

## Article

# Why America Is at the Crossroads & How China Can Emerge as a Benign Superpower

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### Abstract

Certain data for the United States indicate that America is at the crossroads. We have a choice: Either remain on the sidelines witnessing the decline of this great nation or take action to postpone the decline. On the other hand, China has an opportunity to emerge as a benign superpower by embracing the science and practices of internal excellence.

**Keywords:** America, crossroad, practice, science, internal excellence, China, superpower.

### Why America Is at the Crossroads

This essay highlights my findings with which to make progress, but in hindsight, they are nothing more than a restatement of the wisdom of Sri Krishna in the Bhagvad Geeta from the perspective of science. The Bhagvad Geeta was revered by the likes of Mahatma Gandhi and J. Robert Oppenheimer along with scores of others. In the author's book entitled "the Nature of Ultimate Reality" co-authored with James Kowall [1-2], the wisdom is scientifically explained and chronologically organized for easier reading. Kowall is a retired physician and physicist who devotes his time to research on the nature of ultimate reality [3].

The wisdom of the Geeta is scattered over eighteen chapters making it very difficult to wrap one's rational mind around the messages conveyed. To elaborate, all seven-and-a-half-billion human inhabitants of Earth have three components of the mindset S, R, and T. The S component includes truthfulness, honesty, steadfastness, and equanimity, while the R component encompasses attachment, ambition, bravery, ego, greed, and a desire to live, and the T component includes lying, cheating, causing injury in words or deed and sleep. The definitions of the three components are such that perfection (all S), or for that matter pure evil (all T), is all but precluded.

On the scale of internal excellence, the maximum S component is at the top of the scale and the Maximum T component at the bottom and all other combinations of the three components in between these two extremes. On this scale of excellence, the noble ones are toward the top-end,

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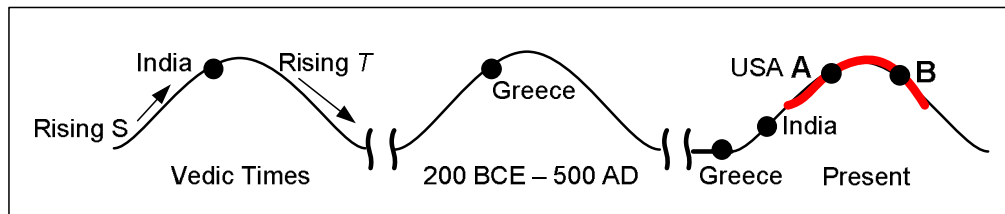
\*Correspondence author: Prof. Pradeep B. Deshpande, Six Sigma & Advanced Controls, Inc., 7013 Creekton Drive, Louisville, KY 40241, <http://www.sixsigmaquality.com> E-mail: [pradeep@sixsigmaquality.com](mailto:pradeep@sixsigmaquality.com)

wicked ones toward the bottom, and the rest of us somewhere in between. Internal excellence has nothing to do with race, religion, gender, language, or national origin.

Just as individuals have a level of internal excellence, so do societies, but when it comes to societies, we speak in terms of an average level of internal excellence.

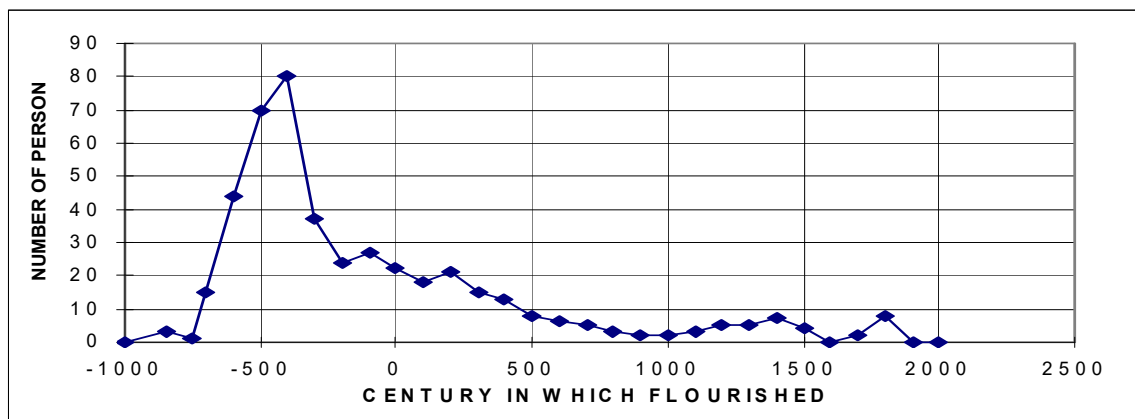
As the average S component of a society increases, its level of internal excellence increases, and the society rises, but the S component cannot increase indefinitely, and so, when it reaches its peak, the T component takes over and the societal level of internal excellence begins to decline and as does the society. However, the T component cannot decline indefinitely either and when it reaches its peak, the S component takes over and the society begins to rise again. This is the profound wisdom of Sri Krishna expressed in the eight lines of the verses 4.7 and 4.8.

These ideas are depicted in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Transformation of the Mindset Induces Rise and Decline of Societies

In the nineties, we found supportive evidence for Sri Krishna’s wisdom in the twenty-three volumes of the Encyclopaedia Britannica [4]. Shown in Figure 2 is a plot of the rise and decline of Greece. Figure 2 depicts the number of persons born in Greece who are listed in the reputed Western reference.



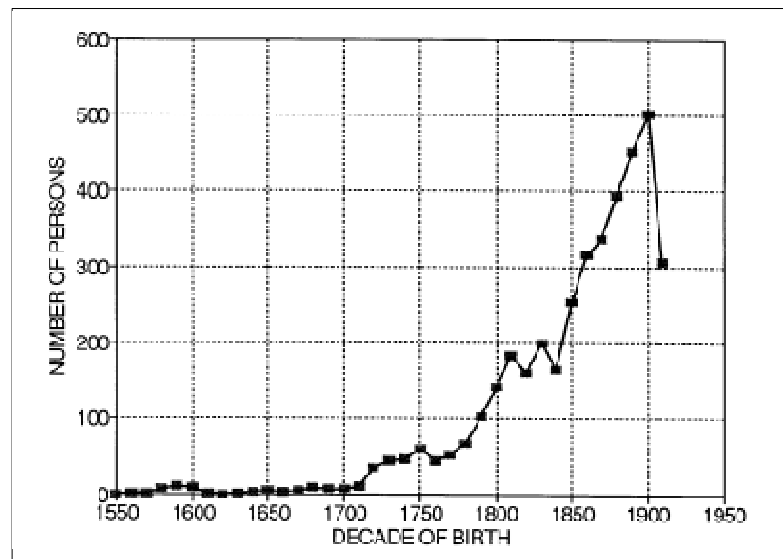
**Figure 2.** Rise and Decline of Greece

Not long ago, I taught a graduate course in six sigma for the MBA students of the University of Kentucky in Athens, Greece for twelve years. The land that gave birth to the likes of Socrates,

Aristotle, Plato, Archimedes, Homer and numerous others is today counted as the weakest link in the European Union. The four hundred or so MBA students that I must have trained are in concurrence with the ideas of rise and decline of their great nation.

The data for the United States are shown in Figure 3. One cannot be sure if the decline of the United States has already begun until decades later but it should be clear why I say America is at the crossroads. We, the people, have a choice: To remain on the sidelines helplessly witnessing the decline of this great nation take place right front of our eyes, or to intervene to postpone the decline by decades. I trust the reader's response is, we must intervene.

In the eighteen chapters of the Bhagvad Geeta, Sri Krishna prods Arjuna, and though him, humanity, to rise on the scale of internal excellence and teaches him yoga (not the bone-bending variety) with which to do so.



**Figure 3.** Rise of the United States

It turns out that the pursuit of higher levels of internal excellence is a well-posed scientific problem.

Internal excellence cannot be measured but human emotions can and this is important as the two are positively and strongly correlated. Human beings are endowed with two types of emotions: Positive emotions and Negative emotions. Positive emotions encompass unconditional love, kindness, empathy, and compassion while negative emotions include, anger, hatred, hostility, resentment, frustration, jealousy, despair, sorrow, fear, and the like. A little reflection will reveal that positive emotions strongly and positively correlate with the S component while negative emotions strongly and positively correlate with excessive values of R and T components. On the scale of emotional excellence, maximum positive emotions are at the top of the scale, maximum

negative emotions at the bottom, and all other combinations of the two in between these two extremes. Thus the two scales of excellence are entirely equivalent.

To rise on the scale of emotional excellence requires a measurement device for emotions and a process with which to rise. Two devices for the measurement of emotions are available.

One device, called EQ Radio, is a wireless device developed at MIT with funding from the National Science Foundation and the US Air Force with additional support from major corporations [5]. Here, an RF (radio frequency) signal is sent to a subject wirelessly and the reflected signal is captured and analyzed to calculate the heart rate, HRV, and the respiration rate from which emotions are estimated.

The second device, which goes by the name Bio-Well, was developed by a Russian scientist and is based on the Gas Discharge Visualization (GDV) principle [6]. Here, a harmless electrical current is applied to the ten fingers of both hands, one at a time, and the fingers' responses to this electrical stimulus in the form of burst of photons are captured and analyzed in comparison with tens of thousands of subjects in the database to estimate the physiological and emotional state of the subject. The method is simple, painless, noninvasive, and takes only a couple of minutes [7]. The GDV technology is registered with the FDA, EU, and the Russian Ministry of Health.

The process with which to rise on the scale of internal/emotional excellence is meditation, or more generally yoga, known for thousands of years. And, since emotions can be measured, progress can be audited.

Conscious approaches such as laws, strikes, protests, and even the brilliantly crafted Constitution are necessary and useful but they are insufficient. For success, the required positive changes have to come about from within which is what the practices of internal excellence do.

The scientific framework for internal excellence can postpone the decline of the United States for decades to come but the decline cannot be avoided altogether. This is the best any society can do for that is the law of nature.

With open-mindedness and a willingness to think outside the box, the readers may find that the ideas and concepts presented herein may play an important role in the future direction of America. Whether America will continue its march as a great nation for decades to come or whether it will commence its decline depends on each American's action.

## How China Can Emerge as a Benign Superpower

By embracing the science and practices of internal excellence, China has an opportunity to emerge as a benign superpower.

To repeat, human beings have three components of the mindset: S, R, and T: The S component includes honesty, truthfulness, steadfastness, and equanimity. The R component includes

**Figure 4.** Scale of Internal Excellence



attachment, ambition, bravery, ego, greed, and a desire to live while the T component encompasses lying, cheating, causing injury in words or deed, and sleep. The definition of the three components is such that perfection (all S), or for that matter, pure evil (all T), is all but precluded. These definitions lead to a scale of internal excellence shown in Figure 4.

On this scale of internal excellence, the maximum S component is at the top, maximum T component at the bottom, and all other combinations of the three components between these two extremes. The noble ones among us are toward the top-end of the scale, wicked ones toward the bottom, and the rest of us somewhere in between. Internal excellence has nothing to do with race, religion, gender, or national origin. Just as individuals have a level of internal excellence, so do societies, but when it comes to societies, we speak in terms of an average level of internal excellence.

For reasons that are not clear, the three components of the mindset undergo transformation over time inducing rise and decline of societies repeatedly. As the average S component of a society increases, its level of internal excellence increases, and the society rises, but the S component cannot increase indefinitely, and when it reaches its peak, the T component takes over and the societal level of internal excellence begins to decline and so does the society. However, the T component cannot increase indefinitely either and when it reaches its peak, the S component takes over and the society begins to rise again. This is the profound wisdom of Sri Krishna

expressed in the eight lines of the two verses 4.7 and 4.8 of the Bhagvad Geeta. These ideas are depicted in Figure 1.

In the early nineties, we found the evidence of Sri Krishna's wisdom in the twenty-three volumes of the Encyclopaedia Britannica [2]. Shown in Figure 2 is a plot of rise and decline of Greece. Figure 2 plots the number of persons born in Greece who are listed in the reputed Western reference. The land that gave birth to the likes of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Archimedes, Homer, and numerous others is today counted as the weakest link in the European Union.

Encyclopaedia Britannica being a Western source of reference does not contain detailed data on ancient cultures such as China and India. Nonetheless, both cultures were great in the distant past, sustained decline, and are rising again.

However, it should be obvious, rising as a global superpower means possessing a high level of internal excellence. High levels of R and T components can at best make a nation a super force. History records that superpower always triumphs over super force but considerable mayhem occurs in the interim.

The late psychiatrist, David R. Hawkins, a Psychiatry) in his book entitled "Power vs. Force" [13] explained the difference between "Power" and "Force". Hawkins was inspired by the works of Adi Shankara, Ramana Maharishi and Nisargadatta Maharaj. He also coauthored the book, "Orthomolecular Psychiatry" with Linus Pauling.

There are two approaches to achieving higher levels of internal excellence: A conscious approach wherein the three components are tracked consciously, diligently and regularly to insure that the S component remains high and nudges higher and R and T components remain low and nudge lower. A thirty-day self-assessment experiment will offer convincing evidence that such conscious approaches are necessary and useful but not they are not sufficient for success. The sufficiency condition is realized only when the required positive changes come about from within.

It turns out that the pursuit of higher levels of internal excellence is a well-posed scientific problem. Internal excellence cannot be measured but human emotions can as described above. The process with which to rise on the scale of internal excellence is meditation, or more generally yoga known for thousands of years. And, since emotions can be measured, progress can be audited.

For societal transformation, the program on the science and practices of internal and external excellence would have to be introduced across all segments of the society: colleges, industries and Government organizations. The program will deliver a myriad of benefits: Exemplary

performance [14], better leadership [15], creativity and innovativeness, and less discord and violence [16].

The proof of concept is already on hand going by the substantial body of evidence in reputed science journals such as Nature, Science, and Proc. Nat. Acad. Sci.-US and by the long list of corporate CEOs and Nobel Laureates who meditate and who credit some of their successes to meditation. An interesting example is the 2016 Chicago Cubs victory over the Cleveland Indians, ending a drought of 108 years. In the Time magazine article, How the Chicago Cubs Made World Series History, columnist Sean Gregory wrote:

Epstein also set out to train his players' brain. The Cubs have a five-person mental skills team that offers mindfulness exercises, visualization drills, and meditation to all players throughout the organization. "The overriding philosophy is better humans make better players," says Josh Lifrak, who runs the program. Don't let the moment get too large. Catch yourself thinking bad, that's mindfulness. Not only knowledge, but action.

The Seattle Seahawks too credit yoga and meditation for their Super Bowl victory.

It is this author's view that China is rising on the basis of the R component while India on the basis of S. The T component in both societies is high. Enhancing the S component and the societal internal excellence is the way for both nations to emerge as global benign superpowers. Indians often look up to the United States. They would be pleasantly surprised to learn that the United States has recognized the importance of emotional excellence.

Emotional intelligence coined by Peter Salovey and John Mayer [17] in 1990 is the notion of recognizing the feelings within oneself and in others. It is an intelligent inquiry to understand the importance of emotions within oneself and in others while emotional excellence the notion of bringing about the required positive changes from within.

Finally, intuition is immediate cognition without the benefit of the rational mind and the five senses. American researchers have recognized the importance of intuition and self-awareness as critical components of leadership [18]. Yogis have known of how to enhance intuition for millennia. See this five-minute video clip on the internet [19].

In closing, there are real prospects for China to emerge as a benign superpower by adopting the science and practices of internal and external excellence. The world will be a better place if that happens.

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