



The BRICS Prepare the New International Order

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Abstract

The article refers to the BRICS, the reasons for their creation, which can be summarized in the dissatisfaction of the countries of the South with the way they are treated by the West, their strengths and weaknesses, as well as their rapid rise in importance. They are presided over by China and Russia, and their objectives are the overthrow of the present international order and its replacement by a new one, very different from the present one, as well as the dethroning of the dollar and its replacement by the currencies of the countries of the South, especially the rim nimbi and the ruble. The population of the countries belonging to the BRICS has exceeded that of the G7, and the BRICS have surpassed the G7 in terms of world GDP production. In the coming years the BRICS will generate most of the world's economic growth.

Keywords: *BRICS, liberal democracy, multipolar world, new international order.*

JEL Classification : F, N, P.

Introduction

The continuous and shocking upheavals of recent decades have systematically and in the same direction shaken the foundations that forged the world order. Nevertheless, the permanent foundation of this order was Western civilization, with its unshakeable legacy of the Old World and its continuity.

In the course of the West's long development, its image has undergone constant alterations, to varying degrees, such as the change in the dominant Western economy, the transformation of the globalization regime into one of protectionism, the frequent imposition of new alliances on the globe with wider consequences, the provocation of military conflicts in search of compromises for economic, geographic and energy domination, etc., among others. Yet, throughout this uninterrupted course, the basic coordinates of the global structure have remained unshaken: Western domination and liberal democracy.

This combination implies, enables or even sometimes imposes the following Western attitudes towards what is perceived as non-Western:

- * a blatant and provocative projection of Western supremacy, which not only allows, but in fact demands, the adoption of measures which, it is hoped, will help it to accept and embrace Western values of life;

- * contempt and rejection of non-Western cultures, with parallel attempts to Westernize Islam [Negreponi-Delivanis, 2024a: 543];

- * the presentation of liberal democracy as the basis for justifying warlike conflicts in order to impose it on countries that have not signed up to it;

- * the right, but also the obligation, for the West to deny non-Western religions, traditions and values, in exchange for loans or aid to non-Western civilizations;

- * The distinction between the West and other regions of the world is not, as we understand it, a geographical definition, but a multitude of asymmetrical characteristics, such as different levels of development, other religions, customs, traditions, preferences, etc., that are collectively and odiously rejected by the West as dangerous, inferior, etc.;

- * The launching of military operations against countries called “tramp states”, “rogue states”, “criminal states”, if they do not accept the demands, usually multi-layered, of the West [Negreponi-Delivanis, 2024a: 480];

- * The distinction between West and non-West is, moreover, the basis for the division of the world into two belligerent camps of equal demographic size, which hunt each other down and are hunted down [Foreign Affairs, 2024: 10].

However, it should be noted that the tumultuous upheavals of recent decades are no longer partial changes, likely to leave the central structure intact, but, on the contrary, are pulverizing it completely. They dethrone the West from its global throne, and make liberal democracy a set of obsolete values that now belong to the past. The West is replaced by the South, which understands what the West did not, or even fought against. In other words, a lower level of development, other religions, other cultures, other priorities, other plans for the future and other values of life. As all the signs indicate, these changes will not be limited, as was the case in previous decades, to the alternation of globalization and protectionism, but will mark the end of the known world and the dawn of a new one [Negreponi-Delivanis, 2018].

This evolution was inevitable and therefore expected, since civilizations have a beginning, a duration and an end, and do not exceed 200 years. This succession has been going on for decades, with signs of decline becoming more and more pronounced, extending to all aspects of religious, social, economic, political and cultural life. Sadly, we are witnessing the gradual evaporation of the fundamental values of life [Negreponi-Delivanis, 2024b].

The succession of Western hegemony on the world stage is therefore historically inevitable, even if it may be delayed by regional wars or even thwarted by the biblical catastrophe that will, alas, accompany the probable Third World War [Note 1: threatened, precisely, as a means for the West to thwart its otherwise certain succession].

In my introduction, I shall attempt to explore the role of the BRICS in preparing the succession to the Western empire. As is well known, there is a general tendency to obscure this question of succession, which is perceived as almost forbidden and certainly undesirable. I'm convinced that scientists of all disciplines are wrong in refusing to deal with this crucial question of succession, which is in fact at the forefront of everyone's interest because it's unpleasant, because it shouldn't be recognized as a problem and because it's

preferable to obscure it. But choosing to distort reality, especially when the future of humanity is at stake, is fatally dangerous.

In the first part of my paper, I will therefore look at the role of the BRICS and their relationship with the West, then, in the second part, at the broad outlines of the new international order, before concluding.

1. The West and the BRICS

The creation of the BRICS in 2009, initially with five member countries (Brazil, Russia, India, South Africa and China, named after their initials) at Russia's initiative, was greeted with indifference by the international community, as these were countries of the South, not worthy of the West's attention. However, the subsequent rapid increase in their numbers, with the addition (from Argentina, which hesitated at the last moment) [Note 2: who then backed down, because he is looking for methods to avoid a break with the USA.] of Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the UAE (United Arab Emirates), and recently also the application for membership from Azerbaijan, Thailand, Vietnam and Bangladesh, stirred the West's stagnant waters. The West has suddenly discovered that the BRICS represent an "integrated South", whose development, however, has only begun to worry the EU in the last five years [Cattolin, Veron, 2024].

The BRICS appear to be on top of the world for the foreseeable future. I will therefore select here some of their characteristics which, in my opinion, form the basis of their success, although some of them may be perceived as weaknesses.

1.1. What are the BRICS?

Their origins

The specific reasons that gave rise to the BRICS have not been formally analyzed, at least to my knowledge. However, it is accepted that their creation echoed the South's dissatisfaction with the way it is generally treated by the West. However, as time goes by, the overriding objective pursued through the strengthening of the BRICS also becomes clear. China's ambition is to change the world, break alliances with the USA, erase Western values and overthrow the dollar [Economy, 2024: 8]. In short, for China, the driving force behind the expansion of the BRICS is their evolution into a counterweight to the G7. And this objective seems to have been achieved by 2024 (see principle in Part II) in terms of quantitative comparisons and beyond. Indeed, what is most worrying for the USA, as the leader of the West, is the decline in its international achievements in key areas such as education and innovation, in contrast to the South, which is making progress [Drezner, 2024]. In this area, recent findings of significant stagnation in schools in wealthy countries are causing panic [The Economist, 2024a: 10].

Complementing this global objective, China and Russia are attempting to limit the hegemony of the dollar, but for the time being, the reduction in its monetary circulation in favor of the ruble and renminbi is limited. It should be noted, however, that since the start of the war in Ukraine and Western sanctions against Russia, progress has been made in this area.

The fundamental problem of the BRICS was first identified as the disparity between member states, which has however become a strong link since their enlargement. This is the feeling that they "belong to the integrated South", whatever their differences. South African

President Cyril Ramaphosa's statement at a press conference on BRICS enlargement is characteristic: "We shared our vision of the BRICS as champions of the needs and concerns of the peoples of the South. These include the need for beneficial economic growth, sustainable development and reform of multilateral systems [Richter, 2024].

Precisely, this collectivity creates an obscure common goal, realized by the presence of China, which is recognized as the adversary of the United States. China's strong presence, combined with the existence of a clear objective, separates BRICS members from any identification with the association of "non-aligned countries" [Note 3: "Non-Aligned"]. At the same time, the BRICS member states retain their specific characteristics and national sovereignty, which precludes any form of external interference [Läidi, 2011].

Their strengths

Right from the start of the BRICS' emergence, China found itself at the summit, along with Russia. And not only at the BRICS summit, but also in three other programs that can be seen as complementary and strengthening BRICS. The first is the BRI (Belt and Road Initiative), also known as the "Silk Road". The second is the Global Development Initiative (GDI) and the third is the Global Security Initiative (GSI). Hundreds of countries are members of these programs, which are jointly chaired by China and Russia. The central idea of these programs, which also appears as China's flagship proposal, is to give a voice to all those countries that have been scorned and pushed to the wall by the current international order [Economy, 2024: 10]. The fundamental objective of the BRICS is also mentioned as being the erosion of fundamental Western objectives that threaten the national sovereignty of other states. To the aforementioned programs, which oppose the American monarchy, I would add the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which brings together China, Russia, Armenia, Cambodia, Azerbaijan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, while Turkey, as an observer, expresses its wish to become a full member. The countries participating in this organization seek to ensure political respect, greater security and, above all of course, greater opportunities for economic development. At the Astana summit, Vladimir Putin formulated a pertinent appeal from the Organization to the United States. In it, he expressed his wish for a "just multipolar world order", based on the central role of the United Nations, international law and the ambition of sovereign states for a mutually beneficial partnership [The Economist, 2023].

Some of their weaknesses

The heterogeneity of the BRICS, as noted above, can in principle be seen as a weakness, as it is not easy to represent them under a common name. The BRICS association includes countries with democratic regimes, but also countries with feudal regimes. Some are clearly hostile to the West, while others wish to maintain good relations with it. There are large, fairly powerful economies, and smaller, newly-developed ones. Significantly, the BRICS have no common governing bodies. All they have is the New Development Bank (NDB), created in 2015 and based in Shanghai. Brazil's Dilma Rousseff will be its president from 2023. However, this absence of operational rules and formalities can also be seen as an important comparative advantage of the BRICS, as it facilitates enlargement by attracting new members. In an official declaration on August 23, 2023, at the Johannesburg meeting, the BRICS declared their support for "multilateralism and international law". Their quantitative presence on the international stage is significant and has surpassed that of the G7, representing 46% of the world's population, 29% of global GDP and 35% of purchasing

power. What's more, the BRICS include two of the world's three largest oil-producing countries. However, their heterogeneity currently makes it difficult to create a monetary union or a free-trade zone [McDermott], and they have not yet acquired the international influence that would enable them to expand further.

1.2. The international scope of the BRICS

Their position and aspirations on the international stage

The objectives of the BRICS are revealed at each new meeting and are embodied in their desire to assert their role as significantly as possible in all areas of international relations, with the United Nations firmly at the center. And through their strengthened presence, they hope to change the foundations of the international order [Allard, 2023a]. This role, which the BRICS are constantly adopting and enriching, seems to echo Russia's attempt to copy, in their mode of operation, that of the G7 [Philip, Boussion, 2023].

However, despite this spectacular rise of the BRICS, which is logically a prelude to international upheaval, the West seems to be ignoring them completely. According to the renowned French economist Thomas Piketty, the most prosperous players on the planet should be subject to minimal taxation, with income redistribution between all countries, in order to share power and wealth [Piketty, 2023].

How are they perceived?

The rise of the BRICS on the international stage is undeniable. It is therefore interesting to examine how they are perceived by the world's inhabitants, who are in fact divided in two, and how their acceptance rate has evolved over time [Silver, 2024].

Not surprisingly, the overall result of this research is summed up in the following conclusion: "In the 35 countries studied, more people have a positive opinion of the United States than of China. Specifically, 54% of adults in the 35 countries surveyed express a positive opinion of the USA, while only 35% of adults in the 35 countries surveyed have a positive opinion of China. There are, however, nuances and details that limit the significance of this difference. Among high-income countries, the only exception is Singapore, where 67% of adults have a positive opinion of China. Estimates of positive attitudes towards the USA range from a high of 86% in Poland to a low of 9% in Tunisia. Finally, 71% of Americans themselves have a positive opinion of their country. When it comes to China, people in high- and middle-income countries have very different opinions:

In the high-income countries surveyed, only 24% on average have a positive opinion of China. By contrast, many more people in middle-income countries (56% on average) have a positive opinion of China.

When it comes to differences in opinion about the USA and China, certain countries stand out:

Malaysia, Singapore, Tunisia and Turkey are more likely to have a positive opinion of China than of the United States.

Opinions on the USA and China are broadly similar (and mostly favorable) in Bangladesh, Greece, Nigeria, Peru, Sri Lanka, South Africa and Thailand.

In the other 24 countries surveyed, those with a positive opinion of the USA outnumber those with a positive opinion of China. In some of these countries, such as Kenya and Mexico, people are only slightly more inclined to prefer the USA to China. In other

countries, such as Japan and South Korea, many more people have a favorable view of the USA and a different opinion of China.

In the thirty-four African countries, 63% view China's policies favorably [Afrobarometer, 2019, 2020].

Opinions on the USA and China have fluctuated since last year in the 22 countries for which trend data is available for 2023. However, there is only one country, Spain, where opinions on the USA have moved negatively, while opinions on China have moved positively. It should be noted that only one country's opinions changed significantly. In Israel, opinions on the USA and China have become more negative.

In any case, and without disputing the Pew survey data, I think it is justified to doubt the results of this survey, given the difficulties of representing them accurately. Indeed, the economic and demographic development of the BRICS should logically lead to higher levels of acceptance for China. The same applies to the widespread resentment towards the West and its unilateral decisions concerning the two wars.

In the future, we can logically expect to see an increase in positive opinions towards China, in parallel with the expansion of the BRICS and the achievement of their objectives.

The results of another, more recent and diversified research approach lead to different conclusions from those of the Pew survey [Note 4: a team of academics surveyed 6,000 participants in 19 countries]. In this new survey, carried out in 19 countries with a sample of 6,000 respondents, the aim was to determine which of the two countries offered better political and economic models, but also which was preferable in its leadership role. In principle, participants were clearly in favor of American models and governance. However, relative scores were very different when exposed to Chinese media messages (either only Chinese messages, or messages from the Chinese and American governments in direct competition); participants preferred Chinese models to American models. These differences are attributed to China's intense diplomatic activity, often accused of propaganda.

It is also worth noting that after the start of the war between Israel and Hamas, the Arab world's opinion of the USA, which had improved in 2022, deteriorated again, prompting sympathy from China [Robbins, Jamal, Tessler, 2024].

2. The New BRICS International Order

The preparation of the new international order is mainly motivated by the dissatisfaction of a significant number of countries around the world with the United States' mode of governance [Note 5: In parallel, of course, and with the imminent decline of the West, which necessarily leads to a change in the international order that has existed until now]. These countries are members of the BRICS, their populations represent just under half the world's population (46%) and their purchasing power has already surpassed that of the G7 (35% versus 30%) [Statista, 2024]. The BRICS account for 40% of world oil production and two-fifths of world trade [Azevedo & al, 2024]. Trade in goods between the BRICS countries has far surpassed that of the G7 countries. China, and in particular its leader Xi Jinping, is at the head of this new international order, with Putin's Russia at its side. Putin's Russia shares the same central objectives as China. China's expanding trade with Latin America is terrorizing the United States [The Economist, 2024b]. Overall, the new international order can be characterized as diametrically opposed to the existing one. I will then attempt to summarize the foundations of the new international order, its differences from the existing order and its development prospects.

China's trunk of global governance (but implicitly also Russia's)

China will be at the head of the emerging international order, and will no longer fight for primacy, as it has earned it. The central pillars of its aspirations are: the demise of Western values, the descent of the dollar from its throne, the establishment of a multipolar world, the imposition of world peace, respect for the national sovereignty of every country, non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries and, above all, the promotion of economic growth for all.

The role of the South in shaping the new international order

The South, mainly the BRICS, will replace the G7's leading role on the world stage. In addition to the BRICS, the South is also involved in other programs, as mentioned above, which bring many states together within them [Note 6: See 1.1.]. The new philosophy advocated by the South, which is completely different from that of the West, is destined to prevail, barring the unlikely event, throughout the world.

During the war in Ukraine, the BRICS strengthened their position far from the supervision of the West, busy with military operations, and are already preparing to seriously challenge the absolute domination of the West in institutions important to the course of the world, such as, among others, the World Bank and the IMF. Twelve additional members have applied to join the BRICS, so the West-South balance that has existed until now is sure to tip in favor of the South. The BRICS help member states to develop, gain access to new technologies and improve their infrastructure projects (mainly through the New Silk Road).

Despite the BRICS' achievements, their heterogeneity and certain tensions between their members (Iran vs. Saudi Arabia, China vs. India [Note 7: But their relations are, in all likelihood, on the road to normalization, The Economist, 2024c: 39]) still raise questions about their ability to play a decisive international role in the future.

There is no longer one but many combinations of regimes

The existence, recognition and respect of the world's many cultures, different levels of development and different political and social models require, according to the BRICS, a different mode of governance. On the contrary, the West's right to impose the liberal democratic regime on everyone, without exception, is criticized as a sign of arrogance. The new international order will recognize the right of sovereign states to choose between different degrees of democracy and non-democratic regimes. All choices made by individual sovereign states will be accepted and respected.

Weakening the dollar

Another central objective of the BRICS, led by Russia and China, is the gradual weakening of the dollar as the international reserve currency and its eventual replacement by the ruble and renminbi. This will deal a fatal blow to the United States, whose debt will reach the colossal figure of \$34,000 billion for the first time by the end of 2023. For the moment, this poses no insurmountable problems, precisely because the dollar is still internationally desirable and generally accepted. A challenge to the dollar's international sovereignty is, for the moment, indiscernible and practically non-existent. However, the cracks have begun and are continuing uninterrupted, subtly and without fanfare. Since 2005, Russia has been engaged in concerted efforts to strengthen the international use of the

renminbi. Its use has certainly been boosted by the war in Ukraine, but so far the results have not been spectacular. In particular, the weight of the renminbi in international transactions is just 2.6%, compared with 20% for the euro, 5.5% for sterling and 4.8% for the yen [Charrel, 2023]. The war in Ukraine has stimulated renminbi exchanges between several countries opposed to the United States. Argentina's decision, under pressure from the Chinese people, is a case in point. In addition, Brazil recently agreed bilateral transactions with China to facilitate mutual investment. Admittedly, the recent agreement between Saudi Arabia and China to limit the use of the dollar in their transactions was painful for the United States, historically coming from one of its most loyal partners [Cheyviale, 2023]. However, the road to replacing the dollar with another international currency, despite its gradual but slow weakening, seems to be a long one. For the time being, the creation of new currency blocs, by the BRICS and beyond, seems the most likely evolution, which will weaken but not replace the dollar. The dollar's weight in world trade, now down to 59%, will continue to decline, but, barring unlikely events, at a slow pace. Its replacement will not materialize until China (accompanied by the BRICS) succeeds the USA on the throne of the world empire.

Conclusion

The overriding consequence of the creation and continued strengthening of the BRICS' international presence is certainly the end of the monarchy of a single decision-making pole and its replacement by a second one [Allard, 2023b]. This means that, while until recently the West also decided the fate of the South, it is now involved to an ever greater extent. As far as this new BRICS pole is concerned, it is worth noting that the heterogeneity of its members, although often cited as a serious handicap, which would be an obstacle to the acquisition of significant international power, has belied these fears in terms of evolution. Indeed, the various governmental changes within the BRICS members, in particular, do not seem to affect their central objective, namely their independence from the West.

As far as the rise of this new pole on the international stage and the advent of a new international order are concerned, it should be noted that the BRICS are acting as China's auxiliaries, not as an autonomous group, since the new international order they are fighting for has been elaborated (as I argued in the second part of this paper) by China. The BRICS are therefore China's vanguard, preparing the ground for Chinese power and hoping to play an important role in it. To summarize the advances of the BRICS, I will limit myself to the following [Azevedo & al, 2024]:

- * The BRICS will continue to expand, as they are expected to be joined by powerful oil-producing countries, whose output is expected to reach 55% of world production, and will therefore be in a position to regulate the price of oil internationally. Above all, the price will no longer be paid in dollars, which poses an existential risk.

- * The per capita income of the BRICS is estimated at 26% of that of the USA, but the purchasing power of their GDP exceeds that of the USA, and they share the world's G7 population almost equally. Which of these figures gives the most power to its holder is anyone's guess.

- *The activities of the BRICS have already contributed, in terms of access for its members to new opportunities for growth, finance, trade, alliances and so on.

- *The BRICS' share of world trade doubled between 2002 and 2024, reaching 40% of the total.

* The contribution of the BRICS Development Bank (NBD) has been a catalyst for the South. It is estimated to have secured \$71 billion in loans across a wide range of sectors, reducing their dependence on the West and all forms of sanctions against their members.

*In the field of new technologies, BRICS members China, Russia and Brazil are working together to kick-start a second industrial revolution.

The overall conclusion of the above analysis is that the success of the BRICS is contributing to the recognition of the power and decision-making capacity of the other half of the world's population, which has remained in the shadows until recently. The new international order will also include countries governed by a constitution other than a democratic one. It will thus be recognized that the type of constitution belongs to the citizens of each country and cannot be imposed by any world leader.

However, before concluding my contribution, it is necessary to ask the question of the degree of certainty of the advent of this new international order. The answer lies in the future and lacks certainty. Indeed, on the one hand, the cultural decline of the West will certainly lead to the prevalence of this new order, provided it is not halted by a Third World War. A few years ago (in 2018, when I was writing my book “The End of Western Economic Dominance and the Invasion of China” [Note 8: Translated into French by Editions L'Harmattan (2018)]), I came to the conclusion that the chances of this scenario coming true were slim. But a lot has changed since then, making this scenario more likely. The changes are mainly economic. Competition from China, with its cheap products flooding the markets of many countries unable to react, seems to be the greatest risk of triggering the Third World War. And its continuation is not foreseeable.

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