The War Cycle

&

The Economic Confidence Model

The Middle East & World War III

Another Islamic Civil War

Armstrong Economics

November 1, 2015

The International Think Tank

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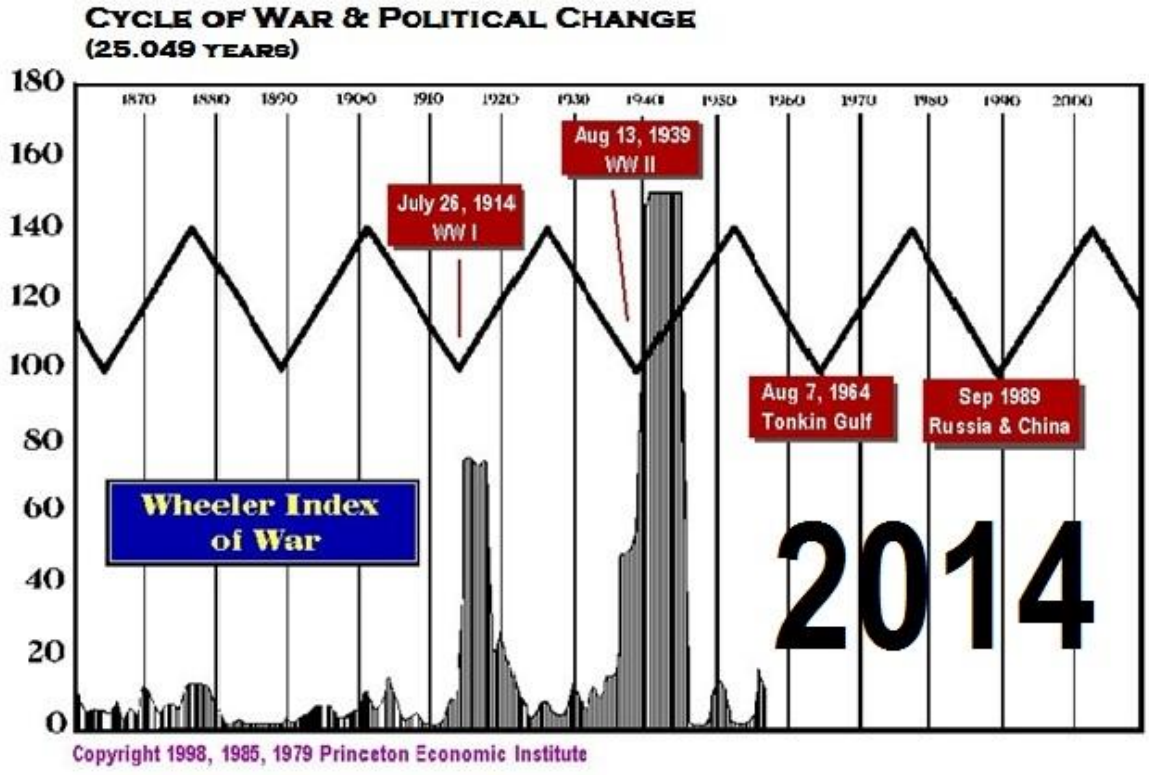
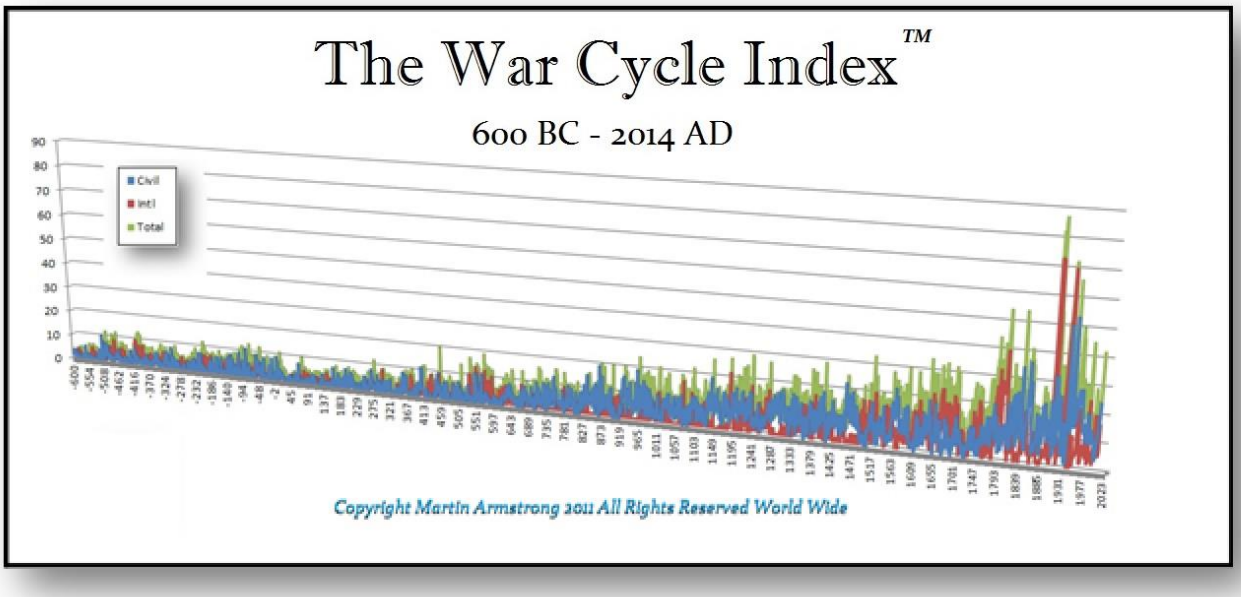
Prologue



One of the most interesting studies we have conducted was cataloguing the War Cycle. No matter what the data series might be, the single factor that emerges is always a cyclical pattern. In physics class the professor would say, "Nothing is random." This stood in contrast with the professors in social sciences and economics who proclaimed that the world was random and therefore it was possible to manipulate society to its own good like putty in their hands. Of course, this was the core theory of Karl Marx and John Maynard Keynes. Social science assumes that the world can be

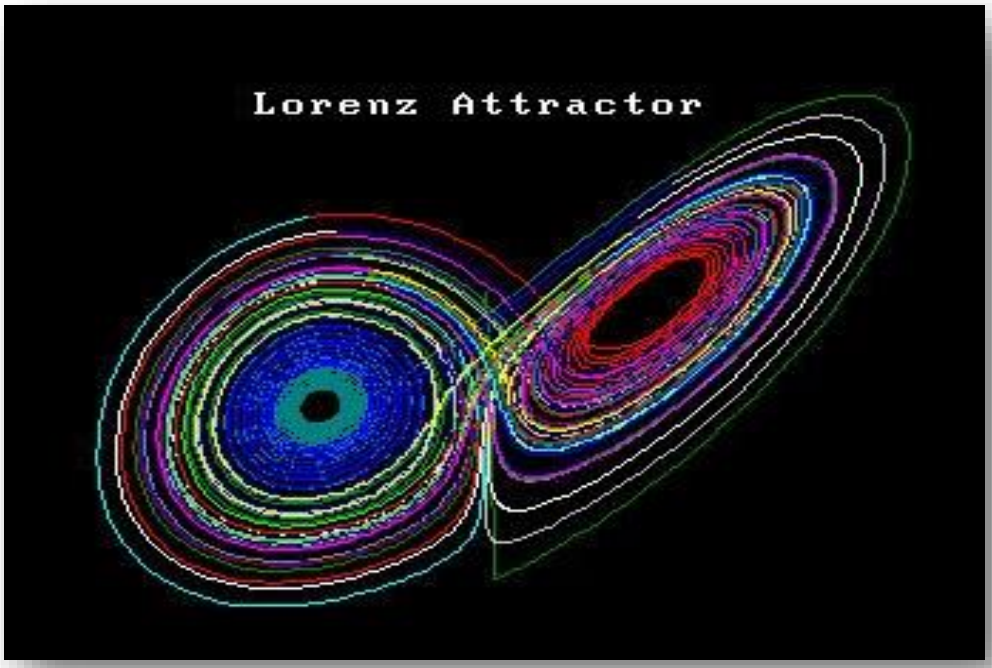


manipulated by economists, ruled by lawyers, and directed by politicians. What if that is just the wishful thinking of people who want to rule the world?

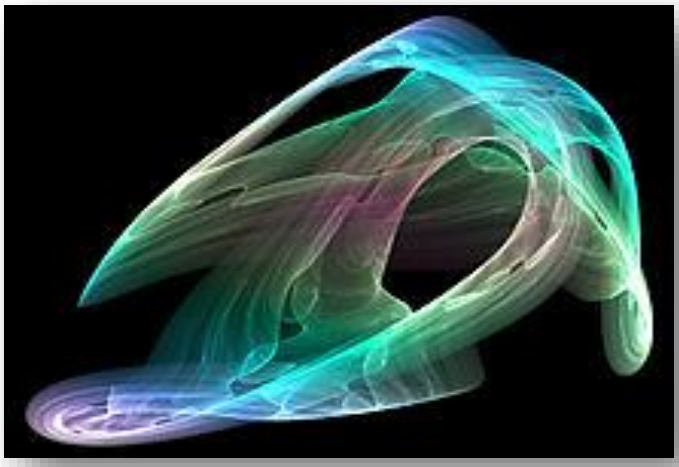
Working with a data series may appear to be pure chaos on the surface, but what exists hidden below is cyclical order. In programming, it is impossible to create a random number generator. A pattern will emerge no matter what you do. It is impossible to eliminate the cycle, yet this is the cornerstone of all social science — the presumption that man can rule the world and eliminate the business cycle. Even when we look deeper by cataloguing any given activity, a cycle will always emerge. Nothing moves in a straight line, for there will always be cyclical waves like the wave motion within the ocean. So it is not a question of whether we can determine if there is a cycle to warfare. It is a question of how can someone fail to believe that cycles to warfare exist when they cannot find the absence of a cycle?

Of course, there will be those who immediately challenge the ability to forecast wars. They refuse to keep an open mind to let the data reveal the hidden order that is waiting to be discovered.

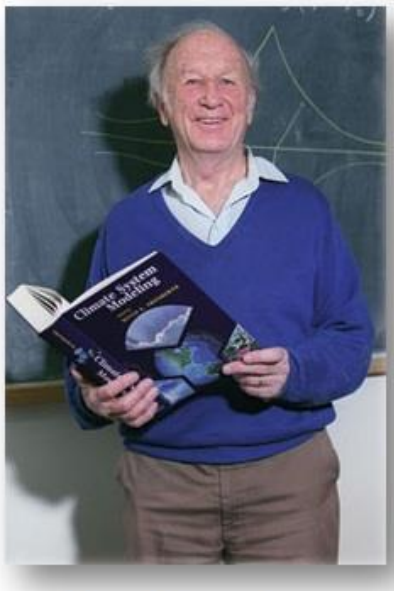
We created a War Cycle Index from 600 BC to the present. In cataloguing internal civil unrest and international conflicts, we have been able to create a fascinating data series that demonstrates the complexity of cyclical activity. The revelation that emerges in interfacing this data series with that of our Economic Confidence Model is rather common sense. War *never* takes place when everyone is fat and happy. Turn the economy down and you will find political unrest. Our models turned back up in 2014 and are now pointing to a first important high by 2017.



The 20th century will be remembered for four scientific revolutions: **relativity, quantum mechanics, chaos theory, and fractal geometry.** Despite advances in real science, the social sciences refuse to move forward by clinging to the idea that we are the masters of our own destiny and can pass some law to prevent whatever we may desire. History argues with such fools for they cannot point to a single sustained period in history where their theory has ever existed.



The father of **chaos theory** is American mathematician and meteorologist, Edward Norton Lorenz (1917–2008 AD). A professor at MIT, Lorenz was the first to recognize what is now called chaotic behavior in the mathematical modeling of weather systems. His discovery was startling: what appeared to be complex randomness (chaos) revealed a cyclical order. We simply had not been focused enough to see the patterns.



Edward Norton Lorenz
(1917–2008)

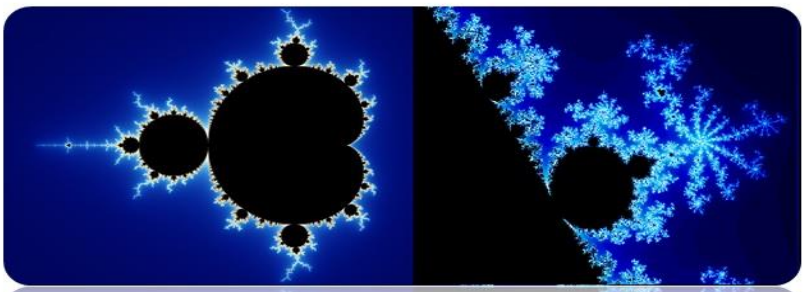
During the 1950s, Lorenz observed that there was a cyclical non–linear nature to weather, yet the field of meteorology relied upon linear statistical models for weather forecasting. It was like trying to measure the circumference of a circle with a straight edge ruler. His work on the topic culminated in the publication of his 1963 paper ***Deterministic Non–periodic Flow*** in the Journal of the Atmospheric Sciences, and with it, the foundation of chaos theory. During the early 1960s, Lorenz had access to early computers. He was running what he thought would be random numbers and began to observe that there was a duality of a hidden repetitive nature. He graphed the numbers derived from his study on convection rolls in the atmosphere. What emerged has been perhaps one of the most important discoveries in modern time.

The **Lorenz strange attractor**, first reported in 1963, is incredibly important. Lorenz's discovery of a strange attractor was made during an attempt to create a model of weather patterns. The actual experiment was an attempt to model atmospheric dynamics of the planet and involved a truncated model of the Navier–Stokes equation. The result was a visual example of a non–linear dynamic system corresponding to long–term behavior in a cyclical manner that reveals a hidden order we cannot otherwise observe.

The **Lorenz strange attractor** is a three–dimensional dynamic system that exhibits chaotic flow; noted for its interesting shape, it revolves around two invisible strange points in space–time that we call **strange attractors**. The map shows how the state of a dynamic system with three variables of a three–dimensional system evolves over the fourth dimension (time) in a complex, yet non–repeating pattern.

In other words, this is a visualization of duality – beneath what appears to be randomness (chaos) is a clear pattern of order. The same identical structure appears in light where it is both a waveform and a particle. We see a similar structure in the economy where we retain our individuality, yet at the same time, we are part of a broader collective pattern. This is the very essence of the **invisible hand** – or in Lorenz terms, a **strange attractor**.

Taking a complex data series and plotting the numbers revealed that there was indeed a hidden order to the superficial chaos. Others, such as Mandelbrot and Pickover, began to explore this new dimension of complexity. Although the real sciences were progressing, the social sciences rejected any notion of cycles.



Mandelbrot Set

Benoit B. Mandelbrot (1924–2010 AD) was a French American mathematician who was born in Poland. He is known as the father of **fractal geometry** – the fourth area of major scientific discovery leading to what I call the **systems theory of everything.** Mandelbrot worked on a wide range of mathematical problems, including mathematical physics, and attempted quantitative finance without much success. Nonetheless, his contribution that lists him in the top four areas of science in my book is his status as the father of fractal geometry. He coined the term "fractal" and described the Mandelbrot set, which revealed the mathematical proof behind the order in what we consider random chaos.

Benoît B. Mandelbrot
(1924–2010)

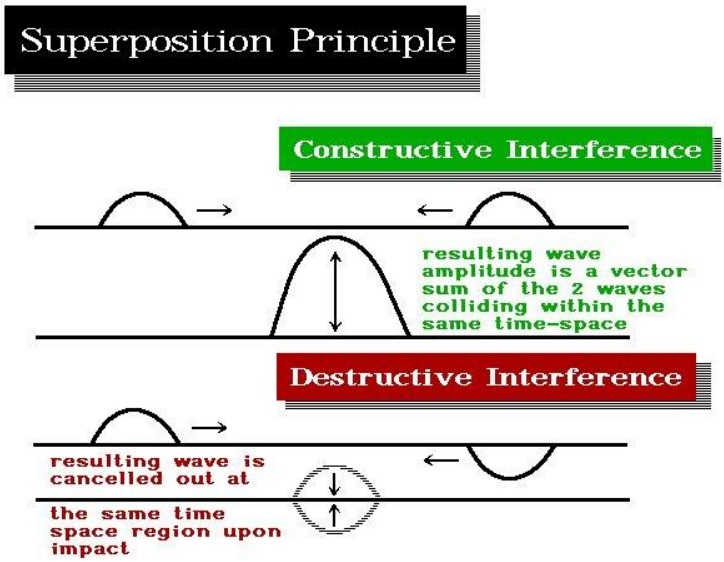
More importantly, fractal geometry is the secret nature of self–referral where one layer refers to its own structure to build the next higher–level generation. For example, in the reproduction of biological life forms, children look like their parents. Nature replicates itself based upon the same structure, just as the solar system appears similar to the atomic structure. This becomes a system of self–similarity whereby two inputs blend to create the next generation. This is similar to the observations of Hegel in his dialectic system that produces a synthesis.

In 1969, Lorenz also discovered that very minor differences in a dynamic nonlinear system (which would include the economy) could trigger vast and often unsuspected results. These observations ultimately led him to formulate the **butterfly effect** whereby a very small change at one place in a nonlinear system can result in large differences to a later state. This term grew out of an academic paper he presented in 1972 entitled: ***Predictability: Does the Flap of a Butterfly's Wings in Brazil Set Off a Tornado in Texas?*** The paper discusses a theoretical example of a hurricane's formation being contingent on whether or not a distant butterfly had flapped its wings several weeks before.

Lorenz's early insights marked the beginning of a new field of study that impacted, not just the field of mathematics, but virtually every branch of science. In meteorology, these discoveries have led some to presume that it may be fundamentally impossible to predict weather beyond two or three weeks with a reasonable degree of accuracy. However, such assumptions ignore the duality structure and the true importance of the **strange attractor**.

Lorenz demonstrated that the very idea of a deterministic system with formal predictable limitations does not actually exist; in other words, the Cartesian universe. I believe that Lorenz's discoveries have overshadowed both relativity and quantum mechanics for they have truly opened the door to the **grand unified theory** (i.e. the **theory of everything)** if we are willing to take that first step through the door.

Against this backdrop are academics in the social sciences who claim that no one can possibly predict the business cycle, no less the war cycle. They



prefer to put forth roadblocks than to acquire real knowledge. Even those who champion global warming/climate change ignore the very existence of cycles.

Consequently, this review of the existence of a War Cycle relies upon quantitative analysis and not personal opinion. The War Cycle turned up in the fall of 2014; we tracked civil unrest within nations, as well as the warfare between nations. Each data series is derived from a different source of activity, and consequently, the cycles revealed are also different. However, sailors have long been aware of the **rogue wave** where the cycles of several waves suddenly synchronize and produce one giant wave that appears out of nowhere.

This combination of waves is known as the superposition principle. Two waves collide and it depends upon their structure what will emerge. You can have constructive interference, where the two waves are positive in force and

they combine to produce that rogue wave that sailors feared. Upon collision, if the two waves are of opposite force, we end up with destructive inference that will cancel each other out. When destructive inference occurs, it will appear that nothing took place when in fact there is a hidden order beneath.

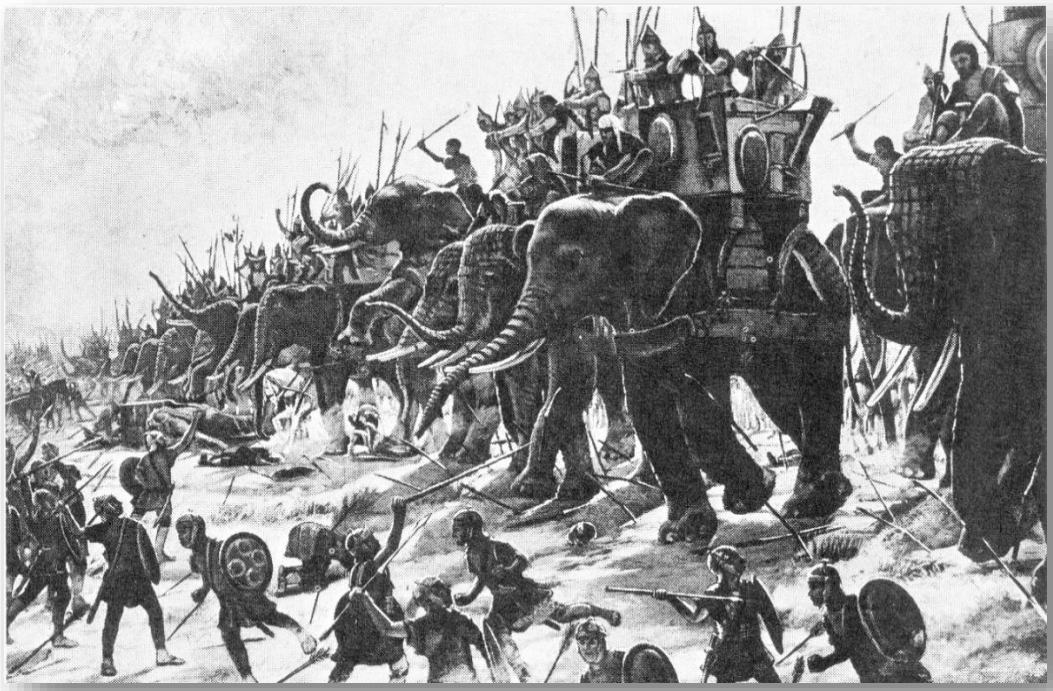
In 1995, there was the first measurement of such a wave known as the Draupner wave or New Year's wave. It struck the Draupner oil platform in the North Sea off the coast of Norway on January 1, 1995. This provided the first opportunity to measure such a wave, and engineer Paul Taylor carried out the study. The platform survived this event, and the wave, measured with lasers, was 84 feet high (25.6 meters) in a sea where the average wave was 39 feet high (12 meters).

What we are facing is very similar: both of our war model data series (civil unrest and international war) are converging as we move from 2014 into 2020. This is rather serious for it amounts to whatever can go wrong, will go wrong, all at the same time.

Many aspects will begin to converge moving into 2017 and 2020; the **War Cycle** is just one of them. Our great concern is that Russia began bombing the Middle East on the very day of our Economic Confidence Model: September 30, 2015 (2015.75). Typically, whatever unfolds on the precise day of the model tends to be the focus.

The **War Cycle** has been incredible for at the core it links to weather, economics, plagues, and natural disasters. We cannot look at war in isolation for its causes are deeply rooted within human nature and its complex interaction with everything else.

Chapter 1: The War Cycle



To understand war, you must also understand the economy. In back testing the Economic Confidence Model, this frequency appeared repeatedly throughout history in all cultures. This frequency was appearing in Babylonian, Greek, Roman, and Byzantine data, no less the Middle Ages.

What became clear was the fact that the economy was tied to the war cycle. No one goes to war without reason. Of course, there were those who followed what I called the **conquest model**, which involves the conquest of another country for profit. As I was modelling history through the focus of studying the cyclical wave motion of events rather than the flat–line chronological style that failed to connect the dots, I could see periods of innovation and war even in ancient times.

King Croesus of Lydia (b. 595–547 BC; r. 560–547 BC) is said to have been the wealthiest king, perhaps ever, but certainly at that point in history. He was the last bastion of the Ionian Greek cities in Anatolia (Turkey) that stood against the rising Persian power of Cyrus II the Great (b. 580/590–530 BC; r. 559–530 BC). Before the Persians could ever hope to invade Greece in their desire to conquer their neighbors for wealth and power, Lydia had to be conquered.

Croesus began preparing a campaign against Cyrus the Great of Persia. Before undertaking this conquest, Croesus petitioned the Delphic oracle to inquire whether he should pursue this campaign and seek an alliance. Croesus' gift to the oracle at Delphi was similar to that of a gift from King Midas of Pessinus, a city of Phrygia, who was another famed man of great wealth who also happened to be from Anatolia (Turkey).

Greek historian Herodotus tells us that Midas dedicated a throne at Delphi around 700 BC. The oracle answered with its usual ambiguity, perhaps delivering its most famous forecast. The oracle replied that if Croesus attacked the Persians, he would destroy a great empire. Croesus formed an alliance with Sparta in addition to the alliances he had with Amasis II of Egypt and Nabonidus of

Babylonia. He then launched a campaign against the Persian Empire in 547 BC. The battle was inconclusive, and, as was usual in those days, the armies disbanded for winter. Croesus followed this tradition, but Cyrus did not, and he launched a surprise attack in winter capturing Croesus in Sardis as he took the city. Cyrus the Great and his Persian army conquered Lydia and Croesus became his captive.

It became clear that the powerful empire Croesus was about to destroy was his own.

Croesus instituted a monetary reform that set in motion the foundation of money for thousands of years into modern times. Croesus introduced a **bimetallic monetary system** by refining the electrum and separating gold from silver. He then struck gold staters with a reduced weight of 10.89 grams. He then issued a silver stater with the same weight of 10.89 grams. The silver to gold ratio was at first 10–12:1. Croesus changed the design of the coins from lions to a lion confronting a bull. We can see at this early beginning in coinage that war resulted in inflation. It is also at this time that we see the first debasement. As the cost of war grew, the gold stater was reduced from 10.9 grams to 8.17 grams.

Herodotus tells us that in the Lydian account, Cyrus had Croesus placed on a great pyre to burn alive because he wanted to see if any of the heavenly powers would save him. As the fire ignited, Cyrus the Great heard Croesus call out ″Solon!″ three times. Cyrus then asked the interpreters to find out what he said. The interpreters answered that Solon had warned Croesus of the fickleness of good fortune. Supposedly, his response moved Cyrus to compassion and he order that the fire be extinguished. However, the flames were too great and Croesus then called out to Apollo and prayed to him. Suddenly, dark clouds gathered and a violent storm appeared to extinguish the flames. Cyrus became convinced that Croesus was a good man and made him an advisor.

Nonetheless, Cyrus the Great adopted the monetary system established by Croesus and continued to mint the same designs of the lion confronting the bull at a reduced weight. Darius I (b. 550–486 BC; r. 522–486 BC) eventually changed the design to one that depicted him as an archer. The gold stater then became known as a "Daric" named after the king who was the first person to place his image on a coin. Darius maintained the reduced standard of Croesus that was introduced around 550 BC due to war.

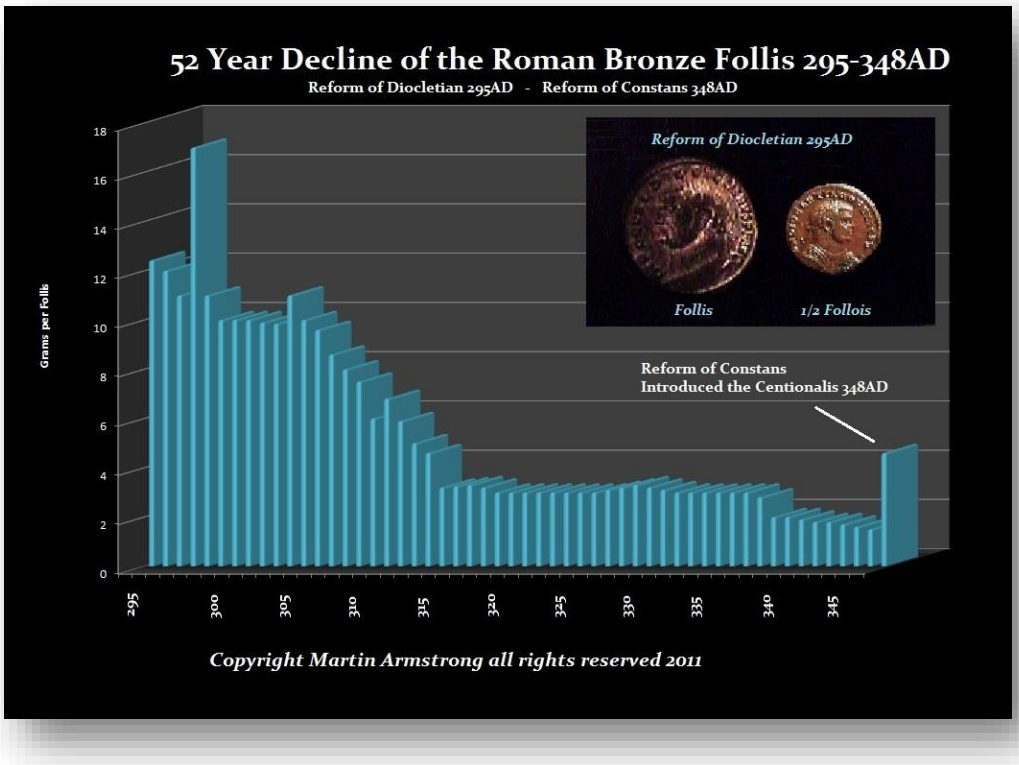
The reign of Cyrus the Great lasted, at best, 31 years or one pi cycle. He built his empire by first conquering the Median Empire, then the Lydian Empire, and eventually the Neo-Babylonian Empire using the conquest model based upon wealth acquisition.

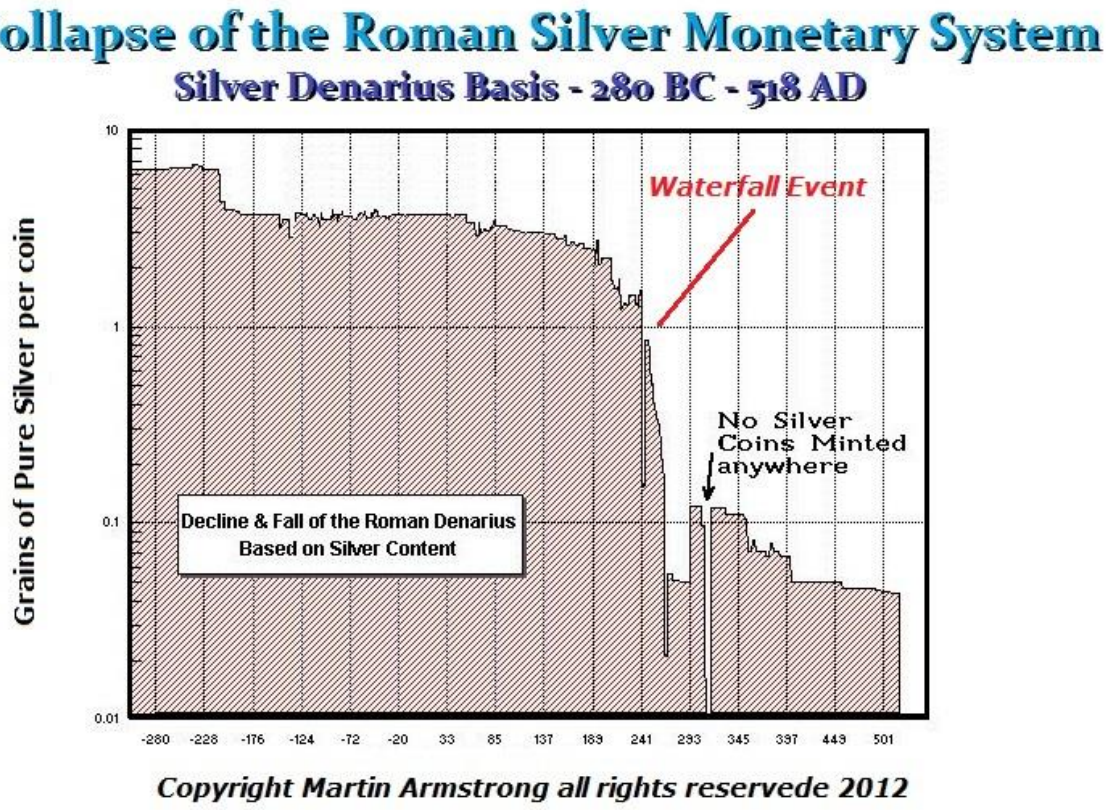
The Persian Empire grew strong in trade due to Cyrus' introduction of a major innovation – roads. The construction of a road by Cyrus the Great was a major innovation for economic expansion. This was similar to constructing railroads in America during the 19th century. The first Persian invasion of Greece, took place in 492 BC under Darius I, and the second Persian invasion of Greece (480–479 BC) occurred during the reign of King Xerxes I (b. 519–465 BC; r. 486–465 BC). From the death of Cyrus the Great, the Persian Empire lasted only one wave of 51.6 years until its defeat by the Greeks in the Second Persian Invasion of 479 BC (530–479BC).

Tomb Cyrus the Great

(576 BC–530 BC)

Even the great reforms of Diocletian (b. 245–316 AD; r. 284–305 AD) following the Great Monetary Crisis of the 3rd century AD in Rome lasted just 51.6 years. This frequency has appeared throughout history with remarkable resilience. It does not matter which empire, culture, or era. This frequency has dominated history and appears often like a rogue wave out of nowhere. It appears to be the harmony of every aspect of life from science to social science given that its core frequency amounts to pi (8.6 years and equals 3,145 days). It has been the cornerstone of the business cycle and the human interaction that we call the economy.

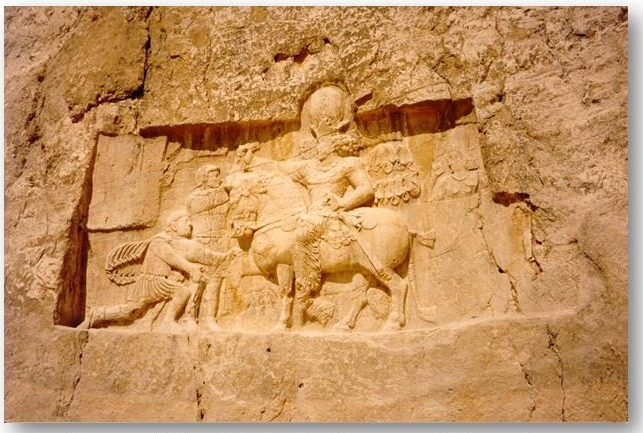




The sharp decline in the Roman monetary system during the 3rd century accelerated once the Persians captured Valerian I (b. 200–260 AD; r. 253–260 AD). It took just 8.6 years for the monetary system of Rome to collapse, as demonstrated by the debasement of silver content from 55% to virtually zero in the coinage. This was a major collapse in a very brief short period of time.

The overall decline from the peak of the Roman Empire under Marcus Aurelius (b. 121–180 AD; r. 161–180 AD) to the bottom was 86 years or 10 times 8.6, illustrating that this is also fractal. The start of the post–Depression socialistic/Marxist era that began in 1934, interestingly enough, is the bottom of the current wave in the ECM – 2020.

What caused the total collapse in the Roman monetary system? Was it inflation or lack of confidence? It was the fact that Valerian I was the first Roman Emperor ever captured by enemies. This sent a shock wave through the empire; people hoarded money, the economy contracted, and that resulted in the government debasing the money to pay its bills. As always, the **CONFIDENCE** evaporates **FIRST** and then the hyperinflationary outcome results. It has **NEVER** been the other way around.



A bas relief at Naghsh-e Rostam, Shiraz, Iran with Shapur I on horseback showing Roman Emperor Valerian held captive chained to the wall who he eventually had stuffed as a trophy

If we look at both the German hyperinflation and the French hyperinflation, each unfolded **ONLY** after revolution, which is communistic in nature (i.e. hunting the rich). Once the rich begin to hoard their wealth instead of investing, the economy implodes. This has become the common denominator in understanding the nature of the economy and human response. It is always a matter of **CONFIDENCE**. Once confidence is lost, everything falls apart.

Looking back in history during the Roman Republican era, we see that in 270 BC the confrontation between Rome and Carthage began, which lead to the outbreak of a trade war in 264 BC, known as the **First Punic War** (264–241 BC). Rome succeeded in subjugating Italy in 270 BC when it recaptured Rhegium (southern Italy) from the Mamertines and defeated the Brutians, Lucanians, Calabrians, and Samnites. Southern Italy was a trade link for Carthage. The

Romans restored the town of Rhegium to its original Greek inhabitants. Carthage actually controlled Sardinia, southern Spain, and Numidia along with Sicily. Carthage inherited their naval strength and experience from their fore–bearers, the Phoenicians, and became a powerful seafaring entity who clashed with the Greeks for the Mediterranean. Carthage was ruled by an oligarchy of merchants who relied upon mercenaries for soldiers.

SICILY, Syracuse. Agathokles, 317-289 BC
AR Tetradrachm (24mm, 16.85 g)
ΚΟΡΑΣ Head of Kore to right, wearing grain wreath and pendant earring.
Rev. ΑΓΑΘΟΚΛΕΟΣ Nike, standing right, attaching armor to trophy to her right

The Sicilian Wars (Greek–Punic Wars) were a series of confrontations between the Carthaginians and the Greek city–states, which at the time were led by Agathocles Syracuse (b. 361–289 BC; r. 317–304 BC). It was a contest for control of Sicily and the western Mediterranean between 600 BC and 265 BC. Therefore, the Sicilian Wars were fought on the island of Sicily but did not involve Rome. We see Carthage issuing coinage in Sicily as well.

After Agathocles of Syracuse sued for peace, Carthage enjoyed a brief and unchallenged period of control over Sicily. However, Carthage's control of most of Sicily came to an end with the Pyrrhic War (280–265 BC). This was the second phase of Pyrrhic War, which eventually led to the Roman–Punic Wars. Pyrrhus of Epirus (b. 319–272 BC; r. 306–302 BC and 297–272 BC; Macedonia 288–284 BC and 273–272 BC) arrived in Sicily to rescue the island from Carthaginians but was only partially successful and returned to Italy. Only when Rome became involved in Sicily did the reign of the Carthaginians come to an end in Sicily. Thus, the First Punic War began in 264 BC after Pyrrhus retreated from Sicily.

Trade effectively emerged as a major economic means of increasing the national wealth in North Africa. The Punic Wars between Rome and Carthage (known today as the suburb of Tunis, Tunisia) and the ancient center of the Carthaginian Empire are indicative of this lucrative trade based on the acquisition of wealth following the Minoan model. Even after Rome soundly defeated Carthage during the First Punic War, the city rose again because of trade. The First Punic War was a battle to control Sicily and Corsica. To defeat Carthage, the Romans had to create a navy, and finally with a fleet of 200 ships they compelled Carthage to yield.

During the Second Punic War (218–201 BC), Carthage gained land in Spain and Hannibal (b. 247–183 BC) led an ambitious campaign to defeat Rome. The Punic Carthaginian military commander renewed the war by invading Italy by land from the north over the Alps. This invasion caused Rome to issue its first gold coins in an effort to convince the rest of Italy to resist Hannibal. These were stated to conform to the Greek monetary standard. They depicted

Roman Republic AU Stater (c. 225-212BC)
Head of Janus and the reverse an oath taking scene

the Roman god Janus for whom January is named. The reverse is an oath scene clearly demonstrating that there was an oath to Rome that should not be forgotten.

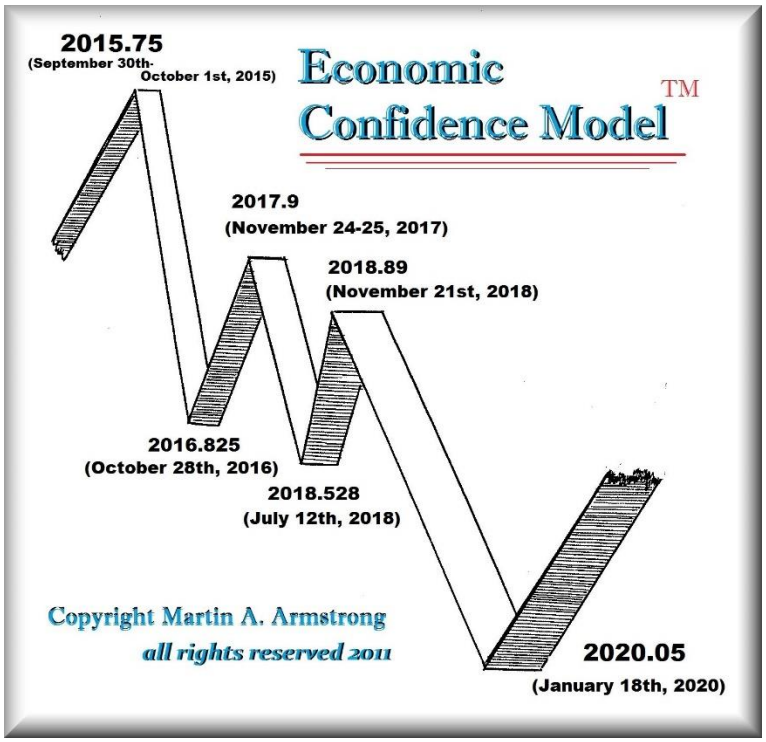
In the end, Rome prevailed and the famous Roman statesman and General, Scipio the Great (b. 236–183 BC) took the war to Carthage. Scipio defeated Hannibal and demanded an indemnity and the surrender of their entire fleet. Coins were issued in the denomination of the Shekel of Northern Africa with his portrait proudly displayed.

Nevertheless, the Carthaginians quickly recovered since their talent was trade. The sheer ability of trade to rebuild the economy was an example to all nations. This created the envy of Rome's imitative merchant class who could not yet compete in international trade. This envy is what sparked the Third Punic War (149–146 BC). Amazingly, the Third Punic War was 51.6 years from the defeat in 201 BC; the Second Punic War (218 –201 BC) was 51.6 years from the conquest of Italy in 270 BC.

The timing of the ECM in waves of 51.6 years has existed from ancient times into the present. This has been a very interesting discovery, rather than a theory.

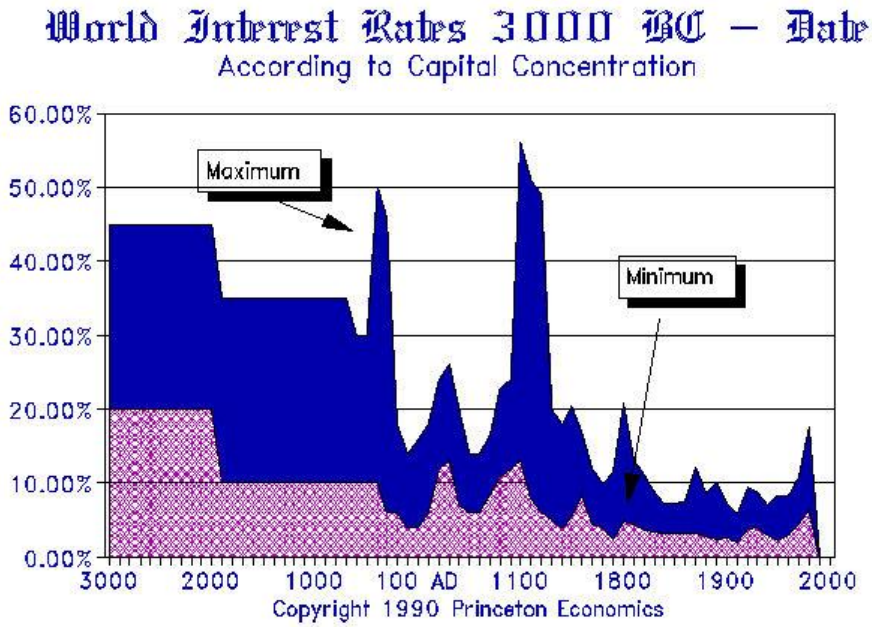
Barcid Issue. Scipio Africanus
(c. 209 BC) AR Shekel or Didrachm (7.1 g) minted at New Carthage

Chapter 2: The Black Stone

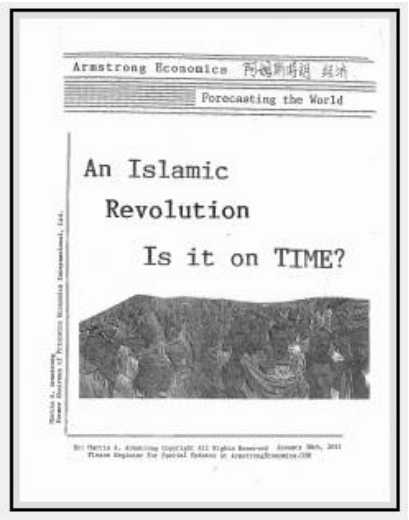


It is extremely disconcerting that on the very day of the peak on the Economic Confidence Model, September 30, 2015 (2015.75), Russia began bombing forces trained and funded by the United States to overturn the Syrian government of Assad. As mentioned, historically, whatever happens precisely on a turning point tends to be the focus of the business cycle. This is very disturbing since this particular turning point is focused on government. We have warned that this would not be some crash in the stock market or commodities within the private sector. This turn is concentrated within government, as we have reached an unsustainable historical crossroad, reflected in so many ways, right down to

uprisings and worldwide civil unrest. This is the 5000–year low in interest rates; we simply cannot sustain government debts any longer.



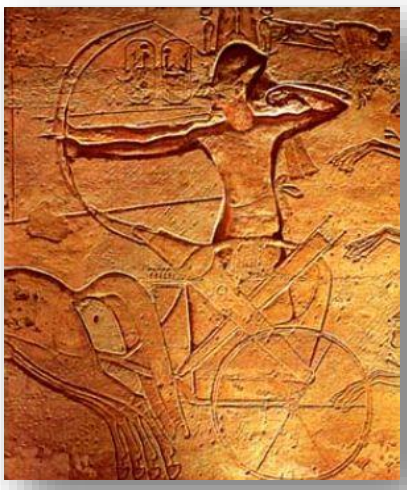
The great concern we must have is the fact that this model has highlighted the beginning of war. This is similar to Hitler's invasion of Poland in 1939 after signing a nonaggression pact in January 1934. Excuses were made to ignore the event and few understood it would lead to World War II. The nonaggression pact with Poland was not popular with many Germans since they had received the former German provinces of West Prussia, Poznan, and Upper Silesia under the Treaty of Versailles after World War I. However, Hitler sought the nonaggression pact in order to neutralize the possibility of a French–Polish military alliance against Germany before Germany



had a chance to rearm. It was a cunning move that mostly ignored.

We first published our Islamic Model back in 1987. The January 30, 2011 edition on the Islamic Revolution reflected an overlooked part of history not typically taught in Western culture. There has been a profound battle between the Sunni and Shiite groups within Islam that has manifested into four prior civil wars. There are two focal points for history within the region. Of course, our Islamic model must begin with the year 622 AD, which was a rather significant turning point in history from both a military and religious perspective.

Then there is the history of the region that centered on Emesa, the modern city within Syria named Homs today. This was the seat of power in the region as well as religion. For nearly 2,000 years, Homs has served as a key agricultural market and trade center for the villages of northern Syria. Emesa was a strategic location that protected Syria from invading forces. Biblical scholars have identified the city Zobah, which was mentioned in the Bible.



Around 1274 BC, a great battle took place there between the forces of the Ramesses II of the Egyptian Empire and Muwatalli II of the Hittite Empire. This was the **Battle of Kadesh** just upstream of Lake Homs. It was the earliest battle in recorded history for which details of tactics and formations are known. It was also most likely the largest chariot battle ever fought in history with some 5,000–6,000 chariots. Ramesses II (r. 1279–1213 BC) had crossed the Egyptian border, but eventually had to retreat as he was unable to keep his

supplies to justify a long siege. This is the place of the first Great War more than 3,000 years ago.

The region is also historic for its worship of a black meteorite. The **Stone of Emesa** has played a central role in the region for nearly 2,000 years is worshiped as the stone from the sun god. The exact origin of the black Stone of Emesa remains rather obscure and it most likely fell to the Earth during the 2nd century AD or earlier since there was evidence of a priesthood that extended well before the 3rd century.

The destiny of this particular meteorite is closely intertwined with that of a dynasty of king-priests who had been nomads, Bedouins of the desert, before settling down in Emesa. It is possible that the stone fell somewhere else in the Middle East and was carried by the tribe before they settled in Emesa. However, the Roman Emperor Septimus Severus (b. 145–211 AD; r. 193–211 AD) married Julia Domna from Emesa. Severus was determined to create a dynasty and regularly depicted his family on his coinage. This would eventually give rise to a hereditary claim to the throne of the Roman Empire by her side of the family centered in Emesa.

A detailed description survives by the historian Herodian who is also our authority for the fact that the so-called ″sacred image″ was ″not wrought by human hands″ and that the stone was ″rumored to have fallen from the sky.″ Herodian describes the object as a rather large, cone-shaped, black stone with a roundish base and a pointed top. Its surface was irregular ″with small projecting pieces and markings″ in which the locals claimed to recognize ″a rough picture of the Sun″ (Herodian III, 5).

Over time, a religious cult who worshiped the black Stone of Emesa became extremely famous and popular throughout the region. By the early 3rd century, the high priest, known as Elagabalus (b. 203–222 AD; r. 218–222 AD), from the family of Julia Domna became a Roman Emperor and the Stone of Emesa became the chief deity of the Roman Empire. The stone was known under the title *deus invictus Sol Elagabalus*, which translates to ''the undefeatable sun which rises every day''.

The black Stone of Emesa was depicted on the coinage of Elagabalus, and upon his rise to the throne, Elagabalus' religious beliefs began to surface as a problem, to say the least. The contemporary historian Cassius Dio suggests he murdered his adviser because he was forcing him to live ″temperately and prudently″ in order to attempt to adjust the Romans to the idea of having an oriental priest as emperor (Cassius Dio, Roman History LXXX.6).

According to Roman history, his mother, Julia Soaemias, went as far as sending a painting of Elagabalus in priestly robes to Rome and hung it over a statue of the goddess Victoria in the Senate House. He was forcing his religion upon Rome and the army did not take kindly to his actions. Revolts broke out before he even reached Rome. Elagabalus brought the Stone of Emesa to Rome and built a temple there by the Palatine Hill.

For all of Elagabalus' religious positions and many wives, he was also notorious for being a bisexual who enjoyed dressing up and playing the part of a woman. Cassio Dio tells us that Elagabalus even married a male slave named Hierocles and enjoyed being beaten by him as if he was Hierocles' female salve. Other men who slept with him were granted high positions in government. As such, respect for the state as a whole declined. Elagabalus even went as far as to ask doctors if they could medically transform him into a woman and carried out his own experiments by cutting off the genitals of young men as a sacrifice to his sun god.

The totality of his behavior led to a loss of loyalty among the troops. Rebellions began as early as 218 AD when the Third Legion in Syria attempted a rebellion. This was followed by the Fourth Legion and later by the Roman Fleet.

By 221 AD, his family convinced Elagabalus to adopt his cousin Severus Alexander (b. 209–235 AD; r. 222–235 AD), who was the son of his mother's sister, Julia Mamaea.

Alexander began to emerge as the favorite among the Praetorian Guard. Sometime in late 221 AD, Elagabalus tried to order the death of Alexander but no one would carry out the execution. On March 6, 222 AD, when Elagabalus visited the Praetorian camp, he found open support for Alexander and tried to order the arrest and execution of those offenders. Instead, the soldiers refused. Elagabalus attempted to flee but was hunted down and murdered along with his mother. Their bodies were dragged through the streets of Rome and tossed into the Tiber. Thus, Severus Alexander was hailed as emperor of Rome.

Elagabalus' reign was renowned for religious fanaticism, cruelty, bloodshed, and excesses of every description. According to the *Historia Augusta*, the temple that housed the black Stone of Emesa was converted to the Temple of Jupiter by Severus Alexander and is pictured on this medallion.

Severus Alexander reverently returned the Stone of Emesa to Emesa. Yet 31.4 years later, in line with pi, usurper Lucius Julius Aurelius Sulpicius Uranius Antoninus (b. 220–254 AD; r. 235–254 AD) rose to power at Emesa in Syria. Uranius was also known as the priest-king. He successfully defended Emesa against the Persian invasion led by Shapur I in 253 AD, who would later capture the Emperor

Valerian I. Although the Persians succeeded in sacking Antioch, they withdrew from the region. Uranius proclaimed himself emperor during the turbulent year of 253 AD, which marked the fall of the emperor Aemilian (b. 207–253 AD; r. 252–253 AD) and the rise of power for Valerian I. We know the Stone of Emesa was returned to the temple in Emesa for Uranius as it is pictured on his coinage. Valerian I defeated Uranius and received the title "Restorer of the Human Race".

Julian II the Apostate
(360-363AD)

The precise events that led to Uranius' death have escaped history. Through his coinage, we can gather that he coined money at both Emesa and Antioch, suggesting that perhaps he had taken Antioch following the withdrawal of the Persian forces. His coinage also attempts to draw a connection with Elagabalus, most likely a claim to some bloodline connection, but that appears limited to the fact that he was simply the high priest.

Interestingly, the religion centered on the Stone of Emesa was very strong. So much so, it was one of the few cities to resist Christianity even into the Christian era of Constantine the Great (b. 273–337 AD; r. 309–337AD). Due to the strength of the religion in Emesa, Christians avoided the city. Eusebius of Caesarea (modern day Turkey) wrote that Silvanus, the city's first bishop, had no jurisdiction over the city and was ignored. He was executed by Emperor Julian II (b. 332–363 AD; r. 360–363 AD) known as the Apostate since he rejected Christianity as

an heir of Constantine and had the bishop of Emesa executed. Certainly, Christianity was well established under the Byzantine Empire by the 5th century, yet curiously enough, there are very few Christian inscriptions found in Emesa (Homs). The city rose to an ecclesiastical status only after the discovery of John the Baptist's head.

The Alleged Head of St John the Baptist
It resides at the Amiens Cathedral in France

After John the Baptist's beheading, the wife of King Herod forbade the prophet's head to be buried with his body. Instead, she desecrated the honorable head and buried it near her palace. The saint's disciples had secretly taken their teacher's body and buried it. The steward of Herodias dug up the head and decided to rebury it on the Mount of Olives. When word reached the royal palace about Jesus' preaching and miracles, Herod went with his wife to see if John the Baptist's head was still in the place they had left it. Upon discovering it was missing, they began to think that Jesus Christ was John the Baptist resurrected according to the Gospels.

According to a description by Archimandrite Marcellus of the monastery in Emesa, as well as from the life of St. Matrona written by St. Simeon Metraphrastes, the head was discovered on February 18, 452 AD. A week later, bishop Uranius of Emesa established its veneration, and on February 26 of the same year, transported the head to the newly built church dedicated to St. John.

These events are celebrated on February 24–March 8, along with the commemoration of the First Finding of the Precious Head. So, Emesa has a very interesting history.

The King of France Philip IV (b. 1268–1314 AD; r. 1285–1314) inherited a massive financial crisis from his father's war against Aragon and his war against the English and their allies in Flanders. He arrested just about anyone he had owed money to and virtually destroyed the banking system of Europe. Philip also debased the coinage and reduced the silver content by nearly 66%. He succeeded in creating a financial crisis that led to widespread rioting in Paris. He was forced to flee and sought refuge in the Paris Temple, the headquarters of the Knights Templar.

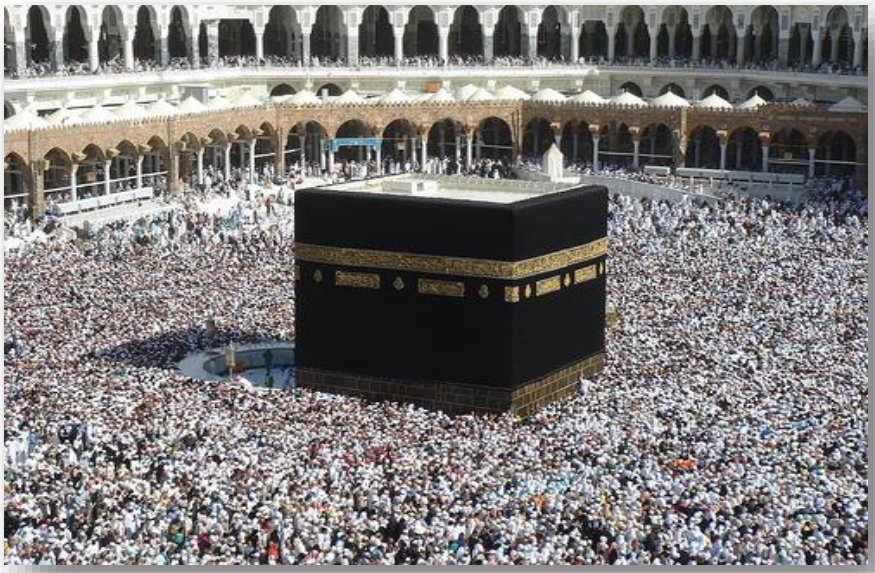
Philip arrested Jews in order to seize their assets to accommodate the inflated costs of modern warfare and expelled 100,000 of them from France on July 22, 1306. He arrested Italian bankers and defaulted on his loans. He became so desperate for money that he turned on the church and seized the very institution of the church itself. Philip IV moved the church from Rome to Avignon in France

Philip IV (1285-1314)
King of France

and appointed his stooge, the French archbishop Bertrand de Goth, as Pope Clement V to facilitate his power.

The Templars captured the head of St. John the Baptist during the First Crusade that launched in 1096 AD and in 1098 AD. The crusaders captured Antioch to the northwest, looted Ma'arat al–Numan, and finally besieged Homs itself. They never actually took the city. However, it appears that this was the connection to bring back the head to France.

Pope Clement V used evidence of hearsay to destroy the Knights Templar who worshipped an idol called Baphomet whom they believed to be a variant of Muhammad (b. 570–632 AD), referring to Islam in Emesa. The Templars were accused of apostasy to the Islamic faith. This strange idol was a severed head of a man, embalmed with herbs and spices, and interrogated as an oracle. Allegedly, the Knights Templar would kiss this bearded head that was kept at the Knights Templar Temple in Paris. This was their crime, but the Knights Templar stored the wealth of the church. Therefore, the king needed to create a crime to justify the seizure of all their assets. On that fateful day in 1307 AD, the king ordered all of the Templars to be burned at the stake.



As for the black Stone of Emesa, it was most likely smashed to pieces when the Byzantines converted the temple into a Christian church during the 4th century AD. However, the site is now occupied by a mosque, the Great Mosque of al–Nuri, which has never been excavated (pictured above). All that remains of the mysterious black stone are ancient texts and a collection of iconographic documents (mostly coins).

All we have is speculation as we lack any historical or archaeological evidence about the later fate of the black Stone of Emesa. It has been suggested that the much smaller, well–known, **black Stone of Mecca** (al–hajar

al–aswed) set in the southeast corner of the Kaaba in Mecca may be a surviving remnant or the Stone of Emesa or perhaps it came to Earth at the same time in this region. While the Stone of Mecca is only 11 inches wide and 15 inches high, if this is a fragment of the Stone of Emesa, then this would suggest that the Byzantines did in fact smash the stone when they converted the Temple of Emesa to a church.

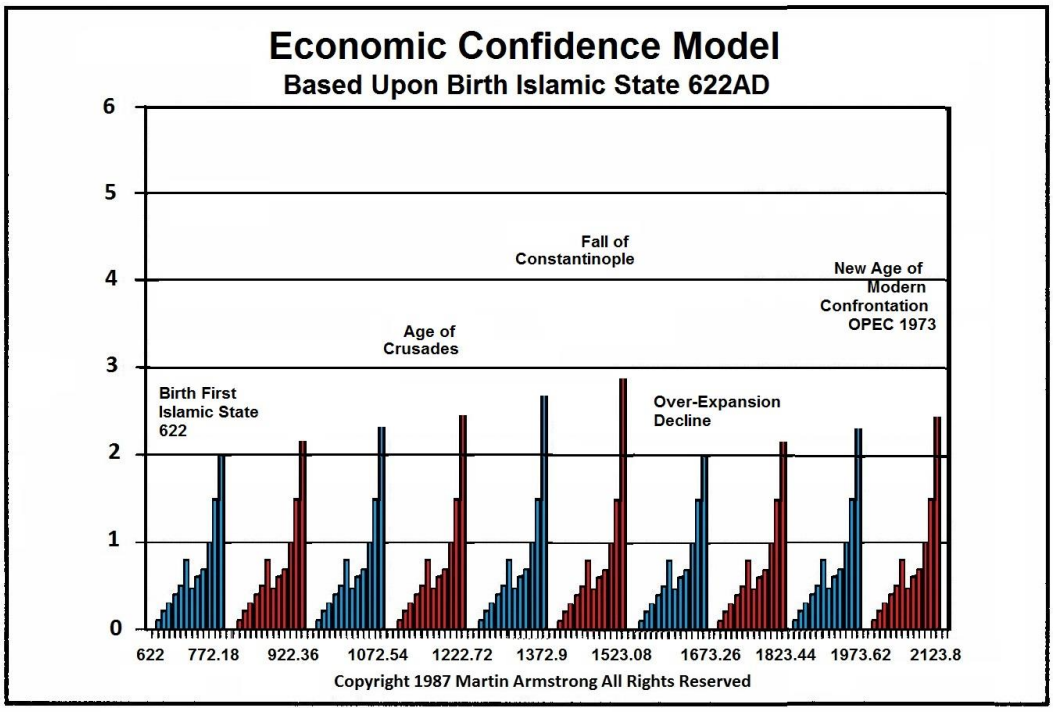
The black Stone of Mecca was clearly venerated at the Kaaba long before the rise of Islam during pagan times. According to Islamic tradition, the black Stone of Mecca was set into the Kaaba's wall by the Islamic prophet Muhammad personally during the year 605 AD, five years before his first revelation. The black Stone of Mecca is now cemented into a silver frame in the side of the Kaaba; its physical appearance is that of a fragmented dark rock which has been polished smooth by the hands of pilgrims touching the object.

According to Islamic tradition, the stone fell from heaven as a guide for Adam and Eve to build an altar. Muslim pilgrims circle the Kaaba as a part of the tawaf ritual during the hajj. Many try to stop and kiss the black Stone, emulating the kiss that Islamic tradition records it received from Muhammad himself.

Muhammad is the person credited with setting the stone in its current position in the wall of the Kaaba. As the story is told in Ibn Ishaq's Sirah Rasul Allah, the clans of Mecca renovated the Kaaba following a major fire. The black Stone of Mecca was temporarily removed to facilitate the rebuilding work. However, the clans could not agree on which one of them would have the honor of placing the object in its place. Consequently, they agreed to wait for the next man to come through the gate and ask him to make the decision impartially. That individual happened to be the 35–year–old Muhammad. He asked the elders of the clans to bring him a cloth to put the black Stone of Mecca in its center. The clan leaders held the four corners and carried the black Stone of Mecca to the right spot. Then, Muhammad himself set the stone in place, satisfying the honor belonging to all of the clans.

The practice of holding these black stones in the Middle East goes back a very long time. These stones were venerated **before** the founding of Islam and may even predate Christianity. The importance here is a tradition that extends back more than 2,000 years.

Chapter 3: The Rise of Islam



The Prophet Muhammad founded the Islamic religion in the 7th century. In 622 AD, he founded the first Islamic state, a theocracy in Medina, a city in western Saudi Arabia located north of Mecca. This is the date that we used for our models on the development of the Islamic state, irrespective of the various differences in beliefs. This is the equivalent of Constantine declaring Christianity as the new faith of the Roman Empire. Therefore, establishing an official religious state distinguished from the faith alone is quite critical from a modeling perspective given the economic implications. This is what we have focused on rather than endorsing any one particular belief over another.

The year 622 AD was rather significant for it was essentially a 309.6–year period in religious strife. The previous cycle saw the collapse of Paganism and the rise of Christianity as the state religion, and the previous wave marked the

birth of Christianity. This period is when the conflict between Nestorianism and Monothelitism emerges. The Nestorianists believed that Christ was two separate persons: one whom possessed a human nature and the other a divine nature. The Monothelites (also known as Monophysites) maintained that Christ was one individual with only one will or nature.

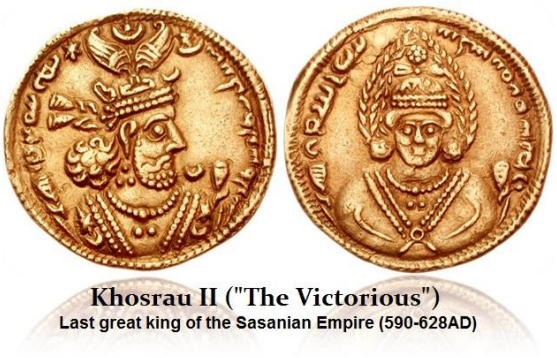
Heraclius & Heraclius Constantine
AU Solius (613 - 638AD)

The Byzantine Emperor Heraclius (b. 575–641 AD; r. 610–641 AD) tried to win back the excommunicated and persecuted Monophysites of Egypt and Syria who believed in only one nature of Christ. In 638 AD, Emperor Heraclius issued the *Ekthesis* (statement of faith) taking the position of the Monophysites. This led to widespread disunity and in 648 AD, Byzantine Emperor Constans II (b. 630–668; r. 641–668 AD) issued an edict forbidding the discussion.

Under Constantine IV (b. 650–685 AD; r. 668–685 AD) the controversy was still raging and he called a council where Monothelitism was condemned and Christ was declared to have two wills with the human subordinate to the divine will. So the year 622 AD appears to be an important point in time for religious and philosophical upheaval. The "Great Schism" that resulted in the split of Christianity between East and West finally took place in 1054 AD, while the Western Schism or Papal Schism was a split within the Catholic Church from 1378 AD to 1418 AD as a result of the French King Philip IV seizure of the papacy that

he moved to Avignon. From a religious perspective, there appears to be a fairly regular 300–year cycle in general.

The Sasanian Empire was the last Iranian/Persian Empire before the rise of Islam. It was ruled by the Sasanian dynasty from 224–651 AD. The Sassanid Empire, which succeeded the Parthian Empire, was recognized as one of the main powers in Western and Central Asia alongside the Roman–Byzantine Empire for a period of more than 400 years.



Khosrau II ("The Victorious")
Last great king of the Sasanian Empire (590-628AD)

The Byzantine–Sassanid War unfolded when Emperor Heraclius sailed from Constantinople with an expeditionary force of about 50,000 men to begin a counter–offensive against the Persian Empire. The Western Turks conquered the Oxus valley, cooperated with Heraclius against Persia, and took Khorasan (modern Afghanistan). The last great king of the Sasanian Empire, Khosrau II (often spelled "Khosrow") (r. 590–628 AD), was defeated and executed by Heraclius.

Digging deeper, we come to the realization that the Persians have always had distinct and separate beliefs from just about everyone else throughout history. They were the Zoroastrians who were the first to believe in one god. Additionally, this is where the idea of a confrontation between good and evil emerged.

Zoroastrianism first began to decline with the invasion of Alexander the Great and was eventually marginalized by Islam during the 7th century. Nevertheless, the Zoroastrians were in fact the wise men who followed the star in the biblical story of the birth of Jesus Christ. Zoroastrianism still exists today, although it is a very small religious belief. The Persians were always the archenemy of the Romans and were the first and only enemy to capture a Roman Emperor (Valerian I).

Against this backdrop, we find that Muhammad left Mecca on June 13, 622 AD, after he was warned of a plot to assassinate him. He then migrated to Medina along with his companion Abu Bakr. They took refuge in the Cave of Thawr, south of Mecca, for three days. On June 27, Muhammad did not enter Medina directly, but stopped at its outlying environs of Quba. There he established the Quba Mosque, the first mosque of Islam. After a fourteen–day stay in Quba, Muhammad moved from Quba to Medina on July 11, and was greeted cordially by its people. There he formally established the first Muslim *ummah,* which translates to "nation" or "community" in English. The year during which the emigration to Medina occurred is designated ″Year One″ of the Anno Hegirae (AH). Consequently, the changes in Christianity appear to rise from the same regions of Egypt and Syria.

The Byzantine Emperor Heraclius launched a major campaign in 622 AD during the Byzantine–Sassanid War of 602–628 AD. The Byzantine Empire was near collapse, but Heraclius managed to inspire the people and with heavy taxation to reverse the fortunes of war. Heraclius' war was very costly and he imposed heavy tax burdens upon both Jews and Christians on both sides. The war eventually culminated in a crushing Byzantine victory in Anatolia (Turkey). The Sassanid Persians had overrun most of the eastern provinces of the Byzantine Empire including Syria. Heraclius left Constantinople one day after celebrating

Easter on Sunday, April 4, 622 AD. The Persian forces in Anatolia under Shahrbaraz were forced to retreat. In 626 AD, the siege of Constantinople failed and the Byzantine Empire survived. This warfare imposed heavy taxes and the Persian Sassanid Empire began to decline, opening the door to the rise of a new religion and state.

The Islamic State expanded very quickly under Muhammad and the first three caliphs of the Byzantine–Sassanid War reduced the two major powers. Local populations of Jews and indigenous Christians marginalized as religious minorities and were taxed heavily to finance the Byzantine–Sassanid Wars. These groups aided Muslims to take the lands from the Byzantines and Persians, as they clearly had an economic incentive to aid the rise of the new Muslim state. The tax revolt by Christians and Jews in northern Africa resulted in the exceptionally speedy conquests of the Muslims. As new areas joined the Islamic State for economic reasons, they also benefited from free trade while trading with other areas in the Islamic State. This freedom from taxation greatly encouraged commerce, since within Islam there was not a tax on trade, there was only a tax on wealth. The Muslims paid Zakat on their wealth to the poor.

Since the Islamic prophet Muhammad drafted the Constitution of Medina, the Jews and the Christians continued to use their own laws within the Islamic

State and even maintained their own judges. Therefore, the Christians and Jews only paid for policing the protection of their property. This economic freedom was truly a tax rebellion against Byzantine.

To assist in the quick expansion of the Islamic State, Byzantine and Persian tax collection systems were maintained. The Christians and Jews still paid a poll tax, but it was much lower than the one imposed under the Byzantines and the Persians. Before Muhammad united the Arabs, the Arabs were divided, and the Byzantines and the Sassanid had their own client tribes whom they paid to fight on their behalf.

In 639 AD, Muawiyah I (b. 602–680 AD; r. 661–680 AD) was appointed Governor of Syria by Umar after his elder brother Yazid ibn Abi Sufyan (Governor of Syria) died in a plague, along with Abu Ubaidah ibn al-Jarrah (the Governor before him) and 25,000 other people. To stop the Byzantine harassment from the sea during the Arab–Byzantine Wars, in 649 AD Muawiyah set up a navy manned by Monophysitise Christians, Copts, Jacobite Syrian Christians sailors, and Muslim troops. This resulted in the defeat of the Byzantine navy where about 500 of their ships were destroyed at the Battle of the Masts in 655 AD that opened up the

Mediterranean. Byzantine Emperor Constans II was almost killed in the battle. Under the instructions of the Caliph Usman ibn al–Affan, Muawiyah, the Arabs prepared for the siege of Constantinople itself.

After the rapid Muslim conquest of Syria and Egypt and the Byzantine losses in manpower and territory, the Eastern Roman Empire found itself struggling for survival. The Sassanid Dynasty in Persia had already collapsed. It was then under Constantine IV that the invention of Greek Fire, an unknown mixture of flammable chemicals capable of burning on the sea water's surface, forced the retreat of the Arabs. The Arabs had waged a siege of Constantinople under the Caliph Muawiyah I, which began in 674 AD when the Arab fleet appeared at the city walls. The siege lasted for four years, yet the city was impregnable. The Arab fleet was repelled with Greek Fire and this confrontation stopped the Arabs from sweeping into Europe. Only Charles Martel (688–741 AD), who prevented the Arabs from invading France during the Battle of Poitiers (732 AD) and confined them to Spain, would match this event. These two events were instrumental in checking the Arab rise to power inspired by the goal to conquer Europe.

Nevertheless, Justinian II (b. 669–711 AD; r. 685–711 AD) entered a very favorable peace treaty with the Arabs that left Byzantium free to deal with the Balkans. Justinian II allowed Slavs to settle in Asia Minor and this group would

become a military asset. However, it was religion that caused his downfall for he was the first to put the image of Christ on the coinage. Leontius (r. 695–698 AD) rose up and overthrew Justinian II. However, Leontius was in turn overthrown and the throne passed to Apsimar who took the name Tiberius III (r. 698–705 AD). Because of this internal religious dispute over the icons, the Arabs took advantage and advanced again in North Africa.

Justinian II (Rhinotmetos)
(b 669; 705–711)
First to apply the Image of Jesus Christ to the coinage

After the Muslims defeated the armies of Byzantine and Sassanian empires, there came the need to administer the conquered territories. The early Muslims from Arabia did not have a sophisticated system like that of the two defeated empires. So the best recourse for them was to maintain the existing administrative system just like other conquerors before and after them. However, the early Muslims inherited two different administrative systems from the two conquered empires. Hence, they had to maintain two parallel administrative systems, one in the East and another in the West, which differed in languages, culture, monetary systems, and controls. The Muslims maintained these parallel systems for over 50

years until the reforms of the Umayyad Caliph Abd al–Malik ibn Marwan (b. 646–705 AD).

ISLAMIC, Umayyad Caliphate. temp. Yazid I ibn Mu'awiya
(AH 60-64 / AD 680-683) AR Drachm (32mm, 3.89 g, 3h)
Issue of Ubayd Allah ibn Ziyad, governor of Iraq

At first, the new Islamic State used the existing monetary systems of their Sassanian and Byzantine predecessors. They issue coinage imitating the issues of these empires. As they conquered the Sassanian Empire of Persia, the coinage reflected a hybrid with the former design with Islamic writing. Clearly, the new rising Islamic Empire began to make its presence known via the coins imitating the two great empires and adding very minor short phrases in Arabic and/or the addition of hijra dates. These lasted until a complete reform of the administrative system by Abd al–Malik ibn Marwan who united it in Arabic and changed the coinage drastically to what we essentially call Islamic coins.

The fifth Umayyad Caliph, Abd al–Malik ibn Marwan, was born in Medina, Hejaz, and was well educated. He believed in regulating state affairs. During his reign, all important records were translated into Arabic, and for the first time he issued Islamic currency for the Muslim world. This led to war with the Byzantine Empire under Justinian II since the Byzantines viewed their currency as the world

currency in the West. Leontios at the Battle of Sebastopolis led the Byzantines in 692 AD in Asia Minor, a battle that was really over the currency. The Byzantines were defeated after the defection of a large contingent of Slavic mercenary troops.

The Battle of Sebastopolis actually established the Islamic currency in trade. Abd al–Malik declared that the only currency of exchange in the Muslim world would be Islamic currency with the new coins asserting the oneness of Allah and Muhammad as the last messenger. In addition, many reforms happened in his time in relation to agriculture and commerce. Abd al–Malik consolidated Muslim rule and extended it, made Arabic the state language, and organized a regular postal service. By the 13th century, the Mongols were imitating the Islamic coinage to facilitate trade.

Umayyads, Islamic type 'Abd al-Malik, 65-86 H./685-705 AD
AU Dinar 79 H, no mint (Damascus) 4.26 grams

ISLAMIC, Mongols Great Khans Chingiz (Genghis) (AH 602-624 / AD 1206-1227)
AV Dinar (27mm, 5.62 g, 6h). Ghazna (Ghazni) mint. Dated AH 618 (AD 1221/2)
Kalima and name of Abbasid caliph in four lines, floral ornament above and to left;
Umayyad "Second Symbol" (al-Quran Sura 9:33) in outer margin
Name and titles of Chingiz Khan in four lines, floral ornament

Indeed, Islam rose as a political religious empire. The Arabic word *khalifa* means a representative or successor, and in the Quran it is linked to the idea of just government; Adam, David, and Solomon, are each said to be God's khalifas on Earth. When the Prophet Muhammad died in 632 AD, the title was bestowed upon his successor as the leader of the Muslim community. The first of the Rashidun, the four so–called "Rightly Guided Caliphs", ruled for the first

three decades of the new Islamic era. They were appointed with popular consent. The idea of a caliph was "the choice of the people… appointed in order to be responsible to them, apply Islamic law and ensure it's executed."

Shia Muslims challenge this version of history. The Shia Muslims believe that the first two caliphs effectively staged a coup to frustrate the leadership claims of the Prophet's cousin and son–in–law, Ali ibn Abi Talib (b. 600–661 AD). This dispute about the early caliphate is the source of Islam's most enduring schism. But to today's Sunni Muslims, many of them living under autocratic regimes, the idea of a caliphate built on the principle of government by consent is likely to have a powerful appeal.

Abd-ar-Rahman III (889- 961) - Emir and Caliph of Al-Andalus

Another significant source of the caliphate's appeal today is the memory it stirs of the Muslim Golden Age. The era of the Rightly Guided Caliphs was followed by the imperial caliphates of the Umayyads and Abbasids. This transformed the Muslim world from a religion to an empire all under the control of a single Muslim leader. This was seen as the Gold Age of Muslim unity and sovereignty.

This Islamic Golden Age was also marked by great intellectual and cultural creativity; the Abbasid court in Baghdad valued literature and music, and fostered world–changing advances in medicine, science, and mathematics.

These dynasties extended their rule so far and so fast that it became increasingly difficult for any one lineage to control all Muslim lands. As power fragmented, it was not just a political dilemma for any particular dynasty, but it was also a theological challenge to the very idea of the caliphate. The power of unity was closely linked to the idea of a caliph, yet it only took just over a century of the Muslim faith for the world to see parallel, and at times competing, caliphates emerge as we now have with the ISIS group. Yet some Muslim theologians have accepted the potential for two caliphates to exist.

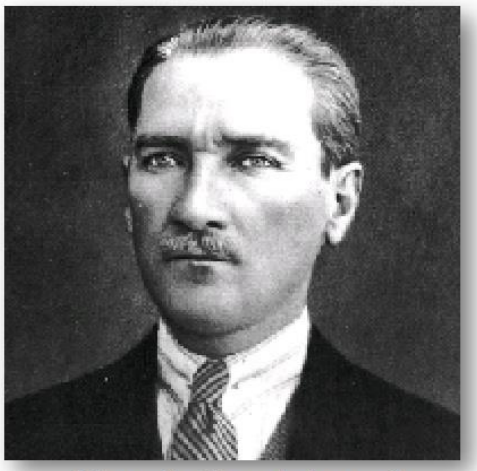
Abbasid caliphate fall to Mongols in Seige of Baghdad 1258AD

The Abbasid caliphate lasted for half a millennium before coming to a brutal end in 1258 AD. When Baghdad fell to the Mongols, they rolled the city's last caliph in a carpet and trampled him to death under the hooves of Mongol

horses. This may sound very brutal, but the Mongol belief was that people of a high rank should be killed without their blood being shed.

The institution of the caliphate, however, survived. The Mamluks, the main Sunni Islamic power at that point in time, installed members of the Abbasid family as titular caliphs in Cairo. They were more ornaments to the Mamluk court than anything, but merely by existing they preserved the dream of a single leader who could unite all Muslims. So the title was still there for the taking when a new Islamic empire arose. During the early 16th century, the caliphate passed under questionable circumstances to the Ottoman sultans, who ruled a new Islamic world power for the next 400 years.

Kemal Ataturk (b. 1881–1938 AD), who became the father of modern day Turkey, finally extinguished the caliphate in 1924. He believed the abolition of the institution was fundamental to his campaign to transform the remnant of the old Ottoman Empire into a 20th century secular nation state. Consequently, the last Ottoman caliph was expelled from Istanbul to live out a life of cultured exile in Paris. Nevertheless, the institution he had represented existed for almost 1,300 years. This fundamental change in abolishing the caliphate had a very profound impact upon the Muslim intellectual life; the Golden Age was over.



Mustafa Kemal Ataturk
(1881 - 1938)

This change was very drastic for it exposed a basic question: Do Muslims really need to live within an Islamic State? This was perhaps as profound as the reformation in Christianity where Christians retained their identity if they no longer followed the pope. By the mid–20th century, there was a movement supported by Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser that adopted the ideology known as Pan–Arabism, which was akin to a secular caliphate. They even established the United Arab Republic, which joined Egypt and Syria together.

However, everything began to change in the Middle East following World War II and the political crafting of the new State of Israel. This effectively undermined the idea of a Pan–Arabism state with a secular caliphate. Suddenly, this dream of a Pan–Arabian state took on the purpose of returning the Arabs to their position of glory and that included the liberation of Palestine. With the stunning defeat of the 1967 Six Day War, the Pan–Arabian dream collapsed.

In the early days of the Arab Spring, the revolutions in countries like Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya were interpreted in Western capitals as evidence that the

Muslim future lay with democracy. Then came ISIS. There are others arguing that a caliphate is spiritual in the Sunni thinking. Those on the Shia side hold to the idea that the state should be ruled by the religious leaders.

Indeed, ISIS has adopted black robes and flags that were used by the Abbasids as their court dress back in the 8th century. They may be attempting to inspire a look back in time to Islam's Golden Age. Their original title, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), refers back to the days when there was no national border between the two countries when the region was under one great Islamic caliphate. Consequently, ISIS is clearly looking to establish the idea of a caliphate that supersedes all other forms of government be it dictatorship or democratic.

Chapter 4: Schism in Islam

Battle of Karbala & Islamic Schism 680AD
(Year 61 AH of the Islamic calendar (October 10, 680 AD)
Located in present-day Iraq Where Ali was Killed

The schism in Islam that resulted in the divide between the Sunni and Shiite branches is ancient and extends back even before the Protestant Reformation or Christian Schism. It is still highly consequential today. The majority of Muhammad's followers thought his closest associate, Abu Bakr, should take over. They became the Sunnis. However, a minority thought the prophet's closest relative, Ali, should succeed. Consequently, Shia is an abbreviation of *Shiat Ali* or "the party of Ali". In 661 AD during the 19th day of Ramadan, an assassin struck Ali in the back of the head with a poisoned sword while praying at the mosque of Kufa. The aftermath produced intrigues and violence with Muhammad's widow Aisha (who was also the daughter of Abu Bakr) who led troops against Ali's son Hussein bin Ali (b. 626–680 AD). Eventually, Hussein was killed in the **Battle of Karbala** in 680 AD, and martyrdom became ingrained in the Shia psyche. As the years passed, this conflict became the bitter schism.

The Shia account states that 72 people were killed at the Battle of Karbala. Hussein and his small group of followers and family members fought against a large army under the command of Umar ibn Sa'ad son of Sa`d ibn Abi Waqqas. The Sunni account states that Hussein's followers were killed around him until he was left alone fighting in the center. Soldiers on the other side were hesitant to kill Hussein until Shamar bin Thi Al–Joshan threw his spear at him. Hussein and all of his men were beheaded, and it is said that their bodies were left for 40 days without burial. The survivors from Hussein's family were taken as prisoners to al–Sham (Syria and Lebanon today) to Yazid. It is said that Shamar bin Thi Al–Joshan was the one who beheaded Hussein.

Today, Shia Muslims commemorate the death of Hussein ibn Ali during every Muharram with the most important of these days being its tenth day, Ashura. However, Sunni Muslims commemorate Ashura for reasons of martyrdom

of Hussein ibn Ali and for involving Moses. Pictured above is the gold and silver casket surrounding the ground where Hussein was beheaded during the Battle of Karbala.

While the Shiite faction in Islam is the minority, accounting for 10–15% in total, more than 80% of the region where oil exists is occupied by the Shiite Muslims. This includes Iran, the oil region of Iraq, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, a small portion of Syria, UAE, and the eastern oil region of Saudi Arabia. In Syria, a Sunni majority country, we find fighting began when anti–government rebels dominated members of a Shiite sect. This gave the uprising a sectarian overtone. The uprising that is religiously driven between the forces of Shiite vs Sunni spilled over to Iraq, where the Shiites have control of the nation. Syria is opposite of Iraq where under Saddam it was Sunni ruling over a Shia majority.

The two opposing sects agreed on the Quran but they maintained completely different views with regard to traditions. These diverging traditions of ritual, law and practice soon emerged as the major dividing factors. A clerical

hierarchy, topped by imams and ayatollahs, became crucial in Shi'ism. This stood in contrast to the Sunni who believed that there was no need for intermediaries in their relationship with God. The Sunnis became satisfied to depend upon the state, which their adherents mostly controlled compared to the religious control under the Shia.

The Shia religious festival became the Ashura where people would beat themselves to commemorate the death of Hussein at the Battle of Karbala. Generally, Sunnis regard the Shia practice of venerating saints and visiting shrines as heretical. The culture of Persia and the Zoroaster belief seem blended in their view of religion. This is one of the primary reasons why Sunni extremists have bombed Shias pilgrimaging in places like Karbala, Iraq.

Nevertheless, sectarianism is only scratching the surface. It is a concept created by leaders to move the masses that often invokes historical conflicts to achieve economic and political power. The usage of such a sectarian discourse, especially in times of heightened violence and instability, helps embolden

sectarian identities and serves to recruit more individuals into those very political battles that are framed under religious terms with hidden economic goals.

Historically, this division in Islam between Sunni and Shiite has been driven in the same manner as the English Revolution between the Papists and the Protestants, yielding the same type of pattern in human behavior. The English triumph over the Catholics was very bloody; they beheaded King Charles I in 1649 in a similar fashion to the beheading of Louis XVI during the French Revolution. In Iraq, the U.S. completely destabilized the nation by removing Saddam Hussein (b. 1937–2006 AD). Anyone with a tiny fraction of a brain would have easily bet on the rise of the new Islamic Civil War.

Indeed, our models warned of the rise of this conflict between the Shiites and Sunnis that we provided in a forecast back in 1987 with our long–term look into oil. Now, Sunni rebels are increasingly confronting the predominantly Shiite government in Iraq. This Islamic Civil War in the Middle East could spill over into

a broader confrontation, especially since the region's major powers have long pushed sectarian interests, with Shiite majority Iran on one side, and Sunni majority Saudi Arabia on the other.

Here, we can see the illustrated Sunni Shiite divide plotted on a map of the region. Ironically, the Shiite minority occupies the region where oil exists. This conflict between the Shiite and Sunni divisions runs so deep that extremists on each side do not even consider the other to be followers of the faith. This deep feeling drawn upon this division in Islam is indeed quite similar to the stark contrast in Christianity between the Catholics and the Protestants in England.

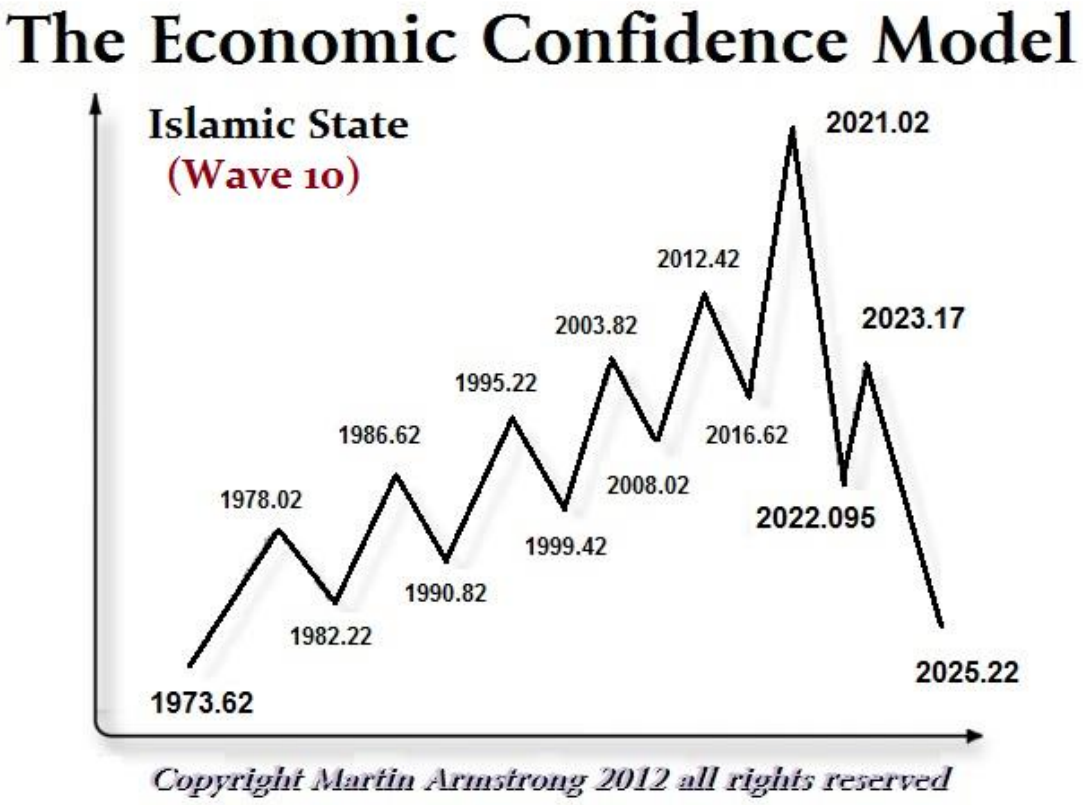
The escalating violence today in Iraq is right on target with our original forecasts delivered back in 1987. Yes, it's important to note that this religious division is one of many factors driving the conflicts in the Middle East. Theological differences are not in themselves enough to explain the fighting. At its core, this type of flare-up is driven by economics, and while the Shiites are the minority, they hold the majority of the oil rich land that is crucial to the flow of money. This

is one of the critical basics that is very important to understand to grasp what is happening in the region and to understand the future risks.

The Sunni and Shiite have, by and large, coexisted within their respective countries with one group typically in a majority and the other a minority. Nevertheless, this divide relieved the social pressure to share any wealth as one side does not consider the other to even be a follower of the faith. This would be like the Protestants in Ireland extending charity to the Catholics merely because they are Irish. The division between Catholics and Protestants goes back to Henry VIII. Consequently, there is enough religious division to enable these two main groups of Sunni and Shiite to develop local powerbases that can compete with formal government authority. This local powerbase continually provides resistance under the surface that flares up in sync with the economy. This fracture in Islam has ebbed and flowed in a cyclical manner between periods of peace and turmoil.

Henry VIII
(b: 1491; King 1509–1547)

We have to look at the rise of Islam also from an economic perspective for it is what set in motion the fall of the East and the rise of Western Europe. The Byzantine Empire was the reservoir of ancient knowledge and customs, but it began to lose territory within 10 years of the death of Muhammad in 632 AD because of its excessive taxation and legendary bureaucracy. The rising Arab



state won over the Christians and Jews by offering economic freedom. The Arab hordes had taken Syria, Egypt, Palestine, and North Africa. Economically, this had a profound impact upon Byzantium because it cut off supplies of precious metals from the mines of North Africa, thereby shrinking trade and giving greater freedom to merchants. This also sharply reduced their taxation revenue that resulted in an economic downturn in Byzantium. Egypt had been the richest province within the Roman and Byzantine Empires. The loss of Egypt to the Arabs was an economic blow with devastating long–range implications.

The current cyclical phase that began in 1973 AD marked the first oil price shock and OPEC, which was precisely the start of the tenth wave of 51.6 years from the birth of the first Islamic State in 622 AD. The tenth wave is definitely an emerging struggle between Sunni and Shia, once again, who are in

confrontation with the West largely because of the lack of understanding of the core beliefs of the Shiites. This defines not only the pattern of local politics, but also the relationship between the Islamic world and the West. The uprising of the youth that began in Iran desired to be more modern. This has been called the Arab Spring, yet how this is truly unfolding is in itself a struggle between peace and conflict.

This struggle between Sunni and Shia is playing out now in Iraq. However, because we are in a wave of conflict both internally and externally, this struggle could spread throughout many Arab nations in the Middle East and to Iran. There is little doubt that there is also the interesting economic aspect where the Shiites constitute 80% of the native population of the oil rich Persian Gulf region.

Consequently for the Shiites, Hussein bin Ali was the innocent spiritual figure who in many ways was martyred by a far more powerful unjust force of Sunnis who were not the family of Muhammad. Hussein then became the crystallizing force around which a faith forms and takes inspiration from the Shiite perspective. Shiite Muslims have often held images of the historic Shiite leader

imam Hussein during anti–American demonstrations. This is the origin of calling the United States the great satin by equating it with the forces that killed Hussein by cutting off his head and parading it around on a spike.

The Shiites called their leaders imam, Ali being the first, and Hussein the third. They commemorate Hussein's death every year in a public ritual of self–flagellation and mourning known as Ashoura. We often see these pictures on TV of people beating themselves with chains to draw blood.

The significance of the imams is one of the fundamental differences that separate the two branches of Islam. The imams have taken on a spiritual significance that no clerics in Sunni Islam enjoy. This presents a political difference in that the Sunni and the West have a separation of church and state, whereas the Shiite believe that the imam rules both.

Many Sunnis believe that some of the Shia had actually attributed almost divine qualities to the imams. To the Sunni, this is a very great sin for it is associating human beings with the divinity itself. Hence, the division begins to run very deep, for many of the devout Sunni see this as an affront to the central Islamic teaching that there is only one God.

Curiously enough, we find the same ideas surfacing within Christianity that appear to be part of this cycle of religious change within society. There was the widespread use of Christian iconography that began as Christianity increasingly spread among gentiles after the legalization of Christianity by Roman Emperor Constantine. The gentiles were accustomed to praying before images, yet there were scattered expressions of opposition to the use of images emerging in Spain. The period after the reign of Roman Emperor Justinian saw a profound increase in the use of images in both volume and quality.

Leo III the Isaurian (the Syrian)
(b. 685; 717–741)

In the Eastern Byzantine Empire, government–led iconoclasm began with Byzantine Emperor Leo III (b. 675/680–741 AD; r. 716–741 AD) following what seems to have been a long period of rising opposition to the use or misuse of images. Leo's most striking legislative reforms dealt with religious matters, especially iconoclasm (meaning icon–breaking, therefore an iconoclast is an icon–breaker). After an apparently successful attempt to enforce the baptism of all Jews and Montanists in the empire in 722 AD, he issued a series of edicts

against the worship of images in 726–729 AD. This prohibition of a custom that had been in use for centuries received the support of the official aristocracy and a section of the clergy. However, the vast majority of the theologians and all the monks opposed these measures with uncompromising hostility. In the western parts of the empire, the people simply refused to obey the edict.

Leo III created a tremendous religious conflict that inspired political and economic divisions in Byzantine society. This division contributed greatly to the economic decline of the Byzantine Empire by involving itself in religious affairs. A revolt broke out in Greece, primarily on religious grounds, and was crushed by the imperial fleet in 727 AD. However, in 730 AD, Patriarch Germanos I of Constantinople resigned rather than subscribe to an iconoclastic decree. Leo III had him replaced by Anastasios who willingly sided with the emperor on the question of icons. Thus, Leo III suppressed the overt opposition of the capital.

In the Italian Peninsula, the defiant attitude of Popes Gregory II (b. 669–731 AD; r. 715–731 AD) and Gregory III (b. 690–741 AD; r. 731–741 AD) on behalf of image veneration led to a fierce quarrel with Leo III. The pope summoned councils in Rome to anathematize and excommunicate the iconoclasts (730 and 732 AD). Then in 740 AD, Leo III retaliated by transferring Southern Italy and Illyricum from the papal diocese to that of the Patriarch of Constantinople. This was the beginning of the separation between the East and West within Christianity. This conflict over icons was accompanied by an armed outbreak in the exarchate of Ravenna in 727 AD, which forced Leo III to finally confront this upheaval and subdue it by sending a large fleet. However, the destruction of the armament by a storm decided the issue against Leo III and his southern

Italian subjects were able to successfully defy his religious edicts. This resulted in Ravenna effectively detaching from the Byzantine Empire laying the seeds for the rise of the Venetian Empire.

Justinian II (Rhinotmetos)
(b 669; 705–711)
First to apply the Image of Jesus Christ to the coinage

Within the Byzantine Empire, the government had probably been adopting Christian images more frequently. One notable change came in 695 AD when Justinian II added a full–face image of Christ on the obverse of imperial gold coins for the first time. This certainly lighted the fire against the use of icons among some sects within Christianity, but it had a profound impact in the Islamic world as well.

Caliph Abd al-Malik (685-705 AD)
AV dinar (4.23g) AR dirham (2.61g)
First Islamic coin to remove the Zoroastrian Fire Temple & human imagery

The adoption of the image of Christ on the gold coins of the Byzantine Empire caused the Caliph Abd al–Malik to stop his earlier adoption of Byzantine coin types. He began to issue a purely Islamic coinage with lettering and no images whatsoever. The first Islamic coins marked the rise of the Islamic economy because of this rising dispute of the use of images. Even the Persian coinage bore the image of the king.

A letter by the patriarch Germanus written before 726 AD to two iconoclast bishops says that "now whole towns and multitudes of people are in considerable agitation over this matter" but there is little written evidence of the debate. Therefore, the first iconoclastic period was between 730 and 787. Sometime between 726 and 730, the Byzantine Emperor Leo III began the iconoclast campaign ordering the removal of an image of Jesus prominently placed over the Chalke gate, the ceremonial entrance to the Great Palace of Constantinople, and its replacement with a cross. A band of iconodules (those who support the veneration of images) murdered some of those assigned to the task.

Pope Gregory III (731-741) & Leo III
1/8 Siliqua 0.39 grams

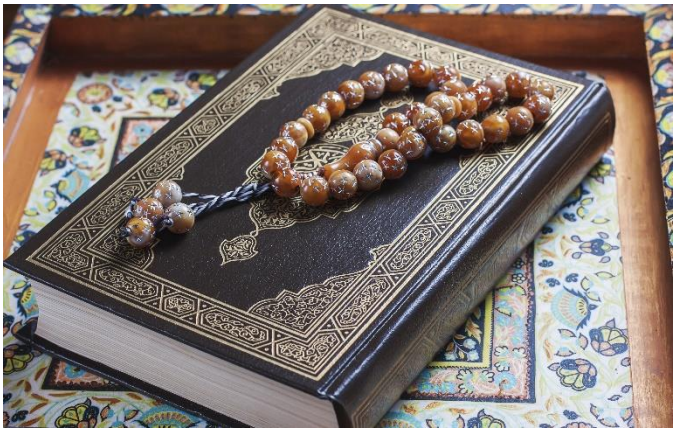
Over the subsequent years, this conflict developed between those who wanted to use the images, claiming that they were icons to be venerated, and the purists who claimed they were simply idols. Pope Gregory III was the son of a Syrian named John. Upon his accession as pope, Gregory immediately appealed to the Byzantine Emperor Leo III to moderate his position on the iconoclastic controversy. The papal letter never reached Constantinople as the Byzantines intercepted the messengers in Sicily.

Nonetheless, Leo responded by trying to bring the pope under control. He dispatched his fleet to enforce the imperial will upon the pope, but it was shipwrecked in the Adriatic Sea. Leo then proceeded to appropriate papal territories in Sicily and Calabria and transferred ecclesiastical jurisdictions in the former prefecture of Illyricum to the Patriarch of Constantinople. However, his attempt to force the Duke of Naples to enforce an imperial decree to confiscate papal territory in the duchy failed, as the duke was supportive of the pope's stand.

Gregory adopted his opposition to iconoclasm by beginning to issue papal coinage for the first time. He repaired numerous churches, decorating them with icons and images of Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary, and the saints in direct defiance of the emperor. Pope Gregory ordered an iconostasis to be erected in the heart of St. Peter's Basilica, situated between six onyx and marble columns that had been sent to Gregory as a gift from the exarch Eutychius. Gregory also built a new oratory in St. Peter's Basilica to house the relics of a number of saints. Gregory was an enthusiastic supporter of monasticism that also began in Northern Africa and he established the monastery of St. Chrysogonus.

Therefore, this iconoclastic controversy, on the one hand, inspired the first Islamic coinage, and on the other hand, inspired the beginning of papal coinage. The subsequent Byzantine Emperor Constantine V convened the Council of Hieria in 754 AD by assembling some 338 bishops who claimed to have been the legitimate Seventh Ecumenical Council. The counsel concluded that "the unlawful art of painting living creatures blasphemed the fundamental doctrine of our salvation—namely, the Incarnation of Christ, and contradicted the six holy synods. . . If anyone shall endeavour to represent the forms of the Saints in lifeless pictures with material colours which are of no value for this notion is vain and introduced by the devil, and does not rather represent their virtues as living images in himself . . . let him be anathema."

The Second Council of Nicaea took place in 787 AD. In 780 AD, Constantine VI (b. 770–797 AD; r. 780–797 AD) ascended the throne in Constantinople, but being a minor, he was managed by his mother, Empress Irene (b. 752–803 AD). She decided that an ecumenical council needed to be held to address the issue of iconoclasm and directed this request to Pope Adrian I (r. 772–795 AD) in Rome. He announced his agreement and called the convention on August 1, 786 AD, in the presence of the emperor and empress. The initial proceedings were interrupted by the violent entry of iconoclast soldiers faithful to the memory of the prior Emperor Constantine V. This caused the council to adjourn until a reliable army could be assembled to protect further proceedings. The council reassembled at Nicaea on September 24, 787 AD. During those proceedings, it was held that icons were only representative art and not idols for worship.



We find the same conflict was raging between the two main branches in Islam. This difference in worship became a very powerful conflict when it came to the story of the 12th Imam, known as the Hidden Imam. During the 10th century, the 12th Shiite Imam went into occultation. Shiites believe God took him into hiding and he will come back at the end of time. He is known as the Mahdi or the Messiah. So in many ways the Shiites, much like Jews or Christians, are looking for the coming of the Messiah. This seems to align with the original core belief of Zoroastrianism that also began in Persia.

Those who believe in the Hidden Imam are known as "Twelver Shiites". They are the majority of the Shiites in the world today. Twelver Shiism is itself a kind of messianic faith based on a creed that the full word and meaning of the Quran and the prophet Muhammad's message will only manifest upon the return of the 12th Imam. Therefore, these Shiites are waiting and looking for signs, as are the Jews and Christians, all whom seek this messianic figure at the end of times.

The fourth wave of our model began in 1072 AD and brought the clash between Islam with Christianity to a height. Islam's lower taxation inspired the economic decline of the Byzantine Empire as they lost territory, tax bases, and sources of precious metals. Constantinople was also seeing the rise of Western Europe thanks to the original iconoclastic controversy. The Byzantine Empire was failing economically on every front. The rise of European power under the leadership of the Venetian Empire would be profound and the final straw that really broke the back of Constantinople.

As the year 1,000 AD approached, many believed the end of the world would unfold. This was such a profound belief that that King Aethelred II of England (b. 968–1016 AD; r. 978–1016AD) removed his own image from the coins and replaced it with the Lamb of God, reflecting the conviction of the times. This inspired a renewal of religion and began the quest for pilgrimages to the Holy Land. Consequently, people traveling were robbed giving rise to the phase "highway robbery" and this inspired the rise of the Knights Templar to protect pilgrims.

The Great Monetary Crisis of 1092

Alexius I (1081-1118)

gold Histamenon Nomisma

debased gold Histamenon Nomisma using silver (electrum)

The First Crusade (1096–1099 AD) started as a widespread pilgrimage (France and Germany) and ended as a military expedition by Roman Catholics to Europe to regain the Holy Lands taken in the Muslim conquests of the Levant (632–661 AD), ultimately resulting in the recapture of Jerusalem in 1099 AD. Pope Urban II (b. 1035–1099 AD; r. 1088–1099 AD) launched the quest on November 27, 1095 AD, with the primary goal of responding to an appeal from Byzantine Emperor Alexios I Komnenos (b. 1057–1118 AD; r. 1018–1118 AD) who requested that western volunteers come to his aid to help to repel the invading Seljuq Turks from Anatolia. An additional goal soon became the principal objective: the

Christian conquest of the sacred city of Jerusalem, the Holy Land, and the freeing of the Eastern Christians from Muslim rule. We can see the economic decline reflected in the coinage of Byzantium as the gold was debased to the point that it was nearly just silver.

Frederick I Barbarossa
(German Holy Roman Emperor: b 1122; 1155–1190)

Byzantine Emperor Isaac II Angelos (or Angelus) (b. 1156–1204 AD; r. 1185–1195 AD and again from 1203–1204 AD), had continued to raise taxes to support a government that was in a severe decline. The oppressiveness of his taxes, which he increased to pay his armies and finance his marriage, resulted in a Bulgarian uprising late in 1185 AD. This rebellion led to the establishment of the Second Bulgarian Empire under the Asen dynasty. In 1187 AD, the Byzantine General Alexios Branas, who had previously defeated the Normans, was sent against the Bulgarians. However, Branas turned his arms against Isaac II and attempted to seize Constantinople, but was slain in battle.

Isaac II also struck an agreement in 1187 AD with Venice in which the Venetian Republic would provide 40–100 galleys at six months' notice in exchange for favorable trading concessions. Each Venetian galley was manned by 140 oarsmen, which meant that there were about 18,000 Venetians still in the empire.

Isaac II's attention was demanded in 1189 AD when the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa (b. 1123–1190 AD; r. 1155–1190 AD) sought and obtained permission to lead his troops on the Third Crusade (1189–1192 AD) through the Byzantine Empire. Barbarossa had no sooner crossed the border than Isaac, who had sought to protect Constantinople from the Europeans by entering a treaty with Saladin, the Sultan of Egypt. Isaac II threw every impediment in his way. In retaliation, Barbarossa's army occupied the city of Philippopolis and defeated a Byzantine army of 3,000 men that attempted to recapture the city. Thus compelled by force of arms, Isaac II had little choice. On April 8, 1195, Isaac II was suddenly overthrown by his own brother, Alexius III Angelus–Comnenus (b. 1153–1211 AD; r. 1195–1203 AD), who had Isaac imprisoned and blinded. By 1196 AD, the finances of Byzantium had collapsed and the once powerful Byzantine navy fell to a token force of only 30 galleys.

The capture of Constantinople by the armies of the Fourth Crusade (1202–1204 AD) was one of the most remarkable episodes in medieval history. On April 12, 1204, an army of perhaps 20,000 men and a fleet of about 200 ships crewed by Venetian sailors and warriors broke in and began to loot the greatest metropolis in the Christian world. Constantinople's mighty walls had resisted

numerous onslaughts: the Avars, Persians, and Arabs had tried to assail its defenses over the centuries, yet "the queen of cities", as the Byzantines described their capital, had survived. The crusaders justified attacking their fellow Christians to be God's will. According to their logic, if God did not want them to sack the city, he would have protected Constantinople. The Latins then ruled Byzantium from 1204 AD until 1261 AD when the Greeks recaptured it.

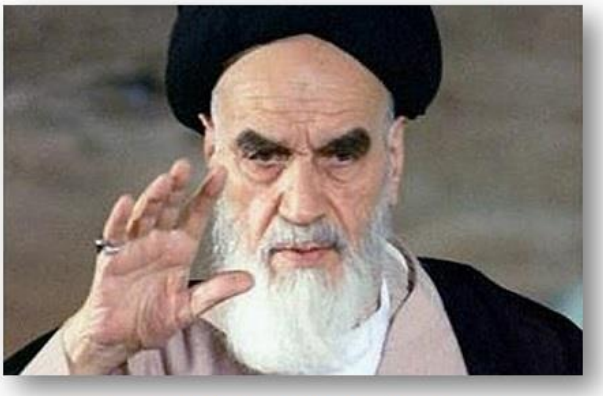
By the year 1,500 AD, Persia was the seat of Sunni Islamic learning. They fell to the arrival of Azeri conquerors who established the Safavid dynasty in Persia (modern–day Iran) and made it Shiite.

The Safavid dynasty actually came out of what's now eastern Turkey and were a Turkish dynasty that was one of the remnants of the Mongol invasions that had devastated the Middle East for a couple of centuries. The Safavid dynasty made its political project to convert Iran into a Shia country. Therefore, the Shiites gradually became the force that held Persia together and distinguished it from the Ottoman Empire to its west, which was Sunni. Mughal Muslims to the east in India were also Sunni. This establishment of the geography of Shiite Islam would prevail into the 20th century. There were of course periods of conflict and periods of peace. Nonetheless, the protracted disagreement and tension between these two sects has maintained for entwined for political power.

The Sunni branch believes that the first four caliphs—Muhammad's successors—rightfully took his place as the leaders of Muslims. They recognize the

heirs of the four caliphs as legitimate religious leaders. These heirs ruled continuously in the Arab world until the break–up of the Ottoman Empire following the end of the First World War.

Shiites, in contrast, believe that only the heirs of the fourth caliph, Ali, are the legitimate successors of Muhammad. In 931 AD, the Twelfth Imam disappeared. This was a seminal event in the history of Shiite Muslims. The Shiite Muslims, who are concentrated in Iran, Iraq, and Lebanon, believe they had suffered the loss of divinely guided political leadership at the time of the imam's disappearance. Not until the ascendancy of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (b. 1902–1989 AD) in 1978 and the great confrontation with the United States did the devout Shiites believe that they had once again begun to live under the authority of a legitimate religious figure.



Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini
(1902 - 1989)

Another difference between Sunnis and Shiites has to do with the Mahdi, "the rightly–guided one", whose role is to bring a just global caliphate into being. The major difference is that for Shiites, he has already been here, and will return from hiding. With respect to the Sunnis, he has yet to emerge into history. Consequently for Sunni Muslims, the loss of the caliphate after World War I was devastating in light of the hitherto continuous historic presence of the caliph, the guardian of Islamic law and the Islamic State. Sunni fundamentalist leaders

thereafter emerged in nations such as Egypt and India, where contact with Western political structures provided them with a model to imitate as they struggled after 1924 AD to provide a viable alternative to the caliphate.

In 1928 AD, four years after the abolishment of the caliphate, the Egyptian schoolteacher Hasan al–Banna (b. 1906–1949 AD) founded the first Islamic fundamentalist movement in the Sunni world, the Muslim Brotherhood (al–Ikhwan al–Muslimun). Al–Banna was appalled by the wave of atheism and lewdness that engulfed Egypt following World War I. The victorious Europeans had imported their half–naked women into these regions, together with their liquors, their theatres, their dance halls, their amusements, their stories, their newspapers, their novels, their whims, their silly games, and their vices.

Suddenly, the very heart of the Islamic world was penetrated by European schools, scientific and cultural institutes. This trend produced doubts and heresy into the souls of its sons and taught them how to demean themselves, disparage their religion and their fatherland, divest themselves of their traditions and beliefs, and to regard as sacred anything Western.

It was the rapid moral decline of the religious establishment, including the leading sheikhs, or religious scholars, at Al–Azhar, the grand mosque and center of Islamic learning in Cairo, that inspired the shift. The clerical leaders had become compromised and corrupted by their alliance with the indigenous ruling elites who had succeeded the European colonial masters.

Osama bin Laden (b. 1957–2011 AD) was a Sunni Muslim. To him, the end of the reign of the caliphs in the 1920s was catastrophic, as he made clear in a videotape made after 9/11. On the tape, broadcasted by Al–Jazeera on October 7, 2001, he proclaimed:

"What America is tasting now is only a copy of what we have tasted. ... Our Islamic nation has been tasting the same for more [than] eighty years, of humiliation and disgrace, its sons killed and their blood spilled, its sanctities desecrated."

Osama bin Mohammed bin Awad bin Laden
(1957 - 2011)

There have been periods of war and peace between Sunnis and Shiites. Shiites are more like traditional Catholics in venerating members of the holy family and their shrines. Contemporary Salafi Sunni Islam is more like the militant brand of Protestantism of the late 1500s that denounced intermediaries between God and the individual, and actually attacked and destroyed shrines to saints and other holy figures where pleas for intercession were made.

Self-Proclaimed Caliphate Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi

We are simply in an uptrend for confrontation on many levels and this includes the old tensions between the Sunni and Shiites. When ISIS declared itself a caliphate in June of 2014, and its leader Abu Bakr al–Baghdadi (b. 1971–present) claimed the title of caliph, it seemed confirmation of the group's reputation for megalomania. Al–Baghdadi insisted that pledging allegiance to this caliphate was a religious obligation on all Muslims — an appeal that was immediately greeted by a chorus of condemnation across the Middle East.

Nevertheless, it is dangerous to underestimate the appeal of ISIS. Al–Baghdadi's brutal regime does not, of course, remotely conform to the classical Muslim understanding of what a caliphate should be, but it does evoke an aspiration with a powerful and increasingly urgent resonance in the wider Muslim world. Many consider him a fraud while others will die for him.

The last caliphate of the Ottomans was officially abolished more than 90 years ago. Yet, in a 2006 Gallup survey of Muslims living in Egypt, Morocco, Indonesia, and Pakistan, two–thirds of respondents said they supported the goal of "unifying all Islamic countries" into a new caliphate. So why do so many

Muslims subscribe to this apparently unrealistic dream that is akin to a one world government? The answer lies in the caliphate's history.

Chapter 5: Islamic Civil Wars & the Fitna

The first Islamic Civil War is known as the **First Fitna** or **Great Fitna** (Arabic: فتنة مقتل عثمان Fitnat Maqtal Uthmān, The Fitna of the Killing of Uthman) (656–661 AD). This was a civil war within the early Islamic State that resulted in overthrowing the Rashidun caliphs, which thereby establishing the Umayyad dynasty. The First Fitna began when Egyptian rebels assassinated the caliph Uthman ibn Affan in 656 AD and continued through the four-year reign of Uthman's successor, Ali ibn Abi Talib. It ended in 661 AD when Ali's heir Hasan ibn Ali (b. 625–670 AD) concluded a treaty acknowledging the rule of Muawiyah, who was then the first Umayyad caliph.

The Second Islamic Civil War, known as the **Second Fitna** (680–692 AD), was a period of general political discontent and conflict that began in 680 AD with the Battle of Karbala. The death of the first Umayyad caliph Muawiyah I (b.

602–680 AD; r. 661–680 AD) appears to have set this one in motion over a dispute as to his successor. This conflict began in 680 AD and ended between 685 and 692 AD. The war involved the suppression of two challenges to the Umayyad dynasty, the first by Hussein ibn Ali who, as mentioned, was beheaded at the Battle of Karbala in 680 AD and the second challenge of Abd Allah ibn al–Zubayr, who was then killed in 692 AD. This Second Fitna established the long running schism in Islam between the Sunni and the Shia.

The **Third Fitna** (744–750/752 AD), includes the Umayyad civil wars and the Abbasid Revolution. During this Fitna, the caliph Hisham was succeeded by Al–Walid II (b. 707–744; r. 743–744 AD), the son of Yazid II (b. 687–724 AD; r. 720–724 AD) who reportedly was more interested in earthly pleasures than religion. Al–Walid II quickly attracted the disgust of many due to his reputation. He also executed a number of those who had opposed his accession. Then in 744 AD, Yazid III (b. 701–744 AD; r. 744 AD), a son of Al–Walid I, was proclaimed caliph in Damascus. His army marched against Al–Walid II and killed him. Yazid III became the caliph and he enjoyed a reputation as being a pious man. However, he died just six months into his reign.

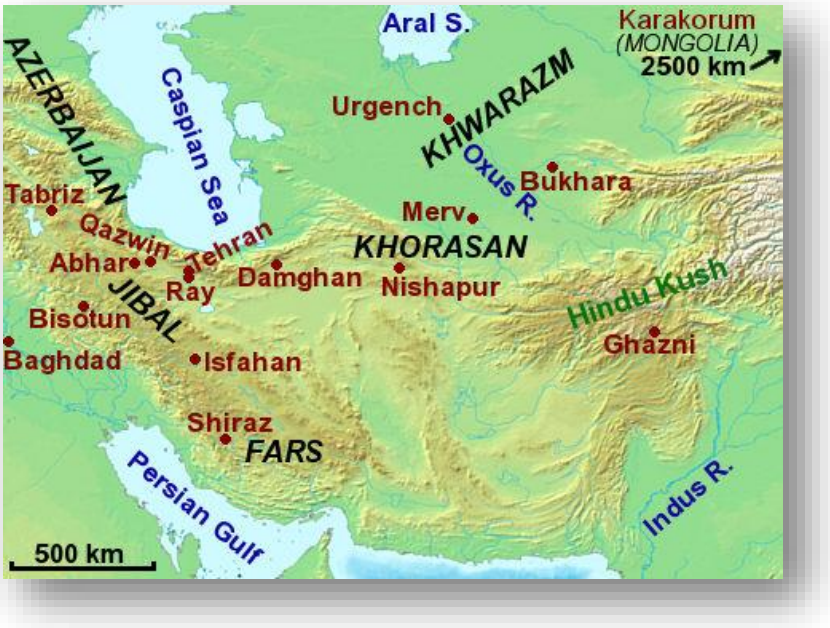
Yazid III had appointed his brother, Ibrahim, as his successor. However, Marwan II (b. 688–750 AD; r. 744–750 AD), who was the grandson of Marwan I, led an army from the northern frontier and marched on Damascus in December 744. Marwan II was proclaimed caliph and he instantly moved the capital north to Harran, located today in Turkey. A rebellion soon broke out in Syria over the relocation of the capital, which would have reduced the importance and

commerce in Damascus. In response, Marwan II in 746 AD razed the walls of Homs and Damascus in retaliation.

Marwan II also faced significant opposition from Kharijites located in Iraq and Iran who hailed two rival caliphs. The following year in 747 AD, Marwan II regained control of Iraq, but by this time a more serious threat had arisen in Khorasan which became the Abbasid Revolution. This was a Shia revolution, led by the Abbasid family, who overthrew the Umayyad caliphate. The Abbasids were members of the Hashim clan who were descendants of a grandson of Ali. They were rivals of the Umayyads, and according to tradition, Abu Hashim died in 717 AD. This tradition allowed the Abbasids to rally the supporters of the failed revolt of Mukhtar.

In 747 AD, an open revolt against Umayyad rule broke out, which was carried out under the sign of the black flag. In January 750 AD, the two forces met in the **Battle of the Zab** (750 AD) and the Umayyads were defeated.

Damascus fell to the Abbasids in April, and in August, Marwan II was killed in Egypt. The Abbasids desecrated the tombs of the Umayyads in Syria, sparing only that of Umar II. Most of the remaining members of the Umayyad family were tracked down and killed. When Abbasids used a ploy and declared amnesty for members of the Umayyad family, eighty members of the Umayyad family gathered to receive their pardons, but instead, they were massacred. One grandson of Hisham, Abd al-Rahman I (b. 731–788 AD; r. 750–788 AD) survived and established a kingdom in Al-Andalus (Moorish Iberia), proclaiming his family to be the Umayyad caliphate revived.



The **Fourth Fitna** or **Great Abbasid Civil War** (809–813 AD) was a conflict between the brothers Al-Amin (b. 787–813 AD; r. 809–813 AD) and Al-Ma'mun (786–833 AD; r. 813–833 AD) over the succession to the Abbasid caliphate's throne. Their father, Harun Al-Rashid, had named Al-Amin as the first successor, but had also named a second and third successor. Al-Ma'mun was to be the

second, with Al–Qasim being the third. Following Harun's death in 809 AD, Al–Amin succeeded in Baghdad. Al–Amin then began trying to subvert the autonomous status of Khurasan based upon requests of the Baghdad court. In response, Al–Ma'mun's sought the support of the provincial elites of Khurasan, and made moves to assert his own autonomy which set in motion another clash between the two brothers.

Al–Amin declared his own son Musa to be his heir, bypassing Al–Ma'mun. Al–Amin then assembled a vast army and marched upon Khurasan. Al–Ma'mun's general defeated the army of Al–Amin in the **Battle of Rayy** (811 AD), and then proceeded to invade Iraq, laying siege to Baghdad itself. The city fell after a year and Al–Amin was executed. Al–Ma'mun then became caliph, but he remained in Khurasan and did not move his throne to Baghdad.

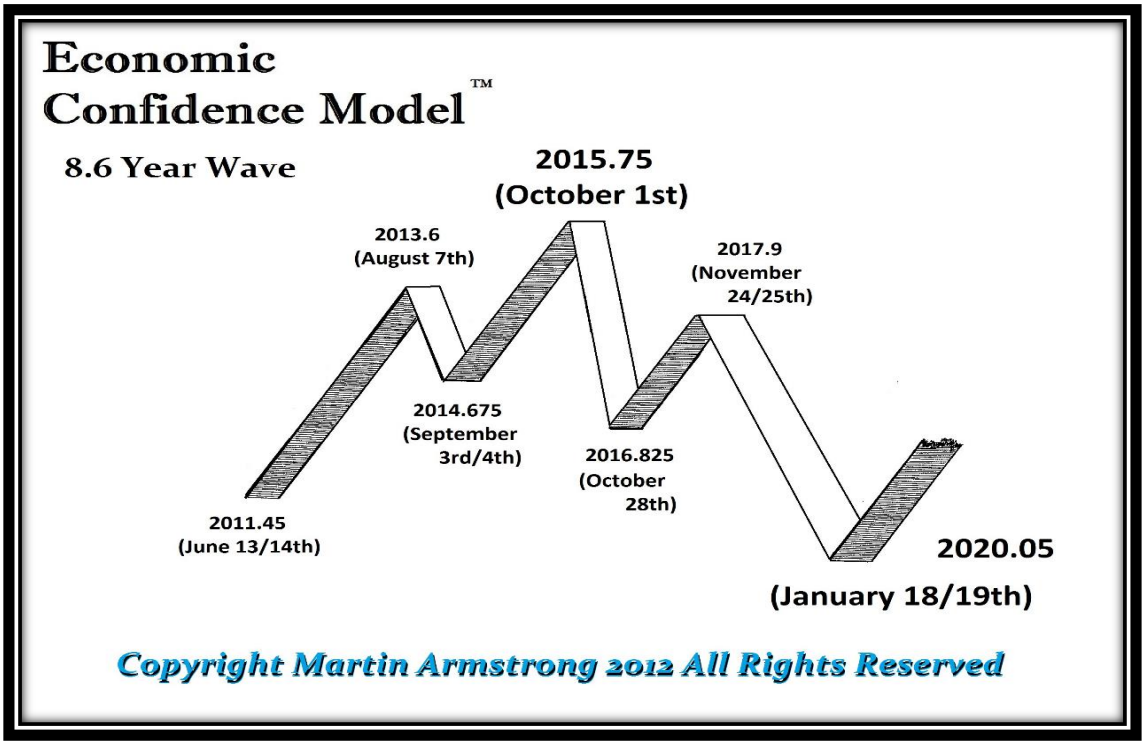
The aftermath of this confrontation, and Al–Ma'mun residing in Khurasan, resulted in a power vacuum with Baghdad downgraded from an important capitol city. This civil war sparked uprising in other local regions such as Jazira, in Syria and Egypt. Additionally, the pro–Khurasani policies that followed Al–Ma'mun's powerful chief minister, and Al–Ma'mun's espousal of an Alid succession, threatened the power among the traditional Baghdad elites.

Consequently, Al–Ma'mun's uncle Ibrahim was proclaimed rival caliph at Baghdad in 817 AD, which then forced Al–Ma'mun to intervene, personally leaving

Khurasan to confront this new claim to power in Baghdad. Al–Ma'mun entered Baghdad in 819 AD victorious. The next several years required Al–Ma'mun to consolidate his power and re–incorporate the western provinces, which was not complete until 827 AD.

These events reflect the internal battle over who is the caliph. With the rise of ISIS and the self–proclamation of Abu Bakr al–Baghdadi to be the caliph of all Islam, we can see the long seeds have been sown for internal civil war in the Middle East. His shocking display of a watch that costs over $6,000 caused an uproar but that has now died–down.

Chapter 6: The War Cycle & The Economic Confidence Model



2015: September 30/October 1, 2015

The unleashing of Russian firepower in Syria in support of the Syrian government shocked the world. However, even more startling, it came precisely on the day of the **Economic Confidence Model (ECM)** – September 30, 2015. I have come to learn from observing this model that major world events, whatever the major focus may be, appear to line up with the ECM.

We have been warning that this particular turning point will be centered in government; not in the private sector or markets. The most interesting aspect of this turning point is the very strange event that may be extremely important moving forward from a geopolitical perspective. Russia gave the U.S. a one–hour notice before they began bombing both ISIS and rebels who were seeking to overthrow the Syrian government trained by the USA. That one–hour notice on September 30 was shocking, to say the least. The burning question: will this prove to be the start of an international war?

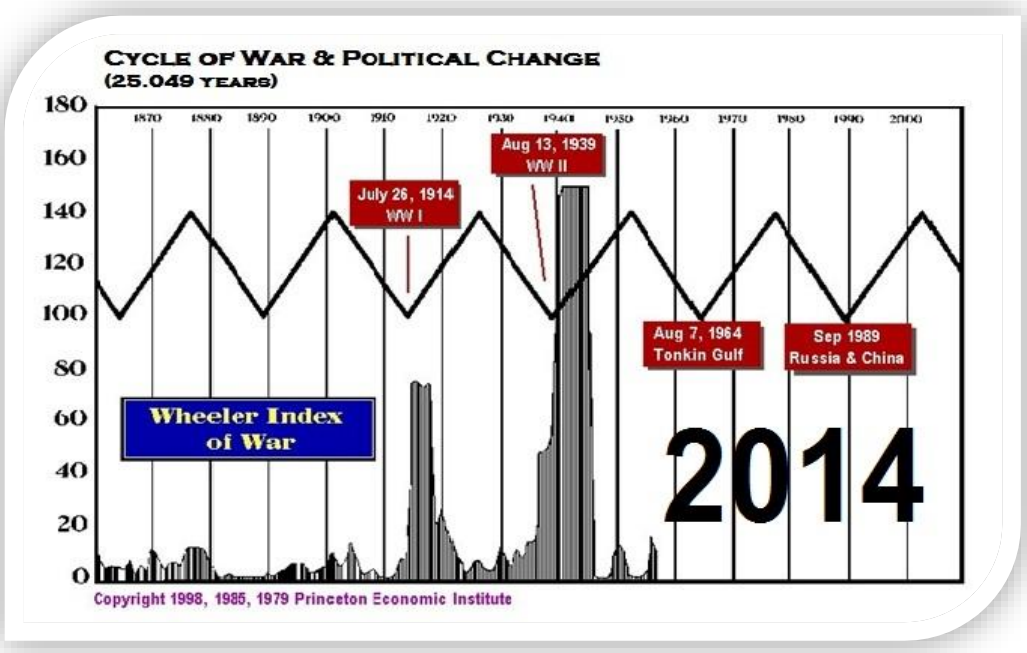
This particular target has been huge for us given that we have the convergence of two **War Cycle Models.** Our first model is the civil unrest, which leads to revolution, and the second is international war. The main convergence of the **War Cycle** between both models began to turn in 2014. The economic

war against Russia's imposed sanctions began on March 6, 2014 (2014.178) when Obama signed Executive Order 13660, which authorized sanctions on individuals and entities responsible for violating the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

The very next day, Executive Order 13660 was followed by Executive Order 13661, which claimed that Russia had undermined the democratic processes in Ukraine. Then on March 20, 2014, Obama issued a new Executive Order: "Blocking Property of Additional Persons Contributing to the Situation in Ukraine". This order expanded the scope of the two previous orders to the Government of the Russian Federation for its annexation of Crimea and its use of force in Ukraine. The U.S. claimed these actions were a threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. Then on April 28, 2014, Obama imposed even more sanctions on Russia. Overall, the Obama Administration assumed that Russia had a second–rate army and that they would have no problem defeating Russia. However, those who play war games in Washington fail to consider the costs of war since it is just a game to them.

The third round of U.S. sanctions on Russia began in October and continued into December 2014, taking place precisely over the turning point on our War Cycle. Then on October 3, 2014, Joe Biden said, "It was America's leadership and the president of the United States insisting, oft times almost having to embarrass Europe to stand up and take economic hits to impose costs." The EU imposed sanctions on December 18, 2014, which banned some investments in Crimea and halted support for the Russian Federation Black Sea exploration of oil and gas. The EU sanctions also prevented European companies

from offering tourism services and purchasing real estate or companies in Crimea. On December 19, 2014, Obama imposed sanctions on Russian–occupied Crimea by executive order, which prohibited exports of U.S. goods and services to the region.



The actual turning point was 2014.8871: November 20, 2014. The one event that took place precisely on that day was the Supreme Court ruling to allow same–sex marriage in South Carolina. This decision sparked civil unrest against the government throughout the Bible–Belt states. On that same day, Obama took executive action on immigration. Two days later on November 24, the Missouri Grand Jury ruled not to indict Officer Wilson in the August 9 shooting of Michael Brown, which sparked the beginning of civil unrest, such as the Black Lives Matter movement, in a rebuke of corrupt police forces.

This turning point on the ECM (2015.75) marked the precise day when Russia began actively bombing Syria to defend its allied government. This should be of great concern in the form of a warning sign with red lights that blink. Russia's bombings have captured the headlines; the press claims that Russia is attacking civilians but has not mentioned that these civilians are rebels trying to overthrow the government that Obama supported. The press is misrepresenting what is taking place, as always.

There are also reports that China has entered the game by sending in troops to Syria for support. However, this has not been completely verified. Obama is creating the threat of World War III as Russia and China are now in alignment in Syria and both are opposed to U.S. policy. There is a direct confrontation taking place all because U.S. policy is out of its mind and tries to topple what it calls "dictatorships" from Iraq, Libya, and now Syria. There is no alternative replacement and this brain–dead policy dreamed up in Washington has no end game objective other than destabilizing the region.

The question that has plagued society is always the assumed right of one nation or empire to dictate the borders of lesser countries. This has been going on for a long time. Such policies rarely consider culture, language, or religion.

This turning point on our ECM of September 30, 2015 (2015.75) is a very disturbing development given the geopolitical events of that day as well as the rising debt crisis among emerging markets and most of Europe, Japan, and the

United States. This crisis is turning into a direct confrontation between the three leading powers in the Middle East. For what purpose? All because Obama and crew did not like Putin? They created Putin by failing to curtail the bankers who tried to take over Russia to get their hands on all of the commodities back in 1999. Whether the government was behind the banking objectives or whether it came in after the fact to protect the bankers amounts to the same thing.

The other side of 2015.75 will be a lot more serious than most suspect. This concentration of **CONFIDENCE** in government marks the peak — from here on out, this will not be a video game — this is real.

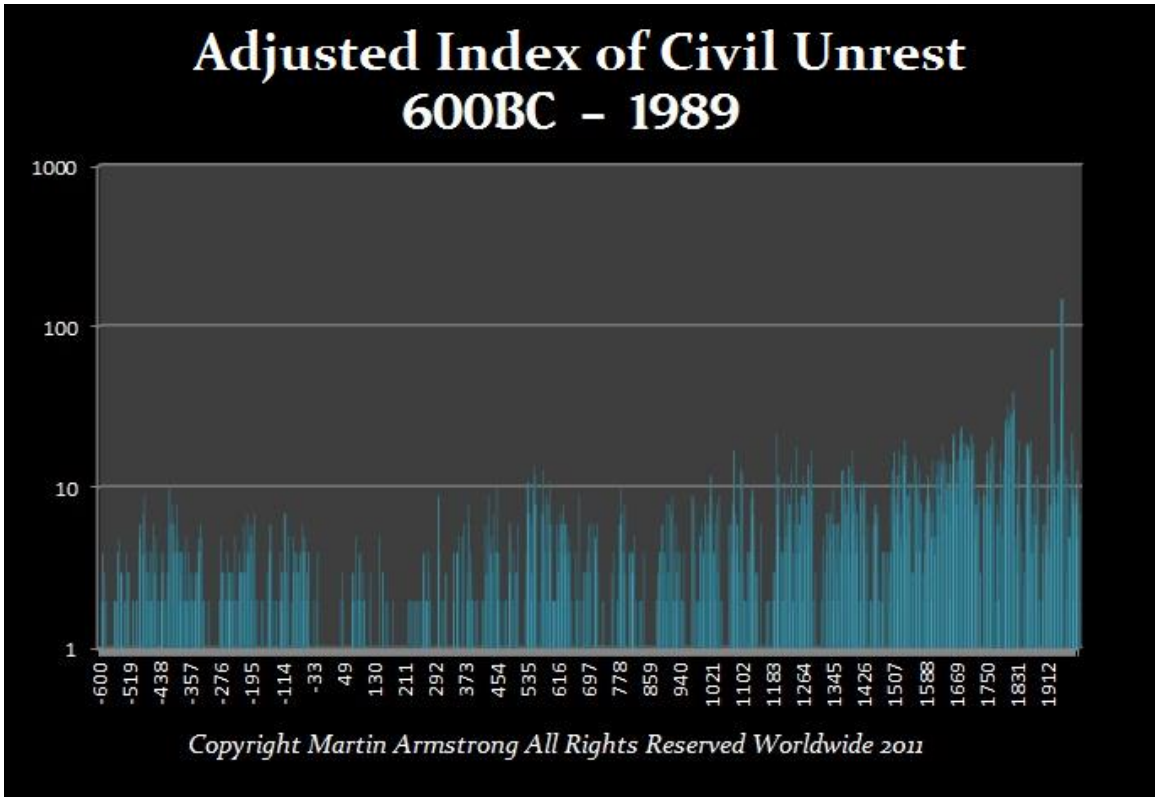
Russian warplanes began by targeting rebels trained by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, placing Moscow and Washington on opposing sides in a Middle East conflict for the first time since the Cold War. As CNN pointed out,

the bombing continued and hundreds of Iranian troops arrived in Syria to join Russia.

Iran is Shia, and in Syria, President Bashar al–Assad's government is Shia ruling a Sunni majority, which is the opposite of Iraq. Clearly, the civil war in Syria is escalating. We will see this unfold as a proxy war directly between U.S. and Russia with China supporting the Russian side in this war game. The Syrian conflict is turning regional and global in scope by drawing in the world powers all because everyone **NEEDS** a war to distract their population from a declining economy.

As the economy in Russia turns down, the government needs a distraction and this is it. We will see the same trend emerge in the USA when the economy turns down, as war is necessary to distract the people from the non–establishment candidates for 2016, the social defaults, and the need to raise taxes for war. This situation will more likely than not escalate into 2017.

Chapter 7: Civil War



The following table provides a list of civil wars involving popular or civil forces that effectively rose to the level of a revolution. Omitted from this listing are wars between clans, warlords, dynasties, wars of succession, etc. Such wars of succession are sometimes described as "civil wars" in modern literature (e.g. Ottoman Civil War or Islamic Civil War).

- **Roman Civil Wars** (100 BC–400 AD): a list of numerous civil wars in the late Roman Republic and in the Roman Empire
- **First Fitna** (656–661 AD): the first Islamic "civil war" between Ali and the Umayyads

- **Second Fitna**, (680/683–685/692 AD): the second Islamic "civil war" between the Umayyads and Ibn al-Zubayr
- **Twenty Years' Anarchy** (695–717 AD): prolonged period of internal instability in the Byzantine Empire
- **Civil War between Artabasdos and Constantine V** (741–743 AD)
- **Third Fitna** (744–752 AD): includes the Umayyad civil wars of 744–748 AD and the Abbasid Revolution
- **An Shi Rebellion** (December 16, 755 AD – February 17, 763 AD)
- **Fourth Fitna** (809–827 AD): includes the Abbasid civil wars and other regional conflicts
- **Fitna of al-Andalus** (1009–1031 AD)
- **Civil war era in Norway** (1130–1240 AD)
- **The Anarchy** (1135–1153 AD): refers to the disorder during the reign of King Stephen of England
- **Revolt of 1173–1174 AD**: civil war in England
- **Civil war** in the crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem between King Baldwin III and dowager Queen Melisende (1152–1153 AD)
- **First Barons' War** (1215–1217 AD): the First Barons' War was a civil war in the Kingdom of England
- **Age of the Sturlungs** (1220–1262/64 AD)
- **Second Barons' War** (1264–1267 AD): Second Barons' War was a civil war in the Kingdom of England
- **Despenser War** (1321–1322 AD): the Despenser War was a civil war in the Kingdom of England
- **Byzantine Civil War of 1321–1328 AD**
- **Byzantine Civil War of 1341–1347 AD**
- **Byzantine Civil War of 1352–1357 AD**
- **Castilian Civil War of 1366–1369 AD**
- **Byzantine Civil War of 1373–1379 AD**
- **Glyndŵr Rising** (1400–1415 AD): Independence movement and civil war in England most of the war fought in wales
- **Ottoman Interregnum** (1402–1413 AD)
- **Armagnac–Burgundian Civil War** (1407–1435 AD)
- **Hussite Wars** (Bohemia) (1420–1434 AD)
- **Great Feudal War** in Russia (1425–1453 AD)

- **Wars of the Roses** in England (1455–1485 AD)
- **Ōnin War** in Japan (1467–1477 AD)
- **Sengoku Period** in Japan (1467–1615 AD)
- **War of the Castilian Succession** (1475–1479 AD)
- **Popular Revolt** in late medieval Europe
- **German Peasants' War** (1524–1525 AD)
- **War of the Two Brothers** in the Inca Empire (1529–1532 AD)
- **Early Modern** (1550–1800 AD)
- **Mughal–Rajput War** (1558–1578 AD)
- **French Wars of Religion** (1562–1598 AD)
- **Marian civil war** in Scotland (1568–1573 AD)
- **Rokosz of Zebrzydowski** in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth (1606–1609 AD)
- **Thirty Years' War** (1618–1648 AD): The Thirty Years' War was between Protestants and Catholics in the Holy Roman Empire
- **Shimabara Uprising** in Japan (1637–1638 AD)
- **Wars of the Three Kingdoms** (1639–1651 AD): involved a number of civil wars in England, Ireland, and Scotland
- **Irish Confederate Wars** (1641–1653 AD): some parts of these wars were civil wars
- **Scotland in the Wars of the Three Kingdoms** (1644–1652 AD)
- **English Civil War** (1642–1651 AD)
- **First English Civil War** (1642–1646 AD)
- **Second English Civil War** (1648–1649 AD)
- **Third English Civil War** (1650–1651 AD)
- **Acadian Civil War** (1640–1645 AD)
- **Fronde** in France (1648–1653 AD)
- **Rokosz of Lubomirski** in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth (1665–1666 AD)
- **Monmouth Rebellion** (May – July 1685): English civil war
- **Glorious Revolution** (1688–1689 AD): English civil war
- **Pugachev's Rebellion** in Russia (1773–1775 AD)
- **War in the Vendée, France** (1793–1804 AD): a war fought between Royalist and Republican forces, which was part of the French Revolutionary Wars
- **Modern** (1800–1945 AD)

- **Argentine Civil Wars** (1814–1880 AD)
- **Zulu Civil War** (1817–1819 AD)
- **Greek Civil Wars** (1824–1825 AD)
- **Liberal Wars (Portuguese Civil War)** (1828–1834 AD)
- **Chilean Civil War** (1829–1830 AD)
- **Ragamuffin War** in Brazil (1835–1845 AD)
- **Carlist Wars** in Spain (1833–1839 AD, 1846–1849 AD, and 1872–1876 AD)
- **Uruguayan Civil War** (1839–1851 AD)
- **Māori War** in New Zealand (1845–1872 AD)
- **Sonderbund War** in Switzerland (November 1847)
- **Revolutions of 1848** (1848–1849 AD): involved numerous European countries
- **Revolution of 1851** in Chile (1851 AD)
- **Taiping Rebellion** in China (1851–1864 AD)
- **Bleeding Kansas** (1854–1858 AD)
- **Indian Rebellion** (1857 AD)
- **War of Reform** in Mexico (1857–1861 AD)
- **American Civil War** (1861–1865 AD)
- **Klang War** also known as **Selangor Civil War** (1867–1874 AD)
- **Boshin War** in Japan (1868–1869 AD)
- **Satsuma Rebellion** in Japan (1877 AD)
- **Jementah Civil War** (1878 AD)
- **The North-West Rebellion of 1885** in Canada (1885 AD)
- **1891 Chilean Civil War** (1891 AD)
- **Boxer Rebellion** in China (1899–1901 AD)
- **Thousand Days War** in Colombia (1899–1902 AD)
- **Mexican Revolution** (1910–1920 AD)
- **Warlord Era** (1912–1928 AD): a period of civil wars between regional, provincial, and private armies in China
- **Russian Civil War** (1917–1921 AD)
- **Iraqi–Kurdish conflict** (1918–2003 AD)
- **Finnish Civil War** (1918 AD)
- **German Revolution** (1918–1919 AD)
- **Irish Civil War** (1922–1923 AD)

- **Nicaraguan Civil War** (1926–1927 AD)
- **Cristero War** in Mexico (1926–1929 AD)
- **Chinese Civil War** (1927–1937 AD; 1945–1949 AD)
- **Paulista War** in Brazil (1932 AD)
- **Austrian Civil War** (February 12 to February 16, 1934 AD)
- **Spanish Civil War** (1936–1939 AD)
- **Italian Civil War** (1943–1945 AD)
- **Greek Civil War** (1946–1949 AD)
- **Paraguayan Civil War** (1947 AD)
- **Civil War in Mandatory Palestine** (1947–1948 AD)
- **Costa Rican Civil War** (1948 AD)
- **La Violencia** in Colombia (1948–1958 AD)
- **Malayan Emergency** (Federation of Malaya) (1948–1960 AD)
- **Korean War** (1950–1953 AD)
- **Laotian Secret War** (1953–1975 AD)
- **First Sudanese Civil War** (1955–1972 AD)
- **Vietnam War** (1955–1975 AD)
- **Guatemalan Civil War** (1960–1996 AD)
- **Congo Crisis** (1960–1966 AD)
- **North Yemen Civil War** (1962–1970 AD)
- **Colombian conflict** (1964–present)
- **Dominican Civil War** (1965)
- **Rhodesian Bush War** (1965–1980 AD)
- **Cypriot Civil War** (1963–1967 AD)
- **Nigerian Civil War** (1967–1970 AD)
- **Communist Insurgency War** in Malaysia (1968–1989 AD)
- **The Troubles** in Northern Ireland (1969–1998 AD; considered ongoing by extremist minority groups)
- **Cambodian Civil War** (1970–1975 AD)
- **Bangladesh Liberation War** in Pakistan (1971 AD): However, this war is not an official civil war, only to the perspective to those who did not support the existence of the independent state of Bangladesh.
- **Lebanese Civil War** (1975–1990 AD)
- **Mozambican Civil War** (1975–1992 AD)
- **Angolan Civil War** (1975–2002 AD)

- **Soviet war in Afghanistan**, also called **War in Afghanistan** (1978–present): the Soviet war in Afghanistan lasted over nine years from December 24, 1979 – February 15, 1989 and was part of the Cold War, but it was inevitable that the regime would collapse within three to six months after the Soviet withdrawal
- **Nicaraguan Civil War** (1979–1990 AD)
- **Salvadoran Civil War** in El Salvador (1979–1991 AD)
- **Internal Conflict in Peru** (1980–present)
- **Second Sudanese Civil War** (1983–2005 AD)
- **Sri Lankan Civil War** (1983–2009 AD)
- **South Yemen Civil War** (1986 AD)
- **Civil War in Afghanistan** (1989–1992 AD): the continuing part of the civil war where the Soviet Union withdrew from Afghanistan, leaving the Afghan communist government to fend for itself against the Mujahideen
- **First Liberian Civil War** (1989–1996 AD)
- **Rwandan Civil War** (1990–1993 AD)
- **Casamance Conflict** in Senegal (1990–2006 AD)
- **Yugoslav Wars** also known as the **Ten day War, Croatian War of Independence, Bosnian War** (1991–1995 AD)
- **Georgian Civil War** (1991–1993 AD)
- **Sierra Leone Civil War** (1991–2002 AD)
- **Algerian Civil War** (1991–2002 AD; conflicts persist)
- **Civil war in Tajikistan** (1992–1997 AD)
- **Civil War in Afghanistan** (1992–1996 AD): the Afghan communist government falls to the Mujahideen. There was a rise in different kinds of ideology, power sharing. Belligerents and violent fighting continues to escalate; also called War in Afghanistan (1978–present).
- **Burundi Civil War** (1993–2005 AD)
- **1994 Civil War in Yemen** (1994 AD)
- **First Chechen War** (1994–1996 AD)
- **Iraqi Kurdish Civil War** (1994–1997 AD)
- **Civil War in Afghanistan** (1996–2001 AD): the Taliban captured the Afghan capital Kabul and established the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan; part of / also called War in Afghanistan (1978–present)
- **First Congo War** (1996–1997 AD)

- **Clashes in Cambodia** (1997 AD)
- **Nepalese Civil War** (1996–2006 AD)
- **Rebellion in Albania** (1997 AD)
- **Republic of the Congo Civil War** (1997–1999 AD)
- **Guinea-Bissau Civil War** (1998–1999 AD)
- **Kosovo War in Yugoslavia** (1998–1999 AD)
- **Second Congo War** (1998–2003 AD)
- **1999 Shia uprising in Iraq** (February – April 1999 AD)
- **Second Liberian Civil War** (1999–2003 AD)
- **Second Chechen War** (1999–2009 AD)
- **Islamist insurgency in Nigeria**, (1999–present)
- **War in Afghanistan** (2001–2014 AD): United States invaded the country after the September 11 attacks, closely supported by allies, and eventually by the wider North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The war ended with another war called War in Afghanistan (2015–present); war part of / also called War in Afghanistan (1978–present)
- **Albanian Rebellion** in Macedonia (2001 AD)
- **First Ivorian Civil War** (2002–2007 AD)
- **Iraq War** (2003–2011 AD)
- **War in Darfur** (2003–present)
- **Houthi insurgency** in Yemen (2004 –2015 AD)
- **Fourth Chadian Civil War** (2005 –2010 AD)
- **Civil War in Iraq** (2006–2007 AD): a sub-conflict within the Iraq War
- **Fatah-Hamas Conflict** in Palestine (2006–2007 AD; tensions ongoing)
- **Mexican Drug War** (2006–present)
- **Second Ivorian Civil War** (2010–2011 AD)
- **Libyan Civil War** (February – October 2011 AD)
- **Syrian Civil War** (2011–present)
- **Post-civil war violence in Libya** (2011–2014 AD)
- **Iraqi Insurgency** (2011–2013 AD)
- **Tuareg Rebellion** (January 2012–April 2012 AD)
- **Northern Mali Conflict** (2012–2015 AD)
- **Central African Republic Conflict** (2012–present)
- **Northern Mali Conflict** (2012 – 2015 AD)
- **South Sudanese Civil War** (2013 – present)

- **Northern Iraq Offensive** (June 2014; restarted August 2014 AD)
- **Second Libyan Civil War** (2014 – present)
- **War in Afghanistan** (2015–present): more chaos ensues and the civil war continues; part of/also called War in Afghanistan (1978–present)
- **Military intervention against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant** (2014 – present): Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (abbreviated ISIL or ISIS, and calling itself the ″Islamic State″ part of Iraqi insurgency (2011–present)