What If a Cyclical Phenomenon Favored Wars?

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A Simple Question with Enormous Implications

Why do wars break out at certain times rather than others? Rivalries between countries, territorial disputes, resources, and leaders' decisions obviously matter. But could there be an additional, hard-to-detect influence that makes some periods more conducive to war? This is the question Jean-Baptiste Renard raises in his 2025 book, "Un phénomène cyclique qui favorise les guerres ?" (A Cyclical Phenomenon That Favors Wars?).

A Cycle of About Eight and a Half Years

The phenomenon under study, called the Quésako Cycle, has an average period of 3,095 days, or approximately 8.47 years. It alternates between phases that favor the escalation of conflicts and others that might favor their de-escalation. This is not a deterministic mechanism that automatically causes wars. Rather, it is an amplifying phenomenon that may intensify preexisting causes until they develop into war.

Surprising Numbers

According to the author's research, approximately 60% of the interstate wars included in an initial analysis began during amplification phases. When regions and recurring conflicts are examined separately—in what he calls "contexts"—the proportions exceed 80%. He reports 89% for wars fought on European soil and 100% for the Arab–Israeli context through October 7, 2023, based on the selection criteria used. These findings need to be replicated and verified by independent researchers.

Predictions Made Before the Events

The significance of this research is not limited to looking backward. The author says he has used this method since 2006 to anticipate periods of war in specific contexts. In particular, a document dated January 2022 identified risks of war in Europe and the Arab–Israeli context during 2022–2026. Assessing the significance of these forecasts requires examining the original documents as well as the predictions that were made.

A Phenomenon Linked to the Number of War Deaths?

The research also identifies a striking correspondence between amplification phases and the number of war fatalities. A hypothesis developed using data on Iraq was subsequently compared with international datasets from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), compiled independently of this research. The quality of the UCDP data is unmatched by the data available before UCDP. For now, this strong correlation with UCDP data cannot be tested against other datasets spanning a longer period. Further research is therefore needed to establish the phenomenon conclusively.

What If Our Understanding of Wars Were to Change?

If the Quésako Cycle is confirmed, it would do more than identify periods of heightened risk. It could reveal an additional factor operating alongside the known causes of war. This would raise new questions about how conflicts escalate and how they might be prevented. It could mark the beginning of a major transformation in our understanding of wars.

Why Is It Urgent to Verify This Now?

Neither Putin, nor Hamas leaders, nor Netanyahu probably imagine that their decisions to wage war could have been influenced by a cyclical phenomenon whose very existence they are unaware of. Yet if the Quésako Cycle is confirmed, this possibility will have to be seriously examined. Could decisions to go to war sometimes be influenced, without the decision-makers themselves knowing it, by a phenomenon that remains unexplained?

Through October 7, 2023, inclusive, every war in the Arab–Israeli context studied began during an amplification phase of the Quésako Cycle. A systematic coincidence? That seems like an awful lot to attribute to chance.

The context of Putin's Russia shows an especially striking correspondence with the amplification phases of the Quésako Cycle. Not every such phase leads to a war, but some coincide with several conflicts. Why this concentration? Could the cyclical phenomenon exert a particularly strong influence in this context?

To date, the findings presented by Jean-Baptiste Renard have not undergone an in-depth independent scientific evaluation capable of confirming or disproving them. That does not mean they are false. It means they remain to be verified.

Is it not urgent to determine whether the Quésako Cycle may have contributed to the escalation of certain ongoing wars? If this influence exists, even in part, can we reasonably continue to ignore it?

Quick judgments are easy. Checking the facts takes more work. But when research presents findings that could change our understanding of wars, can we settle for judgments made without thorough examination? Must we wait until 2030 to verify findings already presented in 2022 and developed in a book published in 2025?

The findings are specific enough to be tested: repeat the calculations, check the lists of wars, compare the phases, and assess the forecasts against actual events. An independent assessment could confirm, correct, or refute the conclusions. Given the potential importance of the discovery, such an assessment should begin promptly. The goal is not to ask anyone to believe in the cycle, but to determine whether the observations withstand rigorous scrutiny.

Jean-Baptiste Renard is a retired engineer. His research did not originate in a university laboratory—but is that reason enough to dismiss it? Are the calculations correct? Do the results withstand independent verification? Those are the questions that deserve answers.

The scientific value of research does not depend on the prestige of its author, but on the soundness of its methods and the reproducibility of its results. The Quésako Cycle can certainly be challenged. But the data must first be seriously examined before anyone claims to have refuted it.

Would it be useful to know whether a cyclical phenomenon favors wars? Would it be useful to confirm that both World Wars coincided with this cyclical phenomenon? We still do not know its origin, nor do we know whether its variations can explain the extraordinary scale of certain wars, such as those we have witnessed since 2022. But is it worthwhile to seek credible answers to questions of this magnitude?

Further Reading

The book published in 2025 presents the research and its analyses. A detailed scientific summary allows readers to examine the methods and results. The question remains open—and that is precisely why it deserves to be studied.

References and contact:

- in French : « Un phénomène cyclique qui favorise les guerres ?» 2025 – L'Harmattan
- in English US : a checked translation is available here or on request to cyclequesako@gmail.com
- Scientific Summary V1
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