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7. EARTH-BEAST: FALSE PROPHET AND MONEY MASTER

So far, we have examined how this view of a dual empire split into Europe and Asia appears to have been foreseen in the symbolic portrayal of the Daniel 2 *"image"* (in its feet). How then might the two *Beasts* of Revelation 13 fit into this framework?

The Scriptures (in Ezekiel 38-39) point specifically to Russia as representing the *"beast from the sea".* (See posts on this subject.) But what can we say about identifying China and European nations as the *"beast from the earth"*?

The modern historical situation does seem to offer some good signposts that might point us in that direction in our thinking: first, in this *Beast's* role as the *False Prophet*; secondly, in his role as the Earth's commercial superpower.

Of course, it is difficult to understand how two far-apart regions (China and EU) could be symbolized by one Beast. But maybe this is why the

Earth-Beast was depicted having two horns – to show that two separate powers would rule the world economically and spiritually in the Last Days.

Anyway, we are only exploring the possible outline of the future. In time it will become clear, and we'll learn better how these prophetic words from long ago should be applied to historical reality.

*

As the False Prophet:

In Revelation 13:11 it is said of the Earth-Beast that *"he had two horns like a lamb, but he spoke like a dragon."* The horns of a lamb are tiny – a rather un-warlike portrayal when compared with the other sea-Beast and his *"ten horns"* of whom it was said, *"Who is able to make war with him?"* (13:4) So the Earth-Beast's role has less to do with military activity. As mentioned earlier, China and the EU's strength lies mainly in the realm of economic activity.

China's military is growing stronger, but it doesn't seem likely it will be used outside of her immediate neighborhood. Other passages in Ezekiel 38 and Revelation 17 suggest that the northern power of Russia will take on that role.

As for Europe, having suffered through two World Wars, she has learned to distrust war and is more conciliatory in her ways than other world powers. Thus, it is safe to say that Europe's role in world affairs, and China's, seems to fit nicely the symbolism of the earth-Beast having *"two horns like a lamb".*

But the passage also states that the *Earth-Beast "spoke like a dragon."* Since this *Beast* is also referred to as the *False Prophet* in Revelation 16:13, 19:20, 20:10, then he must be communicating a false message to the world. And since he's doing it *"like a dragon"*, then that implies that he's a sort of spokesman for the spiritual forces of Darkness (since in Revelation 12:9 the *"great dragon"* is *"called the Devil and Satan."*)

Instead of being a warmonger like the Antichrist, the False Prophet plays the role of deceiver: *"he deceives those who dwell on the earth."*

(Revelation 13:14) Through his influence he is turning the masses of the world's people away from faith in a supernatural and loving Creator to the modern "religion" of secular materialism/humanism: the exaltation into divine status of human society and the material realm. This will include the modern version of emperor-worship (adulation) of the other Beast known as the Antichrist.

> **Definition of Materialism:**
> **1. Preoccupation with or emphasis on material objects, comforts, and considerations, as opposed to spiritual or intellectual values.**
> **2. The philosophical theory that regards matter as constituting the universe, and all phenomena, including those of mind, as due to material agencies.**
> **Definition of Humanism:**
> **Any system of thought or action based on the nature, interests, and ideals of man; specifically, a modern, non-theistic, rationalist movement that holds that man is capable of self-fulfillment, ethical conduct, etc. without recourse to supernaturalism.**

Indeed, looking at the cultures of China and Europe, it seems that, of all regions in the earth, none have become so steeped in this modern religion of secular materialism. China, being a communist nation, represents a huge portion of the world where atheism is the official "religion"; and all other faith-based religions (which accept the role of a Higher Being greater than and beyond any human authority) are being systematically dismantled. (Concerning this, see news article in Footnote 1.)

Europe also, in a different way, has become a bastion of secular materialism. Europe has forgotten how much of her history was rooted solidly in the Christian faith, and how much Christian ideals and practices are woven into the fabric of her culture, and how much she has benefited from that and from the work, ideas, and inventions of dedicated Christians in the past. And so Europe has transformed from being the center of Christianity that it once was to a major center now of secular materialism/humanism. (For some background information, see Appendix 1: Modern Day Religions, Cultures of Darkness.)

But Europe and China behave well on the international scene – at least, compared to how poorly the U.S. is behaving. There are many concerned

U.S. citizens who decry the growing sense of immorality in American policies. Here is one example:

> **Permit me to acknowledge that the US dropped nuclear bombs on two Japanese cities, fire-bombed Tokyo, that Great Britain and the US fire-bombed Dresden and a number of other German cities, expending more destructive force, according to some historians, against the civilian German population than against the German armies, that President Grant and his Civil War war criminals, Generals Sherman and Sheridan, committed genocide against the Plains Indians, that the US today enables Israel's genocidal policies against the Palestinians, policies that one Israeli official has compared to 19th century US genocidal policies against the American Indians, that the US in the new 21st century invaded Iraq and Afghanistan on contrived pretenses, murdering countless numbers of civilians, and that British prime minister Tony Blair lent the British army to his American masters, as did other NATO countries, all of whom find themselves committing war crimes under the Nuremberg standard in lands in which they have no national interests, but for which they receive an American pay check.**
>
> **I don't mean these few examples to be exhaustive. I know the list goes on and on.**
>
> **(from "The Collapse of Western Morality" – Paul Craig Roberts, 24 September 2010)**

The world can easily see that Christian America's self-appointed role as the world's policeman is not working – her self-seeking, belligerent approach to international relations. America seems to have forgotten such basic principles as Christ's words in the historic "Sermon on the Mount" to *"love your enemies"*. (Matthew 5:44) As a result multitudes are becoming disillusioned in their faith because of the bad example they see in the nation that is thought to be the stronghold of Christianity.

So both the American way and the China-Euro way work to turn people against God. The American worldview and way are more physically destructive, and the China-Euro worldview and way are more spiritually destructive. And both are preparing the way for the final *Beast* empire and the *Man of Sin* (the Antichrist) and for his way in the Last Days.

(2Thessalonians 2:3, KJV) He will declare that he has succeeded where religion has failed, so the world should worship him.

The world sees also that, besides America's misguided Christianity, Islamic extremism and Judaism's belligerence in the Mid East are not working either. So what are people to conclude? God's way doesn't seem to work. So China and Europe's way of secularism must be the answer – goodness without God.

It is sad, of course, that this kind of message is being conveyed; it hides from the world the reality of our loving Creator who fully intends to bring righteousness, justice, and peace into the world of humankind.

And of all things, it is the corrupted and misguided activities of the above-mentioned religious groups that are engendering skepticism in the world. Their poor example is playing straight into the hands of the forces of Darkness and will give the Antichrist plenty of fuel for his propaganda fire, his *"blasphemy against God"* and *"pompous words against the Most High"*. (Revelation 13:6, Daniel 7:25)

As for the *False Prophet*, he will find it handy to clothe himself in the secular garments of righteousness, as exemplified in the cultures of China and the European Union. Hiding behind this façade will make it easier for him to promote his Materialism religion that will include Antichrist-worship.

The EU has its share of misguided policies, to be sure, but its basic policy of nations banding together rather than warring against each other is an important positive feature. And in the field of international relations, the EU has been wiser and more peace-seeking than the American superpower. In recent times, however, we are seeing the old guard of European leaders baying for war against Russia. Yet a ground-swell of opposition is rising against this policy among several political parties who would rather make peace and re-gain the prosperity that is now being lost because of America's drive to keep the EU away from Russia.

As for China, she also seeks for peace and international cooperation. Again, compared to America's destructive, self-seeking approach, China is

much more constructive and is seeking prosperity, not just for herself, but for that of other nations also. (See Footnote 2 about China's and EU's enlightened internationalism.)

Besides being commercial empires, China, and Europe especially, are media empires. They certainly have the technological capacity and should be capable of fulfilling what Revelation 13 says about the False Prophet Beast: He "*causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast* (the Antichrist)". (13:12) He causes the lifelike *"image"* to be broadcast, which will *"both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed"*. (13:15) (To understand how this passage manifests in modern society see "Destructive Power of the Image" in *Unraveling the Mystery of the Image* series.)

In the early days of press and TV, media outlets were independent and useful sources of truth, but nowadays, to a great extent, they have fallen under the control of the wishes and whims of big business, those who handle the purse strings and advertising revenue. Modern media have had a tremendous influence in Europe, and other nations, causing them to stray from their Christian roots, by offering so much materialism and distraction.

Except for a few independent and little known outlets, mainstream media have become mouthpieces for the status quo, or whatever emerging status quo happens to be looming on the horizon – which in the days to come will be the dual empire of the *Beasts* of *earth* and *sea.* Since the *Earth-Beast* is also called the *False Prophet*, then his main job must be to communicate to the world an anti-God attitude and message… and eventually bring it to the point of worshiping the Antichrist.

*

As the financial, commercial superpower:

In Chapter 4 ("Economic Superpower: the New Beast"), we saw how the clay-earth symbolism points towards economic, rather than military, strength. And this is certainly true of China and the European Union. Their technology has advanced to the point where it could be used to control the buying and selling activities of the world (as outlined in Revelation

13:16 and 17)

In the realm of commercial activity, China's busy manufacturing industries have given her the modern reputation of "factory of the world". In addition, she has established huge infrastructure projects and transportation links across Eurasia. These are destined to unite the Eurasian land mass, outfitting it to become the ruling powerhouse of the future.

> **The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), as in the Chinese-led New Silk Roads, are a historical game-changer in infinite ways. Slowly and surely, we are evolving towards the configuration of an economically interlinked group of top Eurasian land powers, from Shanghai to the Ruhr valley, profiting in a coordinated manner from the huge technological know-how of Germany and China and the enormous energy resources of Russia.**
>
> **The Raging 2020s may signify the historical juncture when this bloc surpasses the current, hegemonic Atlanticist bloc.**
>
> **(from "Why the New Silk Roads are a 'threat' to US bloc" – Pepe Escobar, 24 January 2020)**

> **Hybrid War techniques… will be hardly enough to derail the Russia-China strategic partnership. To unlock the deeper meaning of this partnership, we need to understand that Beijing defines it as rolling towards a "new era." That implies strategic long-term planning…**
>
> **Beijing expects to have fully woven a new, multipolar paradigm of sovereign nations/partners across Eurasia and beyond, all connected by an interlocking maze of belts and roads.**
>
> **The Russian project – Greater Eurasia – somewhat mirrors Belt & Road and will be integrated with it. Belt & Road, the Eurasia Economic Union, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank are all converging towards the same vision…**
>
> **For the US, this is indeed an existential battle – against the whole Eurasia integration process, the New Silk Roads, the Russia-China strategic partnership, those Russian hypersonic weapons mixed with supple diplomacy, the profound disgust and revolt against US policies all across the Global South, the nearly inevitable collapse of**

> **the US dollar. What's certain is that the Empire won't go quietly into the night. We should all be ready for the battle of the ages.**
>
> **(from "Battle of the Ages to Stop Eurasian integration" – Pepe Escobar, 16 January 2020)**

> **[Belt and Road] "offers an alternative to the existing international order. The present international order was designed by and still essentially privileges the rich world, which represents only 15% of the world's population. BRI, on the other hand, is addressing at least two-thirds of the world's population. This is extraordinarily important for this moment in history." – *When China Rules the World* by Martin Jacques (Quoted in "Western Intellectuals Freak over 'Frankenstein' China" by Pepe Escobar, 17 July 2019)**

As for the European Union, the organizational basis for its unity hinges on a monetary union. Not military, but financial authority, is the foundation of her power. As for political authority, this is where the EU is starting to crumble. European nations are dissatisfied with EU governance, which seems committed to siphoning of European resources to its so-called ally, America.

China's economy has grown to the point where it equals or excels that of America, which is why the U.S. has started to treat China as an "existential threat". The EU could have become a major competitor also. But the U.S. has managed to tame the Euro, which was once considered a major rival to the Dollar. However, the Yuan, China's currency, is operating outside the American financial system and seems destined to become the basis for the world's commercial exchange in the future (after the collapse of America).

The European Union has been a leader in the use of digital currency. But nowadays, it is China who is taking the dominant role in that kind of financial exchange. Is this preparation for what is described in Revelation 13 – a system of exchange where buying and selling will be conducted without the use of cash?

> **…. It is not strange that China again comes up with the major step of disintermediating [reducing or eliminating the use of intermediaries between producers and consumers] the current**

technology of money by the creation of its DCEP [Digital Currency Electronic Payment]…

We see more and more countries following suit but there is no one that is as far along as China on roll-out of digital currency, already trading with it, using it via smart contracts and more and more in cross border trade…

As all technology changes, the technology of money will also change and in reality, is in the process of change as we speak. The size of the change in financial technology spearheaded by China could well be of the magnitude, as was the acceptance of paper money, i.e., the whole world, just as Kublai Khan created his system [using paper cash in China] in the 13th century. The prospective use cases [*sic*] of digital money at this level staggers the imagination and the strength of an economic weapon of this kind is routinely underestimated.

[Excerpt from "Here comes China: Afghanistan, 7 Deadly Sins, Space, Common Prosperity" by The Saker, 28 August 2021]

(See also Footnote 3: News Article.)

So, from what we've learned so far, the *False Prophet* presides, not only over the religion of Antichrist-worship, but also, because of his control over the world's wealth, he should also be regarded as the one who presides over the religion of Materialism. And Materialism is a religion in its own right, and one that has persisted throughout history.

The Lord epitomizes or symbolizes Materialism by calling it Mammon, who was the god of wealth and things of the ancient World. Jesus Himself used that god they were familiar with and knew was the god of wealth and things and possessions. He said, "You cannot serve God and Mammon." (Matthew 6:24)

Whether Capitalist or Communist, all governments worship this world and this Earth and what it can provide, things and money and wealth and possessions and gadgets and the power that it gives them. The World has only one really genuine worldwide religion which would be popular with everybody, the worship of Materialism, greater and more widespread than any other religion.

In recent times the EU has undergone much strain in its unity and economic affairs, so it remains to be seen how she will emerge from the

present crises. (There is much pessimism these days regarding the future of the European Union. Much of it may be true. But it can be helpful to see the other side of the picture, as in this News article.)

Regardless of recent events, as an economic association, the EU stands out as a much different sort of empire to those that have come and gone through history. And this reflects how the *"earth"* symbolism for the Beast in the Revelation 13:11-18 passage differs from the symbolism for the other Beasts in the Books of Daniel and Revelation, all of whom rose *"from the sea".*

> **The EU is an entirely unprecedented phenomenon in world affairs: a project of political, economic, and above all legal integration among 27 countries with a long history of fighting each other. What has emerged is… a new model that pools resources and sovereignty… under which security for all is guaranteed by working together.**
> **(from "Think Again: European Decline" – by Mark Leonard, Hans Kundnani, *Foreign Policy*, 29 April 2013)**

And much the same could be said of China and its ambitious plans to unite the Eurasian continent economically through its wide-ranging infrastructure projects known as the "Belt and Road Initiative", and sometimes referred to as the "New Silk Road".

Besides economic features, China and Europe differ from other superpowers of the past in another way too: compared to the warlike Antichrist *"beast from the sea"*, or for that matter to the American superpower, both powers are less warlike. Having suffered through two World Wars, Europe has learned to distrust war and is more conciliatory and tolerant in her ways than the American superpower.

China's and Europe's role in world affairs seems to fit nicely the symbolism of the earth-Beast having *"two horns like a lamb"* – a rather un-warlike portrayal when compared with the other sea-Beast and his *"ten horns"* of whom it was said, *"Who is able to make war with him?"* (Revelation 13:11,4)

Both China and the EU have exhibited some valuable assets that are sorely needed in the modern world:

1) Both have learned how to get various nations to work together, and this would be helpful in forming a more broadly based government that could include nations from different parts of the world.
2) And both are well advanced in the use of cashless economic systems (financial digital technology) that will enable implementation of the *"mark of the beast"* buying and selling system. Needed for that future system are computer surveillance networks, and China is well advanced in the use of that domain of control.
3) Unlike the *Harlot* and her unbridled greed, both China and the EU seem interested in wise government of the world. If the EU can ever break away from America, its centuries of experience in international affairs could be useful in a new world order led by Russia. Compared to America's efforts, the EU and Russia could exercise much better leadership and administration of the world.
4) In the powerful domain of media broadcasting, both have the technology capable of propagandizing the world towards accepting the reign of the future Antichrist.

All these above-mentioned features combine in what could become a powerful empire of China (and maybe some EU nations) – an empire that seems to fit the prophetic description of the *False Prophet Beast* in Revelation 13:

> ***"He* [Earth-Beast] *had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast… He causes all… to receive a mark… that no one may buy or sell…"* (13:11,12,16,17)**

Taking all these factors into consideration, if the False Prophet Beast were to have a geographical headquarters somewhere, then the modern, technologically advanced superpowers of China and the EU, on either end of the Eurasian continent, would seem to fit as the right location, the ideal base of operations, from which the Earth-Beast can subject the rest of the world under the future regime of the *"mark-number"* economic system.

If indeed this is true, then it wouldn't be difficult to imagine the Dark legions working in these lands as a hidden driving force, preparing the

way for the False Prophet and his empire, guiding these nations into something that can be used as a means of ruling the world economically.

This is a hidden reality, difficult to prove right now perhaps, but in the future it wouldn't be surprising to see the emergence of China and perhaps Europe as the new controlling authority on matters to do with allegiance to the reign of the Antichrist and a new world order with its *"mark-number"* buying and selling system.

The trade and transportation links forged by China's Belt and Road Initiative and the transformation of Europe into an economic union showcase the fact that groups of independent nations can be organized into commercial empires. Of all nations in the world, China and the EU are the ones best poised to bring in other nations under their "umbrella". For years we have seen nations being herded into economic union, either in the BRI or the EU, for good reasons: the advantages of greater unity, peace, and economic stability.

And if that were the end of the story, it would be fine, but behind it all the forces of Darkness will work to corrupt these rising systems and use their resources as a means to exercise more control in the world… and thereby transform them into the *"beast coming up out of the earth."* (Revelation 13:11)

Now there is nothing wrong with having some sort of overall association or government; this is not bad in itself. The world recognized after World War 2 the need for some kind of overall organization and coordination among its various nations to manage international crises of war, pollution, food scarcities, etc.; this is what the United Nations was supposed to achieve.

But how true it seems to be in this world that no matter how useful a new invention, a new philosophy, or in this case, a new organization of states and infrastructure may be, the forces of Darkness are always there to infiltrate, corrupt, and distort it in some way to serve a harmful design.

Especially in the sphere of peace-keeping, the U.N. has become weak and ineffective so that stronger nations are not restrained enough from pursuing their own agendas and self-interest. As a result the world has

seen too many pointless wars and genocidal conflicts since the U.N. was founded in 1945.

In this world it will always be rare to find a government that is truly following God's way of righteousness and peace. For the most part that is something that will have to wait for Christ's Second Coming and intervention into the affairs of human society, as foretold in several passages from the Sacred Book.

In the meantime we can rejoice, knowing that the coming of Christ will liberate human society, enabling us to pursue our present worthwhile endeavors and goals unhindered by the interference of Satan and his hordes. And God's plan to establish His Kingdom *"on earth as it is in heaven"* will be fulfilled. (Matthew 6:10)

Conclusion

The symbolic picture of the two *Beasts* in the Daniel and Revelation Books points to the arrival of a dual empire, coming at the End of the Age. We know Russia fits as one of the *Beasts*. So, we're just trying to complete the picture and figure out who the other *Beast* is.

We might call China the anti-Christ *Earth-Beast*, and Russia the anti-Christ *Sea-Beast*.And it is by means of these two that this dual empire is able to conquer a large part of the world in a thorough manner – militarily and politically by the Antichrist (from Russia), economically and spiritually by the *False Prophet* (presumably from China and maybe Europe).

(How Europe fits into the picture is difficult to say; right now it looks like she is going down with the American *Harlot*, but possibly, some of those nations will jump off the sinking ship and team up with the Russia-China empire.)

That may be a very simple picture, and there are more facets to be covered later. It's difficult to know accurately how things will pan out in the future, but for now it's a starting point. Hopefully, it gives us a better view of the "elephant" and a better understanding of this mystery about the dual nature of the final empire.

So, in a sense, there are actually two Antichrists. Perhaps we're not used to thinking of the *False Prophet Beast* as another Antichrist. One is enough. Until the time comes, it's a little difficult to pinpoint exactly how the roles will play out.

But the Revelation Book does suggest that two high-profile personages will play their parts on the End Time stage. Generally, we could say that the *False Prophet* won't be worshiped like the Antichrist, but his power is probably just as great, and his influence is just as anti-Christ as the Antichrist's, if not more so.

The Antichrist will come out as the world's new demagogue, by virtue of commanding a powerful military-political empire, while the False Prophet will come out as the world's new promoter of Materialism, by virtue of commanding enormous power through his control over Earth's economy and wealth – its finances, digital technology, industry, natural resources, and so on. And through that he is able to steer the world's religious orientation towards devotion to both Materialism and Emperor worship.

The domains of the two *Beasts* are different, and this would make sense: as the Revelation Book pictures it, these beasts don't just co-exist but are like co-regents. It would be difficult to do that if both were operating in the same arena of power. Two military superpowers would come into conflict with each other. But with the Antichrist as the military superpower, the *False Prophet* could join forces with him from a different angle as the world's economic superpower (and along with that, be its guiding religious influence). (See Footnote 4: News article.)

So, to give a brief synopsis of the future, it seems safe to predict that the Antichrist and his empire will make a military conquest over much of the world through their wars in the Middle East and against America. (This can be deduced from the following chapters: Ezekiel 38-39, Daniel 11:40-45, Revelation 17-18.)

But to complete that conquest, a strong financial base and industrial infrastructure will be needed that can provide an alternative to America's Dollar capitalist system. Unlike the American system of private ownership, what is coming could be called state capitalism – or socialism. The world

has suffered long enough under American capitalism, which has concentrated wealth into the hands of business corporations (the *"merchants"* spoken of in Revelation 18, the *"great men of the earth"*), where the rich get richer and the poor poorer.

This *Harlot* empire, as it is called, continues to destroy nations in order to maintain her dominance; but she is destined to collapse at the hands of the *Beast*, and her corporate capitalism will be replaced by a new system with a fairer distribution of wealth. Eventually, once the new upcoming regime has ascended, it too will go off the rails – into totalitarian tyranny, no individual rights or freedom. But for now, it is a needed alternative to the American system, and God Himself is allowing it to rise up and bring about the *Harlot's* collapse.

In addition to the wealth infrastructure, the final empire will require the support of the media to foster worship of the Antichrist. There will also be a need for administration and an effective surveillance system to keep an eye on the world's vast population.

So, who takes care of all that? It would be difficult to picture Russia alone possessing enough of that kind of power to effectively rule the world.

However, looking at the present historical landscape, it would be easy to picture China and maybe Europe as the powers capable of providing those elements necessary for a thorough conquest of the world.

So, is it any wonder that in our world today, we see the Russia-China combine (joined by some European nations in the future?) striding forward, gathering power all over Eurasia, and in the eyes of American lawmakers, posing an existential threat to them?

It should be clear in our minds, though, that it is because of America's sins on the international scene – greed, exploitation, warmongering – that God is allowing her rivals to be strengthened and eventually to defeat her. (And this is a whole other study in itself, a sad story, which is outlined in chapters 17-18 of the Book of Revelation.)

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Continue to 8: Iron-Clay Kingdom = Sea-Earth Beasts' Empire

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Footnote 1: News Article

[from "The Chinese Communist Party Is Scared of Christianity" by Azeem Ibrahim, 1 July 2021, *Foreign Policy*

As the Chinese Communist Party celebrates its centenary, Christianity—and other faiths—remain among the challengers it fears most. Religious controls have been part of communist practice since the foundation of the People's Republic of China. But since 2018, many churches have been shut down… Religious leaders are now expected to spend more time extolling the CCP and Chinese President Xi Jinping personally than they do seeing to their flock. In some churches, icons of Jesus or Mary have already been replaced with portraits of Xi. The ultimate goal seems to be to suppress any kind of identity—religious, ethnic, or ideological—that might challenge the CCP's authority, whether now or in the future. Chinese leadership have studied the fall of the Soviet bloc intensely and are well aware of the role both Catholic and Protestant faith contributed to the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe.

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Footnote 2: News articles about China's and EU's enlightened internationalism

[from Beyond the Dollar Creditocracy: a Geopolitical Economy by Radhika Desai and Michael Hudson, 6 July 2021]

Productively superior creditor nations (such as China) help build up the economies of their debtors and customer countries so as to create a balanced circulation of goods and services. That possibility is contained, for instance, in the Belt and Road Initiative, creating ports and transport infrastructure, and China's other overseas investment and financing operations creating a foundation for mutual regional prosperity.

[from Think Again: European Decline by Mark Leonard, Hans Kundnani; 29 April 2013; *Foreign Policy*

Since the end of the Cold War, the EU has peacefully expanded to include 15 new member states and has transformed much of its neighborhood by reducing ethnic conflicts, exporting the rule of law, and developing economies from the Baltic to the Balkans… At a global level, many of the rules and institutions that keep markets open and regulate world trade, limit carbon emissions, and prosecute human rights abusers were created by the European Union. Who was behind the World Trade Organization and the International Criminal Court? Not the United States or China. It's Europe that has led the way toward a future run by committees and statesmen, not soldiers and strongmen…

[At present Europe's policies have come under the control of America and NATO. Whether this will ever end is difficult to determine now. But if the EU can break free, that will contribute greatly to the rise of the Eurasian empire.]

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Footnote 3: News Article

[from "Financial Technology Is China's Trojan Horse – Popular Chinese Mobile Payment Apps Are Just the Tip of the Spear" by Nadia Schadlow and Richard Kang, 13 January 2021, *Foreign Affairs*]

… People in China, and increasingly in other countries, conduct all sorts of transactions over Alipay and WeChat Pay… from paying electricity bills to buying food from street vendors to splurging at high-end boutiques.

… China's emerging dominance in financial technology, also known as "fintech," poses an even more fundamental problem for the United States…. Beijing will use fintech to occupy the high ground in global commerce, bolster its surveillance state, and lay the groundwork to challenge the U.S. dollar as the world's reserve currency.

… China's burgeoning middle class has leapfrogged credit cards and moved straight to digital payments… nearly 150 times the volume of U.S. transactions on apps such as PayPal and Venmo.

….

But China's dominance in fintech also promises to boost the CCP's expansionist ambitions in another way, hardwiring other countries to China's economy. Chinese fintech firms function like a geoeconomic Trojan horse… These companies soon become too embedded in their host country to remove…

China's bid for fintech hegemony in Asia is a step toward an even bigger goal: achieving global reserve currency dominance. Last fall, analysts at the U.S. financial services firm Morgan Stanley forecast that the yuan could surpass the Japanese yen and the British pound sterling to become the world's third-largest reserve currency by 2030…

…The CCP could then push for the digital yuan to be used instead of the U.S. dollar by bigger institutions and businesses conducting large transactions…

….

Countries in the region may soon begin to increase the share of yuan in their foreign currency reserves… Russia dramatically upped the share of yuan in its reserves… It also reduced its share of U.S. dollars…

… CCP officials have described SWIFT as a means for the United States to maintain "global hegemony" and reap "huge profits by virtue of the monopoly platform."… Max Levchin, a co-founder of PayPal, believes that if the United States does not get its act together and make a digital version of the dollar more readily available, "we run the risk of letting China become the digital reserve currency of the world." The United States will lose the leverage and influence it has over many countries if they increasingly opt for the yuan over the dollar.

….

The popular and convenient digital commercial payments systems that Chinese consumers use every day are a critical part of China's technology-driven, autocratic surveillance state, what we term the "Sino Operating System." Through fintech, China is determined to stake an even greater claim to the global economy and gain greater control over the global financial system…

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Footnote 4: News article

[from "Can Russia (or Iran) Survive without China?" by *Unz Review*, 21

November 2019]

I believe that the relationship between Russia and China is a symbiosis, which is much stronger than any alliances because while the latter can be broken, the former typically cannot (at least not without extremely severe consequences). I also believe that Putin and Xi both understand that the fact that Russia and China are so completely different is not a problem, but a tremendous asset: they fit perfectly, like Lego or puzzle pieces. What Russia has China does not and vice-versa. And, just to clarify for the logically challenged: both sides also understand that they will never get from the other side by war what they could get by peaceful exchange…

Yes, Russia and China need each other. I would argue that they need each other. Vitally. And yes, the "loss" of one would threaten the other. But that is not just true for Russia, it is also very true of China (which desperately needs Russian energy, high-tech, natural resources, weapons systems but most of all, Russian experience: for most of her existence Russia was threatened, invaded, attacked, sanctioned, boycotted and disparaged by a long succession of western states, and she defeated them all. Sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly, but each time Russia prevailed. The determination and ability to resist the West is something which is deeply embedded in the Russian cultural DNA (this in sharp contrast with the rest of the so-called "East European" countries). Finally, and for all their very real recent advances, the Chinese armed forces are still far behind the Russian (or the USA for that matter) and in a one-on-one war against the USA China would definitely lose, especially if the USA goes "all out". Russia, on the other hand, has the means to turn the US and Europe into a post-industrial nuclear wasteland (using nuclear and, most importantly, non-nuclear munitions!).

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Continue to 8: Iron-Clay Kingdom = Sea-Earth Beasts' Empire