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A review of Charles A. Kupchan. *No One's World: The West, the Rising Rest, and The Coming Global Turn*. A Council on Foreign Relations Book. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012)

By Sam R. Snyder

“In August of 1941 Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill held a series of secret talks . . . in a secure Newfoundland harbor. . . . The Atlantic Charter they crafted envisioned a global order resting on self-determination, free trade, and dis-armament (p. 1).”¹ Thus begins the opening paragraph of an argument that focuses on the shifting balance of power in the world and what it will mean for how the world works in the future.

The book has two primary goals: (1) to explore the causes and consequences of the coming global turn, and (2) to map out how the West should prepare for and adjust to the world of the twenty-first century. The author contends that from the collapse of the Roman Empire to the beginnings of the Reformation Europe was a geopolitical backwater. Power shifted to Constantinople, the center of the Byzantine Empire, while by 1600 China and India accounted for almost one-half of global wealth. In the meantime, Islamic civilization flourished. By the thirteenth century, Moorish invaders from North Africa had converted the majority of inhabitants in the Iberian Peninsula.

¹ All references are to the book under review with page numbers as indicated.

Yet, between 1500 and 1800 the era of Ottoman domination of the Mediterranean Basin was ended. Europe surpassed in economic and military strength the Ottomans and India and China. Over the course of the nineteenth century Europe and North America came to dominate global politics.

Europe's stunning rise was the product of political weakness resulting from the fragmentation of imperial rule. Authority was widely distributed among the king, the pope, local religious leaders, noble families, and relatively autonomous fiefdoms. The emerging bourgeoisie, merchants, and other members of this newly existing middle class, founded independent towns in which to ply their trades and accumulate wealth, challenging manorial and ecclesiastical authority.

With the wealth from commerce and finance came education and literacy. Urban populations became the primary supporters of religious leaders who in the sixteenth century challenged the theology and practices of the Catholic Church. The Reformation drove forward the political transformation of Europe. Religious tolerance came to Europe as a result of the widespread embrace of Protestantism. Religious diversity had to be accommodated if the different branches of Christianity were to live side by side. The Thirty Years' War killed forty percent of Germany's population.

Conflict born of confessional difference advanced the fortunes of political pluralism as well. While at first only the landed nobility and wealthy bourgeoisie enjoyed the expansion of political rights, rule by lineage and wealth gave way to liberal democracy as the Industrial Revolution led to the education, mobilization, and empowerment of the commoner. Urbanization, the formation of a middle class, religious tolerance, industrialization, and the rise of the democratic nation-state were the underlying socioeconomic developments that fueled the rise of the West and its economic and military primacy (p. 16).

Unlike the leading states of Europe, the Ottoman Empire after 1500 maintained centralized control, prohibiting the emergence of an autonomous class of artisans, merchants, traders, and intellectuals. In addition, the author states that there is a fundamental difference between Christianity and Islam. Christianity is a religion of faith, whereas Islam is a religion of faith and law. There is no distinction between the sacred and the secular. Non-Muslim communities were allowed to retain their own religious and political institutions but these institutions were then brought under the control of the empire.

The author states that "The centralized strength of the Ottoman Empire's system of governance eventually proved to be a defining source of its weakness . . . too reliant on traditions of hierarchy to take advantage of the dynamism offered by reform, but too weak for the center to maintain imperial integrity. The empire ultimately collapsed in the face of economic, military, and ideological challenges posed by the rising West (p .58-

59).

The Ottoman Empire and imperial states in China, India, and Japan were held back by centralized and hierarchical structures of rule while, in the 1400's, oceangoing ships and advances in navigation enabled European explorers, merchants, and immigrants to establish outposts in the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and the new World (p. 64-65). Between 1815 and 1914 – the era of Pax Britannica – European imperialism expanded in terms of both territorial reach and the scope of political control . . . The era of Pax Americana began after World War II. Europe and the United States teamed up to fashion the world's first global order.

In the fourth chapter, entitled “The Next Turn: the Rise of the Rest,” the author reproduces a table which compares the top five economies in the world in 2010 with the top five projected for 2050.

2010	2050
1. United States	1. China
2. China	2. United States
3. Japan	3. India
4. Germany	4. Brazil
5. France	5. Russia

The author's contention seems to be that the decline of the West is inevitable. However, he departs from the conventional wisdom that modernity will follow the Western model. Rather, other nations will follow their own multiple versions of modernity rather than political homogeneity. The rise of the West, he argues, was unique to the conditions of early modern Europe. Further, culture shapes the particular forms of modernity. In capitalist autocracies such as China and Russia, illiberal politics and capitalism offers an alternative to the Western model. Finally, today there is a very different international setting than the one that saw the rise of the West.

The remainder of the chapter is devoted to an analysis of what the author describes as the communal autocracy of China, paternal autocracy in Russia, tribal autocracy in the Gulf Sheikdoms, and the theocracies of the Middle East. Israel is seen as a hybrid, containing many of the institutions and values of the West blended with the values and institutions of the Middle East. Finally, the author labels Latin America as the Populists. It is the one region that is most closely following the Western model of development.

The conclusion is that nation states are on very different “political trajectories.” “The next world will not march to the Washington Consensus, the Beijing Consensus, or the Brasilia Consensus. Rather, the world is headed toward a global “dissensus” (p. 145).

In his penultimate chapter the author discusses the (un)governability of the West, citing the re-nationalization of Europe, its causes and consequences; the polarization of the United States and its causes and consequences, and the problem of restoring Western solvency. The author believes that the West can learn much about the benefits of strategic economic planning from countries with state-managed markets such as China.

The final chapter is entitled, “Managing No One’s World.” In a section called Principles for the Next World the author considers the challenges of defining legitimacy, defining sovereignty, balancing representation and efficacy, facilitating regional devolution, taming globalization, managing the rise of China, and restoring U.S. leadership.

Since this work is described on the title page as “A Council on Foreign Relations Book,” its focus is naturally restricted to the political and economic issues central to the United States and its relations with other nations. While excellent in its analysis of these issues, its concentration on the future of humanity in terms of their current institutional arrangements, it ignores some issues which I believe are of paramount importance to the continuation of the human race on this planet.

Are we going to continue the promulgation of war as a basic strategy of foreign policy? The continuing development of this institution as an instrument of private enterprise, the increasing legitimization of tactics such as assassination, torture, rendition, blackmail, and the targeting of civilian populations through such devices as economic sanctions seem diametrically opposed to professed traditional Western values.

Will the doctrine of “money as morality” continue to deplete the resources of the natural world, destroy the flora and fauna that maintain the balance that makes life on earth possible?