

BREAKING THE CODE OF HISTORY by David Murrin

SYNOPSIS

Part 1: PAST

1 From Hunter-Gatherer to Industrialist

Factors which explain what drives civilisations to increase and become empires

2 The Elements of Empire

Factors that enable empires to arise, including environmental, social and individual.

3 The Five Stages of Empire

Outlines the author's theory of the five stages of empire as they emerge, grow, over-extend and decline.

4 Empires and Super-Empires

The five stages identified in particular periods of the Roman, and British Empires. The introduction of the concept of a super Empire, with specific examples of a roman super empire and the Super western Christian Empire.

Part 2: PRESENT

Introduction

Six key themes underlying the political and economic forces at work today.

5 The Multi-Polar World

The application of the Five Stages of Empire model to modern geopolitics and a description of the rise of the emerging countries in the East and decline of the West, sketched out in terms of the stage of empire each is in.

6 Commodities: the Fuel of Modern Empires

The new commodity cycle has been driven by the demand for raw materials by both the developed world and the developing worlds. This has precipitated competition for resources to a degree never before witnessed, as the world draws from a resource pool that is historically at its most depleted. The significance of this is shown by reference to key commodities in the various parts of the world and their associated geopolitics. The key message is that wars are only fought over resources, and as the commodity cycle peaks in 2020/2025 the risk of global conflict will escalate to become a major concern.

7 Polarisation: the Road to War

Polarisation is the process by which societies close ranks to face off against other societies. It is, in fact, the road to war. It has two different manifestations: primary expansive polarisation of a new rising power, and the defensive secondary polarisation of a declining empire or nation trying to defend itself from attack. Societies typically use nationalism and religious memes as the engines that define the polarisation process, and this chapter also looks at the different memes currently used globally by the key nation players in the modern world.

8 Global Military Balance

As Polarisation comes to its end game the result will inevitably be conflict. Wars define nations. Indeed the way in which nations structure their armed forces is a function of the society they derive from, and the wars fought by the leadership are a function of national values and History.

Wars are not all the same and their very energy is a function of the combination of where the combatants are on their own empire cycle. So this chapter looks at wars and the way they are fought in a unique and new way that enables us to understand the past in a new light and anticipate the potential wars to come.

9 Disease and Empire

Just as humans are susceptible to disease when stressed and overworked, there is a link between empires and the disease cycle. This chapter covers the roles of different well known diseases as functions of various past and present empires.

10 Climate Change

This chapter links the accelerating global population and industrialisation process with the old empires of the west and new ones of the east. It postulates that we have vastly underestimated the rate of oncoming climate changes, and explains why our institutions have failed to provide warning of the huge change we are experiencing and the cost to both the natural world and human civilisation.

Part 3 FUTURE

11 Our Brave New Multi-Polar World

Like empires before us, we in The West fail to appreciate the values, achievements and thought processes of the new rising powers who seek to challenge for global influence and power. This chapter explains the impressive history and thought process of China, the challenge of Iran , and the steps America needs to take to ensure that its decline is not coincident with a third world war. This includes a restricting of its debt and the creation of new alliances to contain Chinese expansion.

12 Conflict, Disease and Climate Change

This chapter explains the major risks to man's earth, in terms of the balance of military power, resource sanctity and climate change, and suggests ways that we might navigate our way successfully through the next decade of increasing global tension so that our race can find a way to work together and move out beyond this planet.

Afterword

The story of the rise and fall of the society inhabiting Easter Island demonstrates the cycles of empire in microcosm, and clearly shows the risk to mankind if we do not transcend our historical empire cycles, particularly at this critical time in the history of our planet.