

# An Appraisal of the Chronology Problem in the “Rise of the West” Question

## “Batı’nın Yükselişi” Mevzusunda Kronoloji Sorunu Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme

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### Abstract

*“Rise of the West”, “Grand Question”, “The Great Divergence” are all different nomenclature for a pristine problematic in social sciences: The supposed discrepancy between the “East” and the “West” in a variety of domains whereby the “West” is assumed to acquire supremacy over the “East”. In the former part of our essay we try to acquaint the reader with the aforementioned literature. We do not intend to present a detailed account but just the important milestones delineating only the broadest contours of the discussion. After providing a general overview of the “Rise of the West” literature we dwell upon the “Problem of Chronology” haunting it. We call it the “Problem of Chronology” since it is essentially providing an adequate answer to the following question “When had the West Risen?” We think the researchers have too much engaged in providing an answer to the “Why” question, which is both harder to address and prone to much prejudice. According to us, a better approach is to put “Problem of Chronology” as the central piece of the argument. It is a clear cut and more tangible question to tackle. However, we pinpoint that, providing a solution to the problem requires answering a preliminary question: “In which domains should we seek a chronology?” We argue that a three pronged approach derived from Mann’s theory of social power and realist International Relations theory may be useful in achieving a methodologically satisfactory solution to the problem.*

**Key Words:** Rise of the West, Problem of Chronology, Eurocentrism, Mann’s theory of social power,

### Özet

*“Batı’nın Yükselişi”, “Büyük Sorun” ve “Büyük İraksama”, sosyal bilimlerdeki çok eski bir problematike işaret eden farklı terimlerdir. Burada, Batı’nın Doğu üzerinde üstünlük sağladığı varsayılan bazı alanlar vasıtasıyla “Batı” ile “Doğu” arasında bir fark oluştuğu düşünülmektedir. Çalışmamızın birinci bölümünde okuyucuya ilgili literatür tanıtılmaya çalışılmıştır. Ayrıntılı bir anlatımdan ziyade, konuya ilişkin önemli hususlar ön plana çıkarılarak, tartışmanın ana hatları belirlenmeye çalışılmıştır. “Batı’nın Yükselişi” literatürüne yönelik bu genel değerlendirmenin ardından, konunun önemli bir boyutunu oluşturan “kronoloji sorunu” üzerinde durulmuştur. “Kronoloji Problemi” olarak adlandırdığımız problem, şu sorunun cevabını aramaktadır: “Batı ne zaman yükseldi?”. Araştırmacıların cevaplama daha zor ve önyargılara daha açık olan “Neden?” sorusuna odaklandıklarını düşünmekteyiz. Bize göre daha belirgin ve somut olması nedeniyle “Kronoloji Problemi”ni tartışmaların merkezine koymak daha faydalıdır. Ancak burada da öncelikle cevaplanması gereken soru, “Kronoloji Problemi”nin hangi alanlarda inceleneceğidir. Mann’in sosyal güç teorisi ile realist Uluslararası İlişkiler teorisinden türetilen üçlü bir yaklaşımın bu soruya metodolojik olarak tatmin edici bir cevap vermede faydalı olabileceğini düşünmekteyiz.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Batı’nın Yükselişi, Kronoloji Problemi, Avrupamerkezcilik, Mann’ın sosyal güç teorisi

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*"I cannot promise very much.  
I give you the images I know.  
Lie still with me and watch  
We laugh and we touch"*

Anne Sexton

## I. Introduction

In 1998 two leading scholars, one of them a versatile development economist and the other an eminent economic historian, performed one of the most colourful scholarly exchanges of the last decades. Andre Gunder Frank and David Landes, both had their radiant books published same year in a culmination of an age-old debate. The issue at hand was harking back to at least a century and they were fighting on a battleground beginning to shape at least half a century ago.

In the year of 1905, Max Weber, the German sociologist, inaugurated a debate which later proved to be of gigantic scale both with its scope and its depth. The list of the antagonists stretches out: Sociologists, biologists, geographers, historians, economists, economic historians, military historians and so on.

There are ample expositions of the literature involving this debate so we needn't dwell on it lest we fall in repeat. However we have to put the literature in perspective before we commence on wading through the rough terrain of our essay. We do not intend to present a detailed account but just the important milestones to draw a scheme delineating only the broadest contours of the discussion.

After providing a general overview we are going to analyze the current status of the debate wherein we demonstrate the need for a different approach. Then we can proceed to elucidate a three pronged appraisal devised to explore the three main strands of the debate.

## II. The Origins

Max Weber in his *Protestant Ethic* claimed only the West in the whole world posses the "rational mind" that would allow the flourishing of modern science, modern art, modern law and modern economy, a scion of specialization and capitalism -needless to say of course which also present only in the west-. Weber even asserts there may be some racial factor at play.<sup>1</sup>

Weber's ideas in fact were more in line with the "Belle Époque" prevailed a little while ago than the "Fin de Siècle" milieu dominant in the Conti-

1 J.M. Blaut, *Eight Eurocentric Historians*, (New York: Guilford Press, 2000) is a good place to start with some emphasize on older works. R. Duchesne, "Defending the Rise of the Western Culture against its Multicultural Critics", *The European Legacy*, Vol. 10/5, (2005):455-484 presents the literature from another view.

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ment. They were in some way the incarnation of the Europe, colonizing or overwhelming the whole "non-western" world with its tremendous economic and military might, emerging triumphant; and a reflection of the over-confident mindset of average European intellectual occasionally slipping into racism.<sup>2</sup>

Nevertheless in reality prospects were getting gloomy for Europe. The euphoria and self-confident jubilant ambiance was beginning to give way to a rather dull and wavering one. It was in this atmosphere Oswald Spengler gave birth to *Decline of the West* in 1918 and it was the physical and intellectual shock of the WWI that perhaps paved the way for a reconsideration of the place of the West in a larger scheme. Toynbee's novel comparative macro -in both chronological and spatial sense- history of civilisations named *A Study of History* seem to serve this end.

Toynbee's first volume which was merely prequel to the projected further volumes appeared in 1934 and the twelfth and the last volume was to be published in 1961. Will and Ariel Durant's eleven volumes of *The Story of Civilisation*, emerged between 1935-1975, is another example. The burgeoning of macro histories and comparisons using rather sweeping and problematic concepts such as civilisation may be somehow disturbing the "rigidity standards" of orthodox historians; nonetheless they still were fostering an outlook putting premium on a broader view and the big picture which is more akin to contemporary world history approach.<sup>3</sup>

For all its intermittent outspoken jingoistic account, Weber was the first one to strive for a systematically worked out comparative perspective<sup>4</sup> which won him the honour of posing the problem and opening the curtain. The problem for Weber of course was a matter of explaining the crumbling of the non-western civilizations against the western ways. This was an evident fact thereby this phenomenon of western superiority has to be explained by some factor.

- 2 In any case the British intellegencia was talking of the Eastern Question and driving the Turks back into far Asia, "half European" Russians were defeated in Crimean War, obstinate Chinese was shown who's the boss with two Opium Wars and the subsequent Taiping and Boxer rebellions were crushed with the help of the European Powers, English expanded their territories to north and interior in India and to the east Burma, Persia was spared from a direct invasion but it was also reduced to a semi colony where Britain and Russia had their "sphere of influences". Indians Persians, Chinese all of Asia except Japan subdued and late comers were busy with the crunches falling off the table in Africa. The world was not enough for Europe and it was the heyday of "gunboat diplomacy". For all that, 19<sup>th</sup> Century was also the swansong of Europe if not West. After two world wars Europe lost much of its power never to enjoy such supremacy again.
- 3 See C. Dawson, Toynbee's Study of History: The Place of Civilizations in History, *International Affairs*, 31/2, (1955):149-158; K. Thompson, Toynbee's Approach to History Reviewed, *Ethics*, 65/4, (1955): 287-303; W. McDougall, "Mais ce n'est pas l'histoire!": Some Thoughts on Toynbee, McNeill, and the Rest of Us, *The Journal of Modern History*, 58/1, (1986):19-42 for reactions to Toynbee.
- 4 We may be giving undue credit to Weber since possibly "Asiatic Mode of Production" argument of Marx and the literature it spawned can be deemed as a systematic attempt for comparative analysis. On the other hand Marx's focus was not a comparison of West with non-western civilizations neither he is much interested in explaining the underlying factors in uniqueness of the West.

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The second act in the play opened with the coming of two extraordinary historians, Joseph Needham and William McNeil, into the stage. The story of Needham's involvement was amazing; as he was discussing three Chinese biochemist colleagues about the Chinese culture, science and technology he decided to study China.<sup>5</sup> Within five years he abandoned biochemistry and set on a work titled *Science and Civilisation in China* which turned out to be a colossal enterprise. First volume was published in 1954 and additional volumes kept on coming up to 1998 even after his death in 1995.

The main thrust of Needham's work was the "Grand Question"<sup>6</sup>; seeking an explanation for the "relative failure of Chinese civilisation": "Needham assumed that there is a significant relation between the Scientific Revolution and the origins of Industrial Revolution" and despite impressing scientific achievements in the past China yet "failed to make the breakthrough to experimental and mathematical science and hence to the Industrial Revolution".<sup>7</sup> As Finlay put, "Science and Civilisation was dedicated to answering this 'Great Question' from the beginning".<sup>8</sup>

In the meantime, in 1954, the same year Needham published his first volume, McNeill was beginning to write his classic opus magnum *The Rise of the West: A History of Human Community*. It was rather unexceptional in the sense that it is a single volume macro history. This greatly contributed to the readability and popularity of the book which immediately became a huge success in 1963. The material in the book also formed the foundations for another book by McNeill to appear 25 years later in 1998: *A World History*.

McNeill's book was not so "Eurocentric" as its name suggests since its principle theme was the interplay between civilisations as a motor of social change. On the other hand, as McNeill later admits, "historians approach their subject from the moving platform of their own times" and the book was "an expression of the post-war imperial mood in the United States".<sup>9</sup> Post W.W. II. economic boom of the West and "the United States, of course, passing through the apex of its post-war capacity to influence others thanks to its superior skills and wealth" was to play a crucial role in forging of the McNeill's work.<sup>10</sup>

McNeill's and Needham's contributions are quite important because they set the parameters and context for the studies to come. "Rise of the West"

5 R. Finlay, "China the West and World History in Joseph Needham's Science and Civilisation in China", *Journal of World History*, 11/2, (2000): 279.

6 Actually the first usage of the term "Grand Question" to refer Needham's inquiry was by Lynn White Jr., in the review symposium on Science and Civilisation in Isis. It was also subsequently adopted by Needham. Ibid., 279, Footnote 61.

7 Ibid., 279.

8 Ibid., 279.

9 W. McNeill, "The Rise of the West After Twenty Five Years", *Journal of World History*, 1/1, (1990): 1.

10 Ibid., 2.

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and "Great Question" (Decline of the East) was to be the Janus faces of the same topos which for the next two decades researchers would look out for explanations.

Wallerstein's acclaimed *The Modern World-System* comprising three volumes and Nobel laureate Douglass North's *The Rise of the Western World* were all endeavours to bring up mainly economic explanations for the "Rise of the West". 1970s were an epoch West has to endure the nasty consequences of two severe oil shocks and the subsequent economic recessions whence economic factors became even more pronounced.

The second wave<sup>11</sup> of "transition debate", wherein a number of Marxist scholars, economic historians and medievalists discussed the causes and nature of transition from feudalism to capitalism, can also be viewed as a part of this general structure; if capitalism somehow accounts for the "Rise of the West" then some light must be cast upon when and how it began.

1980s witnessed the advent of right-wing conservative political recipes with a distinct flavour of neo-liberal economic policies prepared with a view to healing the economy; it was the age of Thatcherism and Reaganomics. Perhaps some repercussions of those currents may be found in John A. Hall's *Powers and Liberties: The Causes and Consequences of the Rise of the West*. (1986) Hall's explanation calls for political fragmentation, competitiveness and minimal government intervention to flourish economy, not to mention, China and India failed to establish such a system and fettered development.

However the single most important book of the era was the *European Miracle* (1981) by E.L. Jones which paved the way for further studies such as *The Triumph of the West* (1985) and *Europe and the Rise of Capitalism* (1988), which is essentially a collection of the papers submitted to a symposium held in 1985 under the title "The European Miracle". This highly influential book was to be the classic account of the so called "Eurocentrist" history and most modern discussion tends to predicate upon it.

What Jones had done was to compile a variety of arguments to pull together a coherent thesis explaining the "Rise of the West". There were numer-

11 The first wave of the "Transition Debate" started with the appearance of Maurice Dobb's *Studies in the Development of Capitalism* in 1949 and Paul Sweezy's critique of the book in Spring 1950 Issue of *Science and Society*. The debate climaxed in early 1950s via an assortment of articles. A collection of these articles may be found in R. Hilton (ed.), *The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism*. (London: Verso Books, 1978). A new 2006 edition of the books testifies that the problem has not lost its significance despite all the time. The second surge of debate on a similar theme was initiated by an article written by Robert Brenner in 1976. It "occasioned much interest and discussion" so a symposium on it was published in the prestigious journal *Past & Present*. Both Brenner's and the other contributors' articles can be found in T.H. Aston and C.H.E. Philpin (eds.), *The Brenner Debate: Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

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ous material or environmental factors as well as immaterial cultural factors cited by Jones.<sup>12</sup>

Despite all the pleasantness of the “Finding the reasons lying behind the Rise of the West” game played during the 80s, some dissident voices began to echo. It is not surprising that this triumphant and self-congratulatory mood setting eulogies for the West became tedious and “The calm scholarly serenity with which the rise of the West had been debated in the past has given way in recent years to acrimonious exchanges over the worth of distinctive cultural traditions”.<sup>13</sup>

The first salvoes of the so called “multiculturalist” tradition’s counterfire were Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (1979), Hichem Djait’s *Europe and Islam* (1985), Martin Bernal’s *Black Athena* (1987), and Samir Amin’s *Eurocentrism* (1989). Despite all the fanfare those works had, they were aimed at rejecting Eurocentric ideology, “...largely by examining that ideology at the ideological level itself”<sup>14</sup>

In the meantime, Janet Abu-Lughod was opening a somehow more historical perspective by arguing that up to 1350 there was some sort of equilibrium between Europe, Middle East and China, which together formed a world system between 1250 and 1350 in *Before European Hegemony* (1989).

*1492: The Debate on Colonialism, Eurocentrism, and History* (1992) edited by James M. Blaut and the following *The Colonizer’s Model of the World: Geographical Diffusionism and Eurocentric History* (1993) in which Blaut further developed his thesis, were also re-interpretations of historical record attempting to put the “Rise of the West” into a period after the “Age of Explorations”. These works were extremely important since they were challenging the cherished “Eurocentric” notion that European civilization had a pristine superiority over the other ones.

Roy Bin Wong’s *China Transformed Historical Change and the Limits of the European Experience* (1997) was another great landmark for the debate because it

12 Northern winters were impairing the “build-up of endoparasitic infestation” that Asia suffers much from; “European agricultural society was able to avoid a comparable history of authoritarianism ...by virtue of an open-ended productive environment of forest land and rainfall farming”; “Europeans commanded more working capital per head than Asians mainly in the form of livestock.”; and this also bring about “Nutritional advantages over the cereal diets of the older civilizations...”; “Geo physically and climatically Europe is quieter than most other parts of earth.”; minimizing natural disasters; “Europeanness” of pre-historical settlers of Europe consisting of a “decentralised, aggressive” spirit; peculiar European marriage pattern favouring nuclear family instead of extended family facilitating a mitigation effect for Malthusian trap; “Social and political decentralization...fundamental to economic and technological progress” etc., E.L. Jones, *The European Miracle, Environments, Economics and Geopolitics in the History of Europe and Asia*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 6, 10, 4, 48, 24, 13, 14 -16, 68.

13 Duchesne, “Defending the Rise”, 455.

14 A.G. Frank’s review of “The Colonizer’s Model of the World” in *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 85/3, (1995), 589.

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further pushed the chronology of the European rise into the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and the Industrial Revolution.

China had always been tough nut to crack for students of the "Rise of the West" problem. Its huge potential, its past contributions to science and technology and the political and economic power it had enjoyed all tends to obscure the analysts theories sometimes. But Wong's bold thesis which contends that before Industrial Revolution Europe and China was on a similar course in terms of economic performance had a profound impact upon the course of the debate.<sup>15</sup> This twist in the debate precipitated a structure in which economy is ascendant and on the focal point, though it always had been a key aspect of the debate.

It was against this background Frank's *ReOrient: Global Economy in the Asian Age* (1998) and Landes' *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations* (1998) engaged each other. In fact, both of them drew heavily from the earlier literature and developed much sophisticated versions of them: Frank again attributed the colonies and imperialism an essential role and insistent on an altered chronology that takes the "Industrial Revolution" as a 'structural break' whereas Landes was adamant that it was some sort of a Weberian cultural process whereby Europe lifted itself up much earlier although he also stressed the environmental superiorities of Europe leading a "democratic society" rather than a "despotic one".

### III. The Problem of Chronology and Need for a Different Approach

The debate Frank and Landes involved in was a seminal one in the sense that it spawned numerous studies. Richardo Duchesne mounted a counterattack with his article published in the journal "Science & Society".<sup>16</sup> Soon two commentaries on this article produced by Wong and Goldstone, and a reply from Duchesne appeared in the same journal<sup>17</sup> in addition to the two articles by Jack Goldstone, one proposing a new theory and chronology hinging on the "...events in the late seventeenth century..", and Kenneth Pomeranz's book *The Great Divergence: China, Europe and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (2001) which by itself became a source of further debate.

What the "multiculturalist" school brought into the agenda of the debate, whether consciously or inadvertently, may be a quite useful insight for

15 See P. Richardson's review of "China Transformed: Historical Change and the Limits of the European Experience" in *The Economic History Review*, New Series, 52/1, (1999), 199. "The underpinning theme is that Europe and China shared a Smithian market dynamic prior to the industrial revolution..."

16 R. Duchesne, "Between Sinocentrism and Eurocentrism: Debating Andre Gunder Frank's *ReOrient: Global Economy in the Asian Age*", *Science & Society*, 65/4, (2001/2002): 428-463. Duchesne, objecting the main arguments of Wong and Frank, did not agree "...as late as 1750-1800 China was the dominant player in the world market, and that its agriculture was more efficient and productive than Europe's "

17 Comments and reply of Duchesne were assembled under the title Eurocentrism, Sinocentrism and the World History: A Symposium, *Science & Society*, 67/2, (2003): 173-205.

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the “Rise of the West” problematic: The Chronology Problem. To put it more bluntly, however diverse may be the contributions of the “multiculturalist” view, they essentially take us back to the same question “When the West had risen ?” for usually their works themselves are in theory would be the product of the following questions “Had the West really risen ?” “If so when ?”. I rather think the latter is the single most important question we would eventually have to grapple anyway. While the discussion entails much deeper methodological problems such as materialism idealism, principal agent problem, historical objectivity etc. any attempt to deal with the “Rise of the West” sooner or later would have to come to grips with the chronology problem.

At first instance, it may seem that the chronology has been debated much or it always had been the axis of the debate, but it never really been, in fact rather it is the least debated one. The problem is that, all the authors of the debate are more interested in the causes of the “Rise of the West” than its date, their chronologies are rather a function or by-product of the “cause” they conceive. For example “multiculturalist” historians have an inclination to put the “colonisation” at the center of their explanatory variables while the “Eurocentrist” approach chooses cultural variables which requires a much earlier point of departure of the West from the rest of civilizations. In this respect chronology is merely a parameter fixed or determined by the “cause”. But is this an appropriate research strategy for the problem at hand? It might appear as one, since post Annalles historians are much encouraged to fathom the root causes, underlying processes rather than being simple annalists recording events. However, we may keep in mind that sometimes even the construction of a “chronology” could be extremely complex.

Taking the value laden nature of the subject into consideration, it is not surprising that some researchers would have some “axioms”, in their head, about the place of the West, in a scale in which the West is depicted as either a “villain” subjugating and tyrannizing the rest or a “hero” carrying out the task of the “white man’s burden”, “delivering civilization to savages”, on the extreme sides. However, to what extent those “axioms” affect the opting of their variables and thus their chronology ? Our answer is obvious: to a great extent. The highly subjective values involved in assessing the “Eurocentrism” could hardly be expressed in a more appropriate way than Dirlik did:

...Eurocentrism as a historical phenomenon is not to be understood without reference to the structures of power that EuroAmerica produced over the last five centuries, which in turn produced Eurocentrism, globalized its effects, and universalized its historical claims. Those structures of power include the economic (capitalism, *capitalist* property relations, markets and modes of production, imperialism, etc.), the political (a system of nation-states, and the nation-form, most importantly, new organizations to handle problems pre-

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sented by such a reordering of the world, new legal forms, etc.), the social (production of classes, genders, races, ethnicities, religious forms as well as the push toward individual-based social forms), and cultural (including new conceptions of space and time, new ideas of the good life, and a new developmentalist conception of the life-world). The list is woefully inadequate, and the categorizations themselves are admittedly problematic; but it suffices to indicate the intractability of the problem of Eurocentrism, which is my major purpose here.<sup>18</sup>

#### IV. Towards an Operational Conclusion

The quintessential question emerging from this discourse is: Is it in some way possible to avoid those presuppositions? Of course, any serious student of philosophy of history or philosophy of science would know and say that every discipline -especially social sciences- requires some "axioms" or "presuppositions", and it is not possible for the researcher to be immune from those.

On the other hand it should be the task of the researcher to develop new strategies of methodology to minimize the distortion created by those "presuppositions". Following this line of thought, again several new questions emerge: "How can we build a methodology to handle the problem of comparing civilizations?" "Which aspects of the civilizations should we compare?" At this point Issawi is worth to quote:

It would be fruitless to argue whether Aquinas was a deeper thinker than Averroes, St. Francis a more profound mystic than Ibn al-Arabi, the *Divine Comedy* a greater poem than the *Shahnameh*, Boticeili a finer painter than Bizhad, or St. Peter's a nobler structure than the Sulaymanieh.<sup>19</sup>

The much neglected work of Issawi can perhaps guide us: Since a civilization comprises both material and immaterial aspects one should be aware of comparing the immaterial ones. Even if one assumes, like most of the "Eurocentrist" historians, that there may be some vital "mental patterns", "thought structures", "cultural variables" playing an indispensable role in the "Rise of the West" it is extremely difficult for the historian to pinpoint those processes and it would rather be the incarnation of those immaterial processes that we observe. Despite Collingwood's famous Hegelian definition of history that "All history is the history of thought"<sup>20</sup> it is notoriously hard to write a history full of etheric thought in practice. It is rather the deeds, actions or behaviours of the people we observe per se than the thoughts or motivations of them.<sup>21</sup>

18 A. Dirlik, "Is There History after Eurocentrism?: Globalism, Postcolonialism, and the Disavowal of History", *Cultural Critique*, 42, (Spring 1999): 8.

19 C. Issawi, "Europe, the Middle East and the Shift in Power: Reflections on a Theme by Marshall Hodgson", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 22/4, (1980): 493.

20 R.G., Collingwood, *The Idea of History*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 215.

21 In this instance we can see some students of philosophy of science steeped in relativist-con-

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Therefore dwelling on the material side of the civilisation concept, which would be more amenable to measurement and observation, will, at least in theory, be a more appropriate strategy to pursue. But the problem of dimensions of comparison remains. In which aspects of material culture, could a civilization be superior than others ?

Theories of social power may help us finding an answer. According to Michael Mann there are four sources of social power: military, economic, political and ideological.<sup>22</sup> Any comparison of power thus may take these set of variables into account. However, political and ideological powers are both harder to define and gauge. Hobson recently made a critique of Mann's theory on account of being an eclectic theory heavily influenced by realist international relations (IR) approach.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless we think both Mann's theory and realist IR theories may be particularly useful for setting an empirically feasible model of power comparison.

For long, realist IR theorists were busy trying to measure national power.<sup>24</sup> The concept of national power, of course, is a very different story than the power elements of a civilization. However, still there is a certain degree of analogy that could be exploited and it may be of some help. For example technology which was not deemed as a "building block of" national power in traditional approaches, has recently been identified as a "building block" of national power.<sup>25</sup>

The trinity of military, economic and technological power might perhaps be a good starting point for shaping an empirical comparison model. In fact "de facto" those variables are the channels the "Rise of the West" debate already

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structivist école invoking an à la Kuhnian "theory ladenness of observation" and some connoisseurs of philosophy of history recalling the notion that all we can get is "*historia rerum gestarum*" not the elusive "*res gestae*", raising their brows. Yet as we have referred earlier however empirically inclined a methodology may be, it will always inevitably and inherently include some form of subjectivity. The point is not to eliminate it but to minimize it as possible as we can.

- 22 M. Mann, *The Sources of Social Power, Vol. I, A History of Power from the Beginning to A.D. 1760*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986) and M. Mann, *The Sources of Social Power, Vol. II, The Rise of Classes and Nation States 1760-1914*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
- 23 "First, raiding from other disciplines in a kind of 'pick and mix' approach leads Mann to the 'incommensurability problem' or the 'problem of inter disciplinarity'. For it is problematic to pick concepts that are grounded in a reductionist ontology, as is the neorealist conception of the international, and then mix them with an ontologically pluralist model, as is Mann's. Thus the geopolitical militarism that derives from the structural anarchy of a multi-state system that Mann invokes necessarily offends the spirit of his IEMP model." J. M. , Hobson, "Eurocentrism and Neorealism in the 'Fall of Mann': Will the Real Mann Please Stand Up", *Millenium: Journal of International Studies*, 34/2, (2005): 519-520.
- 24 See Ashley J. Tellis, Janice Bially, Christopher Layne, Melissa McPherson, *Measuring National Power in the Postindustrial Age*, (Santa Monica, California: RAND, 2000); available at [http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph\\_reports/MR1110/](http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR1110/) for a detailed treatment of measures of national power and the relevant literature.
- 25 *Ibid.*, 45-46.

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flows in, though the military one had been visited by a much more restricted audience and performers.<sup>26</sup>

It is curious that a work aiming to construct a chronology of the "Rise of the West" using all those three variables in a unified manner is yet to appear though there are ample works taking one of them as a focus. Only after a thorough research revealing the pattern of the chronology Western ascendancy we may be able to go after the causes in a more robust fashion.

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