



A Brief Review of Major Divergences Underlying Current Human Security and The Modern World Order

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Abstract

The goal of this paper is to focus on learning major divergences for understanding global human security and modern world order in the 21st century, with the strategic perspective of an integrated approach for peace and economy, considering current events. No global structure of peace can be stable and secure unless all parties recognize others' legitimate security interests. The best way for the major powers to begin to achieve that is to choose the path of mutual understanding and de-escalation over Ukraine and Taiwan. In the meanwhile, the Chinese Communist Party concluded that it could grow rich without giving up power, in fact it could buy off rebellion and rival America's strategic superiority. Whatever the outcome of the current crises, what is now clear is that Moscow and Beijing are not going to become like us any time soon, and we need to accept the regrettable reality that we are entering another period of strong divergence for global human security and world order. The ultimate problem we face today in EU is still our inability to solve most of the shared existential challenges we face quickly. But there is hope. Openness is the only way through which we will learn to get through global crises.

1. Introduction

Yeltsin's tenure as President seemed not only to echo a second-rate "America's poodle" status, his handling of the Russian economy proved disastrous for the average Russian, but lucrative for a handful of Russian oligarchs, who in turn were connected to American business interests (Wikipedia, 2022). Boris Yeltsin sums up his actions in this way.

The rise of Putin has been remarkable, perhaps even charming, in some supernatural sense. In a span of five years (1996-2000) Putin moved up the Russian government ladder from Deputy Chief of the Presidential Property Management Directorate to Prime Minister of the Russian Government and finally to Acting President of the Russian Federation. Putin was appointed Prime Minister by Yeltsin on Aug. 9, 1999. Less than five months after that, on Dec. 31, 1999, Yelstin resigned, and Putin became President.

On assuming presidency and his election to a full first term, Putin resolved to end this economic domination by "the oligarchs," but in so doing, he antagonized their internationalist capitalist partners in the West on Wall Street and in Brussels.

Criticized by some domestic opponents for not following punctiliously all the hallmark benchmarks of Western style "democracy," Putin insisted that the difficult path to Russian

democracy was different than the model so often pushed (and imposed) by the United States around the world. Nevertheless, the average Russian citizen experienced more real liberties and more economic freedom than at any time in Russia's long history, and the credit for that must be Putin's (Lynch, 2011, p. 69-74; Stuermer, 2008, pp. 199-200).

Putin's first reign as President of Russia was from 1999-2008. He then took the lower office of Prime Minister again from 2008-2012. Then he was elected to the presidency again, this time from 2012 until 2018, a 6-year term that ended when he was 66. He was president, then he was not, then he was again. Putin's reigns have been marked by one recurring theme: His political enemies mysteriously die or find themselves imprisoned.

But Putin was no Yeltsin. While initially following the Yeltsin pro-American and pro-Western lead in foreign policy, Putin was also aware that Russia was undergoing a radical transition from a decrepit and collapsed Communist state to the recovery of some of its older traditions, including a mushrooming, vibrant return to traditional Russian Orthodoxy, a faith which he has publicly and personally embraced.

Putin believed that the largest nation in the world, which had thrown off the Communist yoke, merited a larger role. His desire was for a real partnership. But aggressive attempts spearheaded by the United States to incorporate formerly integral parts of Russia, areas that were and continue to be considered within the Russian "sphere of influence," even if independent, into NATO, largely dashed Russian hopes for partnership with the West. (Stuermer, 2008, pp. 191-196).

Today the Russian Orthodox Church is, by far, the most conservative, traditional and anti-Communist religious body in the world. It has gone so far as to canonize dozens of martyrs killed by the Communists and celebrate the Romanov tsar and his family who were brutally murdered by the Reds in 1918.

Such a phenomenon is not some Communist plot but represents a genuine desire on the part of the Russian people to rediscover their religious roots, ironically just as a majority of Americans now seem to embrace same sex marriage, abortion, and the worst extremes of immorality and the rejection of traditional Christianity.

Russia has rebounded from state atheism and is now the champion of religious morals, while the USA has steadfastly moved away from religion, and like Europe, has become more liberal.

A report by the Centre for Strategic Communications, a Kremlin-connected think tank, neatly summarized Putin's ambition: it is entitled "Putin: World Conservatism's New Leader" (Kaylan, 2014; Whitmore, 2013). The report argues that large, silent majorities around the world favor traditional family values over feminism and gay rights, and that Putin is their natural leader.

Russia's failure to embrace liberal, democratic capitalism, and America's and Europe's overly optimistic belief that Moscow's flawed, corrupt post-communist economic model would deliver the sort of wealth and prosperity that goes hand in hand with real law-governed competitive free markets was an especially grievous error.

Dependent upon resource extraction and export, Russia has poured immense sums into the military and foreign adventures but failed to diversify into strategic investments for social growth and development. Furthermore, stagnation and corruption have encouraged people to drop out of education or head abroad.

The largest country in the world by geography now has a population size not much bigger than France and Germany combined and lost more than a million people in 2021 alone, indicating serious failure to contain COVID-19. The threat that Russia now poses is borne of the opposite problem: it failed to develop a modern economy.

2. The Roots of the Innermost Hidden Belief in the Russian Federation

Resurgent religious traditionalism has fueled Russia's new law against sexual orientation proselytism to minors and its new anti-abortion law. Both laws also respond to Russia's demographic struggle with plunging birth rates and monstrously high abortion rates that date to Soviet rule.

As the largest nation in the world, with historic connections to the rest of Europe, and also to Asia, Putin understood that Russia, despite the Communist interlude, was still a major power to be reckoned with.

Putin has formed a close association with the Russian Orthodoxy, as Russian rulers typically have across centuries. He is smart to do so, as Russia has experienced somewhat of a spiritual revival... Orthodoxy is widely and understandably seen as the spiritual remedy to the cavernous spiritual vacuum left by over 70 disastrous, often murderous, years of Bolshevism.

Furthermore, it has deep roots in the Russian culture, history, and collective imagination. In fact, in the past centuries, there even used to be an attempt to form a sort of symphony between the government that ran everyday life and the party rulers that were in charge of ideology. For Moscow in the 20th century, like for Moscow in the 16th century, the symphony was not stable while the ruler had Messianic claims that were too strong.

Introducing the concept of the Third Rome with its three essential elements: symphony of powers, supremacy and universality, and its eschatological dimension, it is an attempt to create a strong reference frame for all future events (Laatz, 2011; Wikipedia, 2022, Moscow Third Rome).

(a) Symphony of Powers

One constitutive aspect was the so-called symphony that was formulated by Justinian in the sixth century. This idea was included in the decisions of the great council of Russian bishops of 1551, the Stoglav ("Council of One Hundred Chapters"). But the idea of the symphony of "sacerdotium and imperium" was already spread in the Muscovite society.

Thus around 1500 Iosif Volockij (Joseph of Volotsk), Abbot of Volokolamsk, led a monastic movement in the Russian Church that argued for a strong link between the church and the state, a political theocracy. Thus, in order to achieve religious uniformity, they

defended the theory of divine right of kingship and were willing to enlarge the powers of the state in church government (Berken, 1999, p.151).

The first Tsar Ivan, the Terrible used this idea for defending the Orthodox faith. His wars were against “Muslim unbelievers” and “the Catholic enemy of Christianity”. The mission of the Russian Church was directly grounded in the military victories (Berken, 1999, p.152).

This was an implementation of the concept of symphony, as it was then understood in Russia. But according to modern scholars this was not a real harmony. The partners in the symphony were unequal. The state or the monarch was the real head of the church. Ivan, the Terrible saw “the tsardom as a divine commission and himself as head of the church and representative of God on earth” (Bercken, 1999, p.154).

In the words of Wil van den Bercken: “The unity between religion and politics and between church and state which took form in sixteenth-century Moscow does not mean that a symphony between secular and ecclesiastical power was achieved” (Bercken, 1999, p.152).

(b) Supremacy and Universality

The other constitutive characteristic of the Third Rome is its supremacy and universality. Moscow as the newest Rome is above other countries. And as the supreme state, Russia is the holy Russia (Lettenbauer, 1961, p. 36). But this means that the supremacy was not an achievement of the country itself. The Third Rome was an instrument of God chosen by him for the fulfilment of his aims.

One of the most important characteristics of all of the three Romes was their universality. If the concept of symphony was introduced at the time of the Second Rome, then the concept of universality was there from the First Rome onwards.

The universality of Rome was connected to the concept of “pax romana”. The goal of Rome was to establish a universal empire, which would supersede the disorderly competition between nations and establish world peace (Meyendorff, 1989, p. 11; 1983).

The monk Filofei, one of the masterminds of the doctrine of the Third Rome, wrote that “all Christian realms will come to an end and will unite into the one single realm of our sovereign” (Meyendorff, 1996, p.136).

It is true that the title of the Muscovite tsar was not the Roman emperor. But he was the tsar of all Christian realms, of all Christians. In the same way the Byzantine emperor was emperor “of the Romans, which is of all Christians” (Meyendorff, 1996, p. 133). It is important to note that the term “Christians” refers to not only the Eastern Orthodox Christians who were in communion with the patriarch of Constantinople.

Now in the sixteenth century, the tsar of Moscow pretended also to be the emperor of all the Orthodox Christians.

Both the Byzantine and the Russian rulers were in a way universal emperors inside their own world. And the Russian tsar tried successfully to enlarge his world.

At first the so-called gathering of the Russian land was actually done by bringing together orthodox people under the tsar's sovereignty. One after the other, the Russian principalities and the free cities in Russia were incorporated into the ever-growing body of the Muscovite principality.

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But its appetite for enlargement was not extinguished by the Orthodox East-Slavonic countries. Ivan IV conquered Kazan and Astrakhan and incorporated their surroundings into his empire. But his appetite was farther into the West. Thus, he hoped to incorporate into his tsardom the Baltic countries as well.

Although according to the title he did not pretend to be the Roman emperor, nevertheless his intention was to be the universal emperor of all Christians. Even more, his intention was to enlarge step by step his world of Orthodox Christianity.

(c) Eschatological Dimension

There is another important aspect of the Third Rome that was not noticeable in the case of Constantinople but which was essential in the case of Moscow. This is the eschatological dimension. Moscow is not only the most important city, but it is chosen by God and in a way set apart from other places on the earth. Moscow has a special religious function. It is the centre of Christianity. It is in some way closer to God. But that is not all.

According to Filofei, Moscow is the Third Rome and “the third stands, and there will never be a fourth” (Bercken, 1999, p.146). Moscow is the last Rome. Moscow was the centre of history and therefore its fulfilment (Lettenbauer, 1961, p. 58). This means that Russia had to preserve its rich store of faith in purity in the last phase before the end of the world (Bercken, 1999, p.147). And this fact puts a heavy responsibility on the shoulders of the Russians (Dvorkin, 1992, 32).

It is rather likely that at least the monk Filofei expected a close end of history (Tschizewskij, 1959). According to Florovsky this idea is rooted in Byzantine theological thinking (Florovsky, 1979). The world is approaching its end. The world exists only while Moscow exists. And Moscow exists only whilst it is the centre of the Christian, i.e., of the Orthodox world.

If Moscow perishes or ceases to be this centre then it is the end of the world. Now if the tsardom of Moscow is the eschatological tsardom, then its ruler is the eschatological emperor. This eschatological aspect makes him a special figure.

On the one side he has special functions to play. He has to protect the Christian, i.e., the Orthodox purity of the last Rome. He also has to establish its universality. In practice it means that he has to expand the realm of the eschatological empire.

On the other side, being the eschatological ruler empowers the tsar with special qualities and abilities. He must be able to fulfil his obligations. He must be able to preserve religious purity and must be able to execute the universality of the Third Rome.

This is beyond human abilities. Therefore, he receives these qualities and abilities from God. They are divine. Thus, the eschatological ruler is in a way deified. In this respect nobody in the world is equal to him. Even the head of the church is not like the tsar. This means that he, as the divine ruler of the tsardom, is also the divine ruler of the church.

However, the result of this self-understanding is the abolishment of the symphony of the church and the secular government. Actually, it does not mean the abolition of the concept. In the case of the divine eschatological ruler, the church and the state are rather closely connected. They both are under one ruler. So, it is more monophony than symphony.

It is impossible to discern where the church starts and where the state ends (i.e., we cannot observe the difference between the two realms).

There was a tendency in Byzantium towards “caesaropapism”. Caesaropapism is the idea of combining the social and political power of secular government with religious power, or of making secular authority superior to the spiritual authority of the Church; especially concerning the connection of the Church with government. A strong mixing of faith, superstition and ambition.

Although Justus Henning Böhm (1674–1749) may have originally coined the term “caesaropapism” (Cäseropapismus) (Pennington, 2010), it was Max Weber (1864–1920) who wrote: “a secular, caesaropapist ruler... exercises supreme authority in ecclesiastic matters by virtue of his autonomous legitimacy”. According to Weber, caesaropapism entails “the complete subordination of priests to secular power” (Swedberg, R. and Agevall, O., 2005).

In an extreme form, caesaropapism is where the head of state, notably the emperor (“Caesar”, by extension a “superior” king), is also the supreme head of the church (pope or analogous religious leader). In this form, caesaropapism inverts theocracy (or hierocracy in Weber), in which institutions of the church control the state. Both caesaropapism and theocracy are systems in which there is no separation of church and state and in which the two form parts of a single power-structure.

Although the rulers have never officially pretended to be divine or semi-divine beings, nevertheless they have sometimes been treated practically as half-gods.

Of course, Russian Christianity was above the rest of Christianity. But the holiness of Russia was something more. It was the self-understanding of Russia as elected by God and as having a special task in the divine story within the world. This consciousness of being elected and therefore being the messianic nation has survived even into the secular era.

3. Cindia on the Modern World Order

What exactly is the “modern” world?

There is a serious problem with the way the world views modernity because the word “modern” has become fundamentally associated with practices that emerged in Western Europe in the 19th century and ignores practices in other parts of the non-Western world.

By definition, the word “modern” claims that “modern” practices cannot have existed before nineteenth-century Europe. As such, it means that in order for a nation to enter the “modern world” its people must adopt Western “modern practices.”

It is an assumption that “modernity” is a product simply of competition, markets and technology. It is not. It is also shaped equally by history and culture. “China is not like the West, and it will not become like the West. It will remain in very fundamental respects very different” (Martin, 2010).

In short, the assumption that what is considered to be “modern” must have originated in the West needs to be corrected. It needs to be understood that what it is to modernize does not mean another country must westernize.

The title of this section “CINDIA” means thinking of China and India together (Rampini, 2006). If they were together, they would represent more or less half of the world’s population.

Of course, the two nations have very different degrees of development. The very advanced level of Chinese technology and economy is not surprising, after over three decades of heavy investments by China in the “Silk Roads” strategic initiative.

It is really crucial that India is also making great progress and is very attractive for Western investors as it has a widespread knowledge of the English language and a good level of techno-scientific culture.

However, relations between the two countries are not quite harmonious since there are territorial disputes, the aftermath of ancient tensions and above all economic and geo-political competition.

Naturally, the balance of forces is clearly in favor of China, especially in terms of exports.

It is enough to say that the smartphone market, which in India is developing exponentially, is dominated by four manufacturers who are Xiaomi, Oppo, Vivo and One plus, all four obviously Chinese.

As the smartphone market flourishes, it is normal for apps to develop as well.

We live in a world where apps are not just more than simple “entertainment platforms”, but real “entertaining platforms” of political pressure. If someone is still not convinced, think back to the known issues between former President Trump and the various social media platforms like TikTok, Twitter and Facebook.

(a) China

How do we explain the recent return of China to global prominence?

Interestingly, Confucianism both impeded China's economic progress, allowing the West to surpass China, and it also facilitated China's sudden rise in economic success.

Confucianism, also known as Ruism or Ru classicism, is a system of thought and behavior originating in ancient China. Variouslly described as tradition, a philosophy, a religion, a humanistic or rationalistic religion, a way of governing, or simply a way of life. Confucianism developed from what was later called the Hundred Schools of Thought from the teachings of the Chinese philosopher Confucius (551-479 BCE).

Confucius considered himself a transmitter of cultural values inherited from the Xia (c. 2070-1600 BCE), Shang (c. 1600-1046 BCE) and Western Zhou dynasties (c. 1046-771 BCE). Confucianism was suppressed during the Legalist and autocratic Qin dynasty (221-206 BCE) but survived during the Han dynasty (206 BCE-220 CE).

Confucian approaches edged out the "proto-Taoist" Huang-Lao as the official ideology, while the emperors mixed both with the realist techniques of Legalism.

In the past, according to traditional Confucian beliefs, merchants were unproductive, uncultured, and preoccupied with profit rather than the good of society. The state reluctantly believed that merchants were a necessary evil. Some Confucian thinkers even commended commerce as necessary for the well-being of society (Andrea and Overfield, 2012). It is clear that Confucianism has affected and still continues to affect the commercial industry of China today.

Confucianism is an ideology that is humanistic and non-theistic and does not involve a belief in the supernatural or in a personal god. Confucianism rather is a deep respect and affection for the rich cultural Chinese past, what in the "*Analects*" is called, "*hao xue* 好學," meaning "the love of learning" (Ames and Rosemont 1998).

Xinzhong Yao, in "An introduction to Confucianism", explains that Confucianism is also considered an ethical system. He presents Confucianism as a tradition with many dimensions and as an ancient tradition with contemporary appeal. This gives the reader a richer and clearer view of how Confucianism functioned in the past and of what it means in the present (Yao, 2000).

With particular emphasis on the importance of the family and social harmony, rather than on an otherworldly source of spiritual values, the core of Confucianism is humanistic. Herbert Fingarette's conceptualisation of Confucianism is a philosophical system which regards "the secular as sacred" (Fingarette, 1972).

Confucianism transcends the dichotomy between religion and humanism, considering the ordinary activities of human life, and especially human relationships, as a manifestation of the sacred (Adler, 2014), because they are the expression of humanity's moral nature (xing 性), which has a transcendent anchorage in Heaven (Tiān 天) (Littlejohn, 2010). While Tiān

has some characteristics that overlap the category of godhead, it is primarily an impersonal absolute principle, like the *Dào* (道) or the Brahman.

This intuitive knowing of life cannot be grasped as a concept. Rather, it is known through actual living experience of one's everyday being. Its name, Tao or Dao came from Chinese, where it signifies the way, path, route, road, or sometimes more loosely doctrine, principle, or holistic belief (Zai, 2015).

Laozi in the "Tao Te Ching" explains that the Tao is not a name of a thing, but the underlying natural order of the Universe whose ultimate essence is difficult to circumscribe because it is non-conceptual, yet evident in one's being of aliveness (Laozi, 2018). The Tao is "eternally nameless" and is distinguished from the countless named things that are considered to be its manifestations, the reality of life before its descriptions of it.

To appreciate the role of China, we need to know the entire context and how the western society was during the time China was a world power. In the late eighteenth century, the political economist Adam Smith predicted an eventual equalization of power between the West and the territories it had conquered (Smith, 1776).

The core of Smith's thesis was that humans' natural tendency toward self-interest (or in modern terms, looking out for yourself) results in prosperity. Smith argued that by giving everyone the freedom to produce and exchange goods as they pleased (free trade) and opening the markets up to domestic and foreign competition, people's natural self-interest would promote greater prosperity than stringent government regulations.

This "free-market" force became known as the "invisible hand", but it needed support to bring about its magic. In particular it was the market that emerged from an increasing division of labor, both within production processes and throughout society that created a series of mutual interdependencies, promoting social welfare through individual profit motives.

In other words, once you specialize as a baker and produce only bread, you now must rely on somebody else for your clothes, somebody else for your meat, and yet somebody else for your beer. Meanwhile the people that specialize in clothes now must rely on you for their bread, and so on.

His invisible hand continues to be a powerful force today. Smith overturned the miserly view of mercantilism and gave us a vision of plenty and freedom for all. The free market he envisioned, though not yet fully realized, may have done more to raise the global standard of living than any single idea in history.

According to Giovanni Arrighi (Arrighi, 2007), Confucianism stresses the importance of maintaining balance within the family, harmony within the state, and by extension, the commercial market. The Chinese (Confucian) model of the type of market-based economic development, according to Adam Smith (1723-1790), who is widely considered the pioneer of political economy, was believed to be far superior to the European model and was "much more advisable for governments to pursue."

In fact, Smith even argued that even the late imperial China was the exemplar of market based economic development (Arrighi, 2007). So, Arrighi has provided an answer to this 18th century question; however, there still remains the question of how Confucianism, Confucian ethics, has much to contribute to today's current business ethics, the proper conduct of businesses and business people.

Historically, China held a significant position of world power until the 19th century. However, for the last two hundred years the West has dominated the world technologically, economically, politically, and its people have experienced the most social advancement out of all other world civilizations.

Why did China begin to lag behind the West during the past two centuries?

There were two major reasons. First, the Chinese were arrogant and believed themselves to be superior to all other foreigners. Second, China had a conservative Confucian-based bureaucracy governing the state. As such the bureaucracy stressed that the most important duty to its people was to ensure the maintenance of the Chinese State. This meant that they had to continue to stress the Confucian values of harmony and balance.

The point at which the West's global prominence began is often termed the "Great Divergence." Scholars have provided their own explanations for why the "Great Divergence" occurred (environment, geography, agriculture, population size, social organization, and technology); however, one of the major reasons for the "Great Divergence" is because of an underlying "Cultural Divergence," which began as far back as in the "Axial Age" (c. 800-200 BCE).

This "Cultural Divergence" was due to the beginning of the western philosophies of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle in contrast to that of Confucius in China, to arrive at "Eurocentrism". These philosophers' ideas generated individualistic and democratic thinking, and they were reinforced by the Enlightenment thinkers during the Age of Enlightenment.

"Eurocentrism" is the idea that European civilization, "the West", has some unique historical advantage, some special quality of race or culture or environment or mind or spirit, which gave this human community a permanent superiority over all other communities, at all times in history and down to the very present (Blaunt, 1993).

How do we account for the rapid economic development of nineteenth-century Western Europe in comparison to China? If China is not Westernizing then how is it modernizing?

Historians such as Roger T. Ames, David L. Hall, and Henry Rosemont Jr., have presented the theory that the reason why China did not modernize before Europe is because European culture and that of China, art, politics, religion, the scientific principles and moral ideas, are products of belief systems that have shaped their culture. Not that "divergent paths were taken at a number of crucial moments in the development of Chinese and Western cultures" (Hall, and Ames, 1995). Therefore, because the originators' philosophies were very different from each other's, European culture and that of China are really quite distinct.

In fact, in contrast to Western thought, the Chinese have a widely divergent train of thought ingrained within their minds. The Chinese cultural belief systems are based on the

philosophies of such men like Confucius (the forefather of Confucianism), and thus have played, and still play, a role (though within the last decade this has decreased) in shaping Chinese civilization.

Understanding this “Cultural Divergence” is relevant today because it may help explain China’s lag behind the West, its recent ascent in economic power, and the impact of this cultural perspective on business.

In short, because of this difference in belief systems, the manner in which the Chinese society operates is drastically different compared to Western societies. Every aspect of the Chinese basic way of life is affected by their belief systems (not unlike the West), their government, values, customs, culture, relationships, and even the structure of the Chinese language.

The Chinese have been fundamentally a “relationship-based” society that places emphasis on taking care of the community as a whole.

Currently, a steady change has been developing in China. China has not only caught up to the West but its economy is continuing to accelerate at a rapid rate and may even surpass the West in the near future.

The return of China to global prominence is in part related to the embracing of Confucian principles in modern businesses (Martin, 2010; Ip, 2009). Cultural differences are the underlying, primary, and fundamental drivers of how the West and the East responded to their own differing opportunities.

In the meanwhile, the Chinese Communist Party concluded that it could grow rich without giving up power, in fact it could buy off rebellion and rival America’s strategic superiority.

(b) India

The concept of the Absolute has been used to interpret the early texts of the Indian religions such as those attributed to Yajnavalkya, Nagarjuna and Adi Shankara (Hajime, 1964).

In Jainism, Absolute Knowledge or Kewalya Gnan, is said to be attained by the Arihantas and Tirthankaras, which reflects in their knowing the 360 degrees of the truth and events of past, present and future. All 24 Tirthankaras and many others are Kewalya Gnani or Carriers of Absolute Knowledge.

According to Takeshi Umehara, some ancient texts of Buddhism state that the “truly Absolute and the truly Free must be nothingness” (Umehara, 1970), the “void” (Oru, and Wang, 1992). Yet, the early Buddhist scholar Nagarjuna, states Paul Williams, does not present “emptiness” as some kind of Absolute, rather it is “the very absence (a pure non-existence) of inherent existence” in Mādhyamaka school of the Buddhist philosophy (Williams, 2002).

According to Glyn Richards, the early texts of Hinduism state that the Brahman or the non-dual Brahman-Atman is the Absolute (Richards, 1995; Chaudhuri, 1954; Simoni-Wastila, 2002).

The term has also been adopted by Aldous Huxley in his perennial philosophy to interpret various religious traditions, including Indian religions (Huxley, 2009), and influenced other strands of non-dualistic and “New Age” thought.

In Hinduism, Brahman (Sanskrit: ब्रह्मन्) connotes the highest universal principle, the ultimate reality in the universe (Lochtefeld, 2002; Raju, 2006; Fowler, 2002). In major schools of Hindu philosophy, it is the immaterial, efficient, formal and final cause of all that exists (Raju, 2006; Dhavamony, 2002; Clooney, 2010). It is the pervasive, infinite, eternal truth, consciousness and bliss which does not change, yet is the cause of all changes (Lochtefeld, 2002; Fowler, 2002; Brodd, 2009). Brahman as a metaphysical concept refers to the single binding unity behind diversity in all that exists in the universe.

Brahman is a Vedic Sanskrit word, and it is conceptualized in Hinduism, states Paul Deussen, as the “creative principle which lies realized in the whole world”. Brahman is a key concept found in the Vedas, and it is extensively discussed in the early Upanishads (Philips, 1998). The Vedas conceptualize Brahman as the Cosmic Principle (Philips, 1998). In the Upanishads, it has been variously described as “Sat-cit-ānanda” (truth-consciousness-bliss) (Goodman, 1994), and as the unchanging, permanent, highest reality.

Brahman is discussed in Hindu texts in conjunction with the concept of Atman (Sanskrit: आत्मन्), (Self), personal, impersonal, or Para Brahman, or in various combinations of these qualities depending on the philosophical school.

In dualistic schools of Hinduism such as the theistic Dvaita Vedanta, Brahman is different from Atman (Self) in each being.

In non-dual schools such as the Advaita Vedanta, the substance of Brahman is identical to the substance of Atman, is everywhere and inside each living being, and there is connected spiritual oneness in all existence.

(c) Technical-Scientific Culture

Technology has advanced throughout human history (though at varying speeds) and has accelerated greatly over the past, 100-150 years in particular. Technology is advancing rapidly across much of the world, but some countries are ahead of the pack, enabling their citizens to enjoy advanced benefits including more efficient transportation, the best healthcare, and green initiatives.

The National Science Board (Board) is required under the National Science Foundation (NSF) Act, 42 U.S.C. § 1863 (j) (1) to prepare and transmit the biennial Science and Engineering Indicators report to the President and Congress every even-numbered year. The report is prepared by the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES) within NSF under the guidance of the Board.

Indicators provide information on the state of the U.S. science and engineering (S&E) enterprise over time and within a global context. The report is a policy-relevant, policy-neutral source of high-quality U.S. and international data. The indicators presented in the

report are quantitative representations relevant to the scope, quality, and vitality of the S&E enterprise.

This report summarizes key findings from the nine thematic reports providing in-depth data and information on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education at all levels; the STEM workforce; U.S. and international research and development performance; U.S. competitiveness in high-technology industries; invention, knowledge transfer, and innovation; and public perceptions and awareness of science and technology. Indicators also include an interactive, online tool that enables state comparisons on a variety of S&E indicators. This report, the nine thematic reports, and the online State Indicators data tool together comprise the full Indicators suite of products (NSF, 2021).

Recently, the author was invited by the Vignan's Foundation for Science, Technology & Research (VFSTRU), to give a few presentations on "Computational Intelligence and Brain-Inspired Systems" (Cyber-Techno-Social Intelligence) at their affiliated institutions as the Lakireddy Bali Reddy College of Engineering (Fiorini, 2018). This was the right opportunity to personally check the state of scientific innovation and technology in India.

The number of prestigious Indian Institutes of Technology trebled in the space of a decade. But new arrivals are struggling to establish themselves and must quickly turn things around.

The Indian Institutes of Technology, such as IIT Delhi, are world-renowned for the quality of their students and faculty members. But India's Auditor General has expressed concerns about some of the newest institutions.

There probably isn't a country in the world that isn't looking to build or expand billion-dollar tech corporations.

The United States and China dominate the landscape of "unicorns", privately owned technology start-ups valued at US\$1 billion or more. But now some of the most rapid development is happening in India.

According to government data, India recorded 44 new billion-dollar technology companies in 2021, compared with 10 in 2020 and 9 in 2019 (the country has a total of 83 unicorns). Some analysts are predicting that 2022 will see another surge, with new companies in financial, agricultural, and educational technology joining new life-sciences companies, games companies and online marketplaces.

IIT Madras in Chennai, for example, is attempting to raise \$2 million for a new endowment fund to increase the proportion of women in assistant-professor roles from 15% to 20%. And in June 2021, IIT Bombay received funding to establish the institute's first faculty-chair position to be held by a woman. Such practices need to be shared more widely across IITs.

It is true that high-quality universities do not become high-quality institutions overnight. For example, when the Nature Index compiled a list of some of the world's leading universities under the age of 50, around 70% were at least 20 years old. But youth is not a reason for infrastructure delays, nor for failures in research governance.

India's national and state governments must work with IITs to address the audit report's concerns quickly. All need to grasp the nettle so that the IITs can continue to provide science and technology leaders for India and the world.

4. Conclusion

A few years ago, the two superpowers seemed almost to become one, such was the symbiosis between the world factory (Chinese) and its end market (American). That era has closed and will not return. What many experts considered impossible is happening. The tariffs were just the accelerator of a divorce that will change the maps of our future.

At 6:00 AM, on February 24, 2022, Russian Federation started its Special Military Operation, as defined by Putin, invading Ukraine.

At the same time a series of COVID-related shutdowns in China do not, on the surface, appear to have much in common, yet both are accelerating a shift that is taking the world in a dangerous direction, splitting it into two spheres, one centered on Washington, D.C., the other on Beijing.

The Middle Eastern representatives have no interest in abandoning relations with China, the leading trading partner for Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, or breaking with Russia, which established itself as a force to be reckoned with when it saved Syrian President Bashar al-Assad through its military intervention in his war.

That said, they are watching Ukraine with fascination, because a Ukrainian victory, with a strong, united West behind it, would force a rethink about U.S. commitment and competence and shift the trajectory of declining transatlantic influence and relevance.

Conversely, Putin's victory, even at a huge cost to Russians and Ukrainians alike, would accelerate Western decline as an effective global actor.

From our perspective, taking into consideration analysis of the previous sections, we see the following global divergences emerging, which can be grouped into three main areas: (a) Religious-Political, (b) Sacred-Secular, and (c) East-West Cultural.

a. Religious-Political. There was a tendency in Byzantium towards "caesaropapism". Caesaropapism is the idea of combining the social and political power of secular government with religious power, or of making secular authority superior to the spiritual authority of the Church; especially concerning the connection of the Church with government. The Catholic Church shared communion with the Eastern Orthodox Church until the East-West Schism in 1054, disputing particularly the authority of the pope. Before the Council of Ephesus in 431AD, the Church of the East also shared in this communion, as did the Oriental Orthodox Churches before the Council of Chalcedon in 451AD; all separated primarily over differences in Christology. In the 16th century, the Reformation led to Protestantism breaking away. From the late 20th century, the Catholic Church has been criticised for its teachings on sexuality, its doctrine against ordaining women, and its handling of sexual abuse cases involving clergy.

- b. Sacred-Secular.** With particular emphasis on the importance of the family and social harmony, rather than on an otherworldly source of spiritual values, the core of Confucianism is humanistic. According to Herbert Fingarette's conceptualisation of Confucianism as a philosophical system which regards "the secular as sacred" (Fingarette, 1972). Confucianism transcends the dichotomy between religion and humanism, considering the ordinary activities of human life, and especially human relationships as a manifestation of the sacred (Adler, 2014). In short, the key difference between the West and China is that European society has always been focused on the "individual," whereas the Chinese have always centered their focus on "relationships," the interaction between people, or "guanxi 關係", westernized in "Junzi".

The concept of the Absolute has been used to interpret the early texts of the Indian religions such as those attributed to Yajñavalkya, Nāgārjuna and Ādi Śaṅkara (Hajime, 1964). In Jainism, Absolute Knowledge or Kewalya Gnan, is said to be attained by the Arihantas and Tirthankaras, which reflects in their knowing the 360 degrees of the truth and events of past, present and future. All 24 Tirthankaras and many others are Kewalya Gnani or Carriers of Absolute Knowledge. According to Takeshi Umehara, some ancient texts of Buddhism state that the "truly Absolute and the truly Free must be nothingness" (Umehara, 1970), the "void" (Orru, and Wang, 1992). Yet, the early Buddhist scholar Nāgārjuna, states Paul Williams, does not present "emptiness" as some kind of Absolute, rather it is "the very absence (a pure non-existence) of inherent existence" in Mādhyamaka school of the Buddhist philosophy (Williams, 2002). According to Glyn Richards, the early texts of Hinduism state that the Brahman or the non-dual Brahman–Ātman is the Absolute (Richards, 1995; Chaudhuri, 1954; Simoni-Wastila, 2002).

Brahman is a Vedic Sanskrit word, and it is conceptualized in Hinduism, states Paul Deussen, as the "creative principle which lies realized in the whole world". Brahman is a key concept found in the Vedas, and it is extensively discussed in the early Upanishads (Philips, 1998). The Vedas conceptualize Brahman as the Cosmic Principle (Philips, 1998). In the Upanishads, it has been variously described as "Sat-cit-ānanda" (truth-consciousness-bliss) (Goodman, 1994), and as the unchanging, permanent, highest reality.

The point is, the spiritual and philosophical experiences of the East have determined the way they view commerce and the economy. Their economy is more culture-centric and focuses on the development of the society first as opposed to the rise of the Individual, which is seen in the important role given to the government than the individual. Though this trend is significantly changing, we see that notion of collective-centric governance is a by product of the countries' spiritual experiences and beliefs. Similarly, Putin is influenced by Russia's orthodox version of Christianity which certainly plays a role in influencing his recent actions, since he sees himself as a savior, a messiah.

- c. East-West Cultural.** The point at which the West's global prominence began is often termed the "Great Divergence." Scholars have provided their own explanations as to why the "Great Divergence" occurred (environment, geography, agriculture, population size,

social organization, and technology); however, one of the major reasons for the “Great Divergence” is because of an underlying “Cultural Divergence,” which began as far back as in the “Axial Age” (c. 800-200 BCE). This “Cultural Divergence” was due to the beginning of the western philosophies of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle in contrast to that of Confucius in China, to arrive to “Eurocentrism”. These philosophers’ ideas generated individualistic and democratic thinking, and then were reinforced by the Enlightenment thinkers during the “Age of Enlightenment”. Western and Eastern thought have a widely divergent train of thought ingrained within their minds. The Chinese cultural belief systems are based on the philosophies of such men like Confucius (the forefather of Confucianism), and thus have played, and still play, a role (though within the last decade has decreased) in shaping Chinese civilization.

As a matter of fact, the United States has decided to throw China off track within this decade. China has played the Russian card to prevent this, by forging an almost unprecedented agreement with Russia. For the first time since World War II, the Americans are therefore faced with two great powers, the second and third of the planet, in a game that now follows the logic of war. In this triangular scheme, Washington has two options for avoiding a possible simultaneous confrontation with both rivals. The first, elementary according to the grammar of power, is to play the weakest against the strongest: Moscow against Beijing. The second, riskier, is to liquidate Russia first and then close the match with the now isolated China. By suffocating it in its corner of the world where, no longer being tied to the Russians, Beijing would be completely surrounded: along the seas by the India-Australia-Japan line remote-controlled from Washington. On the ground by almost all the neighbors, India and Russia in the lead. It is this second hypothesis that begins to circulate in Washington. And that Biden is illustrating to Atlantic and Asian partners, because America certainly cannot do it alone. The answers so far received from possible or actual allies are quite promising. Above all and first of all, obviously the British cousins. Global Britain lives in symbiosis with the United States. The geopolitical strategy of Boris Johnson, just fired, therefore presents a blatantly anti-Russian profile even before an anti-Chinese profile. In the line of the traditional, atavistic British Russophobia, but with that extra spice that Brexit and the consequent total alignment with Washington require. The “brilliant second” answered yes to Number One’s appeal: ready to take out Russia, by hook or by crook. Since the anti-Russian clash would all be played in Europe, and more specifically in that middle part of the continent that separates Germany from Russia, so that in history it has often been divided between the two empires.

On land and/or at sea, “accidents” with unpredictable effects could occur. With the Romanians ready to assert themselves, and to welcome any NATO contingents (also to resolve their Moldovan-Transnistrian question, a piece of Romania that Bucharest considers intimately its own, only provisionally independent). Between the Black and the Caucasus, after the clashes over Nagorno-Karabakh the Georgian powder keg is also likely to explode again. Here, among other things, the jihadist chain remains a non-negligible factor. If necessary, Americans and other Westerners could turn it on against

Moscow, along the lines of Afghanistan in the 1980s. And Russia? It is not too subtle. If it were in a tight spot, Moscow would be ready for war. Because she would be affected by her own survival. In the meantime, as per ancient custom, Americans are concerned with establishing or re-establishing profitable relations with Germany, France and Italy, the three main continental countries, which have never shared the anti-Russian passion of the former USSR satellites. The next few months will tell us whether this growing American pressure, via NATO, on Russia will be contained or if, perhaps inadvertently, it will produce the spark of a conflict with imponderable consequences.

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