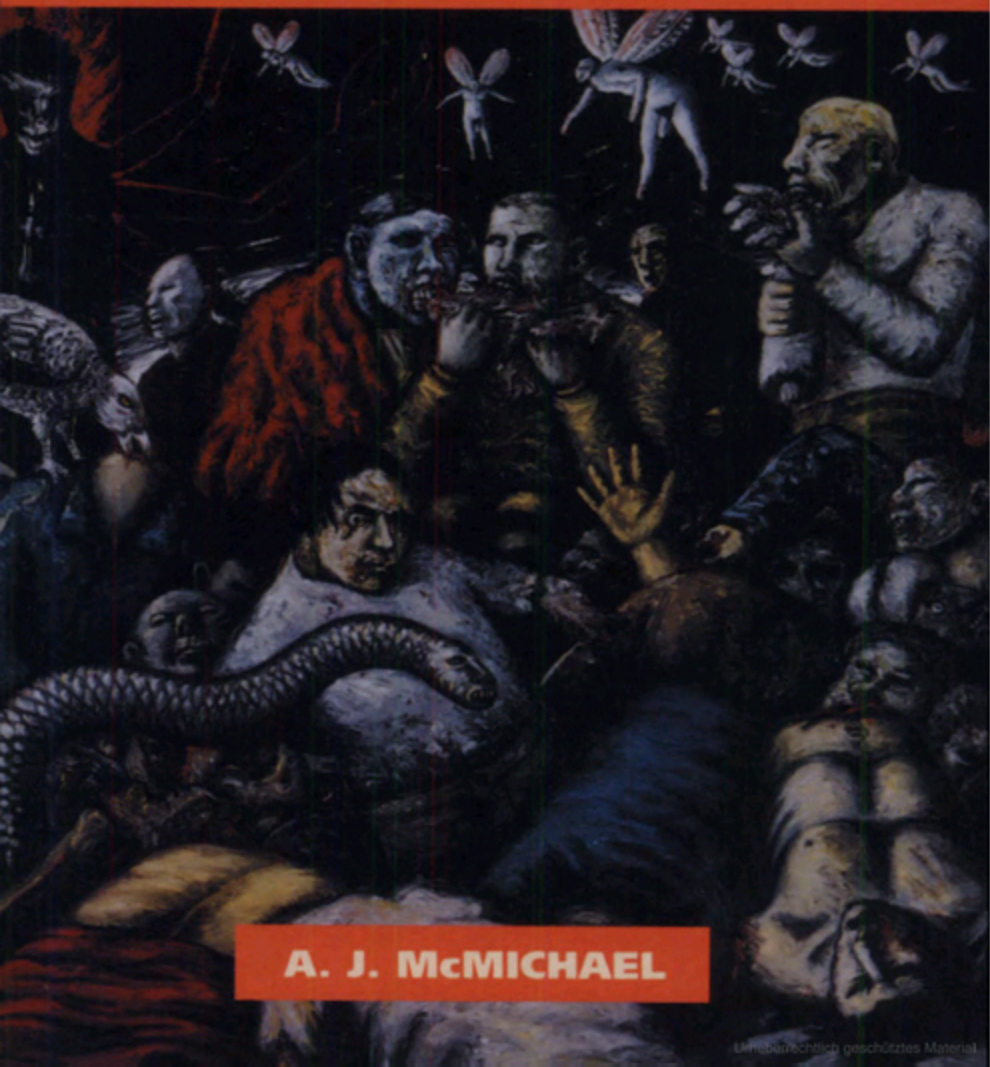


# PLANETARY OVERLOAD

Global Environmental Change and  
the Health of the Human Species



A. J. McMICHAEL

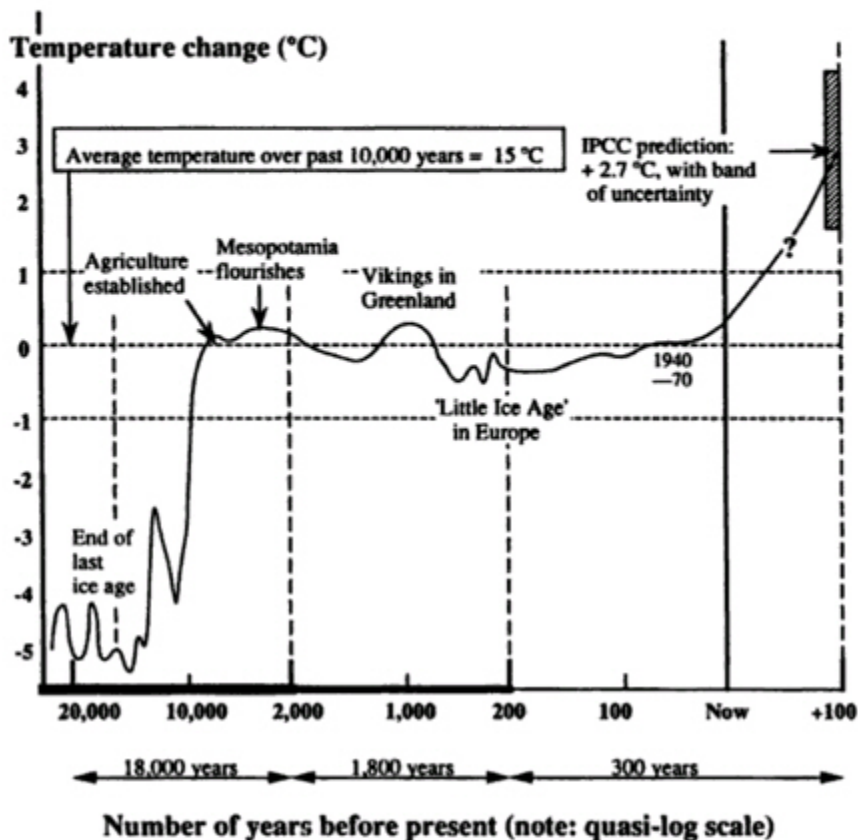


Figure 4.1. Variations in average global temperature over the past 20,000 years. The prediction of the International Panel on Climate Change (see chapter 6) for the coming century is shown. (Multiple sources)

similar vein, other historians have argued that the decline and collapse of the ancient Mycenaean civilisation was exacerbated by climatic change. Shifts in the path followed by winter storms probably deprived the cities of Mycenae of water, much of which had already been committed to agricultural irrigation.<sup>5</sup>

#### 4.2 The decline of ancient civilisations

Early civilisations depended critically upon the sustained productivity of local agriculture and supplies of freshwater. Societal stresses occurred often in response to climatic fluctuations and the overloading of agriculture