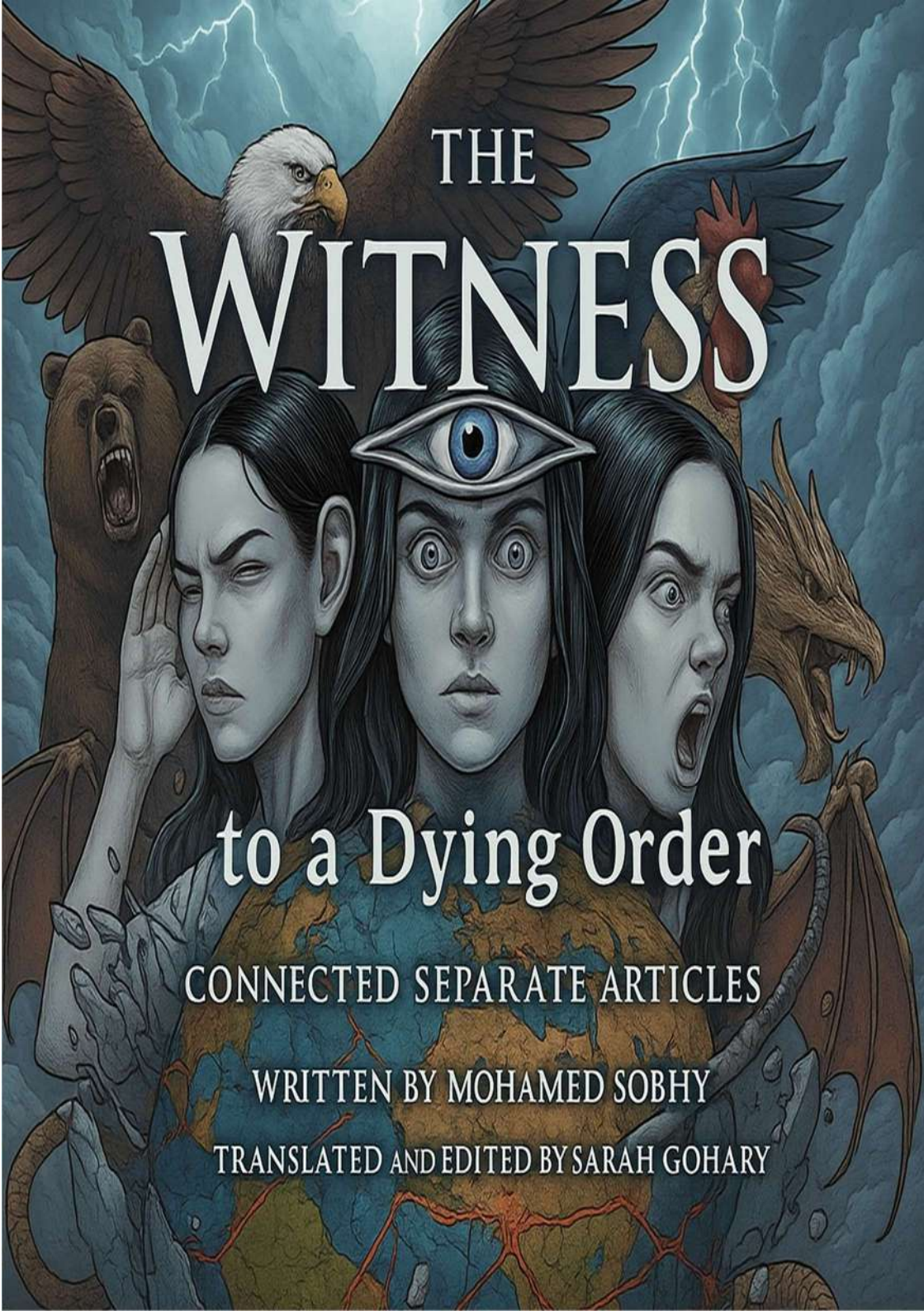




THE WITNESS

to a Dying Order

CONNECTED SEPARATE ARTICLES

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Opening of the First Edition

This book of mine was not written as a journey in a straight line, from the first page to the last.

I wrote it as a circle—beginning with the ending and ending with the beginning.

I wanted to tell you that an ending is not death, but a new birth.

And that a beginning is never a leap from emptiness, but an extension of all that came before—of pain, of trials, of questions.

Here you will read about the oppressed and the victims, about the systems that are dying, and about the fears that loom over us.

But when you reach the last page, you will find yourself returning to the starting point: the human being.

You return to him—yet with a different awareness, and with a memory carrying all you have encountered along these pages.

I wrote this book to see with you the whole picture: how one order ends, and how another is born.

But above all... how we do not allow ourselves to be buried with the departing order but instead become part of what is to come.

Contents

Opening of the First Edition	0
Dedication	6
The End	9
First Tragedy	12
The Asterisked Human... Second-Class by Design.....	12
The Yemenis... Deemed not Human	14
Sudanese People... Humanity Discounted.....	18
Libyans... A Blip on the Mediterranean Radar	21
The Orphan on the World's Maps... The Forsaken People of Syria	26
We love Lebanon... and hate the Lebanese	32
The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan ... A State on Pause	42
Two Rivers of Blood and Oil... Iraq, the Nation Cursed with Governors	45
A Revolution That ate its People	51
Hollywood's Gladiators ... Afghanistan	61
The Arab Lab Rat... Tunisia.....	67
The Pakistani People... Nuclear Lab Rats	74
She Was Once a State... Following the Shadow of the Egyptian Citizen	79
The Arabian Gulf... Lavish Wealth, Fragile Politics	85
They Are Humans... Palestine	90
Descendants of Noah... South of the Desert... Plundered Africa	94
They Were Humans... A Reading in the Crime of "Discovering" the New World	99
The Bad Neighbor ... A Reading in the Tragedy of Latin America	105
International Organizations and Selective Justice.....	111
Double Standards in Dealing with Humanitarian Organizations	116
"International Organizations – Both Victim and Executioner" .	120
A Three-Headed Monster: The Global Loan Organization	123

Second Tragedy.....	127
Human Code... Metallic Bridge	127
The Economy of Obedience: Living as Tools, Not People.....	128
Family and Society Under State Pressure – When Human Bonds Are Strangled.....	131
Planned Economy – Humans Between Production and Starvation	134
When Words Become Chains	137
Education as a Tool of Control – When Schools Become Obedience Factories.....	140
Stolen Childhood – Born in the Arms of the State, Not the Family	143
Censorship and the Grip on Thought	146
The Manufacturing of Official Consciousness – The Media	149
The Human Cog	152
When the Day Belongs to the State, Not the Individual.....	156
Modern Slavery.....	160
When Art Turns into a Weapon Against Humanity	164
Armed Law: When Justice Turns Into the State's Baton	168
The Confiscated Homeland – When Geography Becomes an Open-Air Prison	172
When Grand Projects Become Small Graves – Humanity Versus Development.....	175
The Economy of Obedience: Living as Tools, Not People.....	179
The Human Vs. The Beyond Human.....	182
Third Tragedy	187
"The Lost New Republic"	187
From Cairo... This is Beijing , From Cairo... This is Washington	188
Democracy on the Chinese Way	192
Slippers and Toilets	199
Between China and Europe: How Does Egypt Balance Political Models in the Fundamental Rights File?	203

China's Participatory Democracy: When Participation Becomes a Tool of Control	207
Human Rights: Between "Cultural Specificity" and the Universal Model	211
Does the Chinese Model Succeed in Egypt?	215
Conflict of Values Between the New Generation and the State	219
Confronting the Eastern Bloc's Discourse on Human Rights...	223
Human Rights: An Indivisible Unit and a Path That Cannot Be Compromised	228
The Western Double Standard Does Not Justify Abandoning Human Rights.....	232
The Beginning.....	235

Dedication

To every whole human being who was treated as half a human.

To everyone cast into the box of second-class:

An Arab branded “backward,” lagging behind “civilization.”

An African, descendant of Ham, still enslaved to this day.

A Latin American shown only as merchant—or savage.

An Asian reduced to a soulless, cheap machine.

A refugee counted as nothing but a number in an aid report.

A worker turned into fuel for the wheel of “development.”

A woman trapped inside rigid, masculine molds.

A child who starved because the war budget devoured his right to
food.

Indigenous peoples erased from maps, erased from history.

To everyone called a “terrorist” because they resisted.

An “ignorant” because they clung to their identity.

A “primitive” because they refused to dissolve into the march of
“progress.”

Black, yellow, brown—or any shade rejected by the standards of
whiteness.

To every victim sacrificed on the altar of “development”:

Those who died building bridges they would never cross.

Those whose homes were torn down to pave roads for others.

Those displaced so a skyscraper could glitter on an economic
magazine cover.

To everyone turned into a lab rat in the experiments of the world
order.

To the workers crammed into mines and factories like spare parts.

To the victims of racism, colonialism, war, poverty, hunger.

To the marginalized, who were never mentioned in history books.

And before all of these, and after them, and among them:

A dedication to all the victims of the world order before Hiroshima
and Nagasaki.

To the victims of the “system of power.”

To the victims of the “system of cooperation.”

This book is for them—

so that what was once imposed upon them may never be repeated.

Peace upon the souls that became echoes,
and still pulse within us, despite the arrogance of forgetting.

To Ahmad Mohammed Ismail,
my beloved nephew and friend, thirteen springs old,
the first to read the drafts of these essays,
the one who opened doors of dialogue with me
before they saw light, before they gathered into this book.

I dedicate this work to him—
not as a mere reader, but as a companion in this journey.

The End

Three small statues of monkeys, side by side:
one covers its eyes, the other blocks its ears, and the third shuts its mouth.

When my father gave them to me, he said simply:

“Don’t see, don’t hear, don’t speak.”

My father’s words weren’t tied only to evil. They were broader, almost absolute:

in everything, close your eyes, block your ears, seal your lips... walk close to the wall, and you’ll survive.

Later, when I began reading about Asian culture, I found another meaning: the same statues, but in a different frame. That culture said: *see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil.*

Here the commandment was not isolation, but avoidance.

But with age came another discovery: the trick.

Evil does not vanish when I turn away from it—it grows in the shadows.

The victims are not healed when I refuse to hear them—they are buried deeper in silence.

And injustice does not retreat when I keep quiet—it swells, takes root, and spreads.

I realized then that those statues were never just decoration.

They were a test:

Would I surrender to their ready-made image?

Or would I redefine them in a way worthy of humanity?

So, I rewrote them:

I see evil clearly, so it cannot deceive me with a hidden face.

I hear the voices of victims, so they are not buried alive in silence.

And I scream in the face of injustice, so it cannot mistake my silence for consent.

This book does not begin with a preface—it begins with the end.

Not by accident, nor as a stylistic trick, but because the global order itself is living its final days.

The old system of power had obvious weapons: cannons, tanks, missiles.

The newer system of “international cooperation” had different weapons: economy, media, global institutions... and above all, the ability to persuade—or deceive.

But in truth, both served the same philosophy: domination.

One ruled with naked force, the other with words wrapped in velvet.

The world has lived on life support for decades.

The order of deterrence, weapons, and balance through fear never really disappeared.

And the order of cooperation—built on treaties, institutions, and lofty promises of peace—was only a fragile mask hiding Western hypocrisy and Eastern authoritarianism.

The two systems coexisted for a long time:

one brandishing the stick, the other selling illusions.

But the reality is that the current order is dying—slowly, painfully.

That doesn’t mean it will collapse tomorrow morning. In history books, an entire century often shrinks into a single line.

You might ask: if nuclear weapons were tools of the old system, why are they still the guarantors of the current cooperative one?

That’s the paradox. Every military maneuver, every proxy war, every missile test—each one is just a reminder that we are still ruled by fear, while the specter of a great war grins at us from a distance.

The “end” here is not of the world, but of the world order itself:

the end of fraudulent cooperation, double standards, repression, wars, and human experiments.

This page is nothing more than a meditation on the end of that system... and the beginning of this book.

And just as the last page of this book will mark its end, it will also be the start of a new question: about another order yet to come.

But do not misunderstand me.

I do not claim to hold the solution, nor even to seek it.

You and I, reader, can only observe, reflect, and perhaps laugh with bitter irony at the spectacle.

For this is a world order, my friend—far too vast for its solution to rest in our hands.

This book is not a straight line from first page to last.

It is a circle.

Its journey begins with the human being—
and ends... again with the human being.

At the start, you see the oppressed, the crushed.

At the end, you glimpse a new human being born from the womb of dying systems.

Each essay here is but a thread woven into a larger fabric:
the tale of a world searching for meaning, reinventing itself amid the ruins.

The reader who reaches the conclusion will find themselves back where they started:

from human... to human.

But it is a different return:

one carrying heavier awareness, deeper memory, and perhaps wider hope.

First Tragedy

The Asterisked Human... Second-Class by Design

A series of essays exposing the double standards in the international, particularly Western view of the human being in the developing world. How he is treated as a lesser subject of rights, a conditional human, or a citizen deemed unworthy of solidarity except under the constraints of interest. This series is an attempt to restore the very idea of human equality, beyond the narrow



calculations of politics, and to strip bare the selective discourse that justifies silence—or complicity—in the face of human suffering.

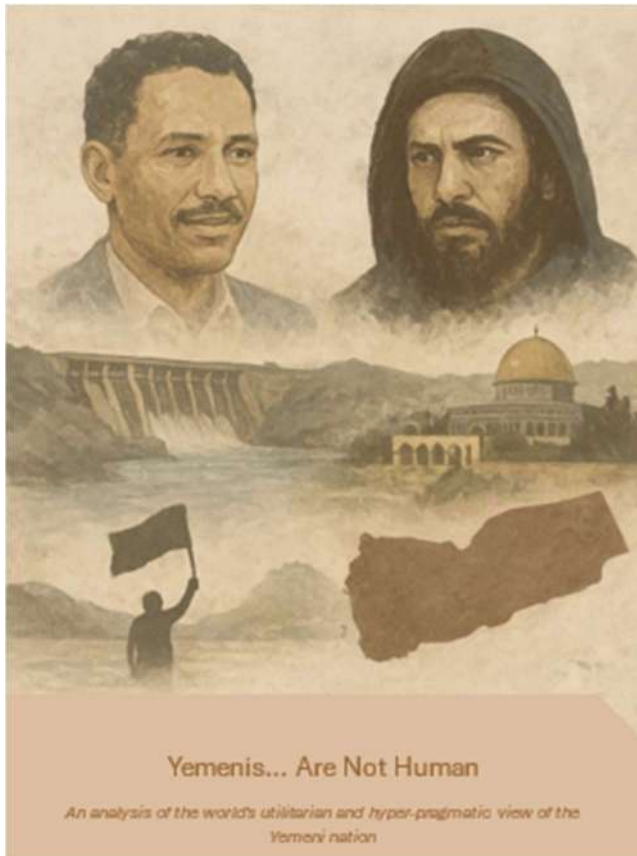
In a world where a person's worth is measured by how much oil his land holds, how

strategic his strait lies, or how valuable his geography is on a map, the ordinary citizen becomes nothing more than a “margin” in the equations of global politics.

The Asterisked Human... Second-Class by Design seeks to expose this duplicity: how the Yemeni is reduced to Bab al-Mandab, the Sudanese to a forgotten war, the Libyan to a blip on the Mediterranean radar, the Syrian to a bargaining chip, the Lebanese to an image stripped of meaning, and the Iraqi to an oil reservoir. These essays are not written about geography, resources, or policy. They are written about the human being whose name has been erased behind it all. They are a testimony of protest against a world that sees peoples as “second-class citizens,” and a cry to reclaim the human as a value higher than every calculation of power and interest.

The Yemenis... Deemed not Human

An analysis of the world's utilitarian and hyper-pragmatic view of the Yemeni nation



Anyone who views the Yemeni scene with an objective eye will discover that the world treats Yemen as merely a "strait," a "corridor," or a "bargaining chip"—not as a nation that is home to more than thirty million people. The Houthis raise the banner of "supporting the Palestinian resistance," an undeniable act of support. Yet, at its core, this serves Iran's interests and places

Yemen, the state and the people, in the heart of a battle it was neither consulted on nor chose.

The danger isn't just that the Houthis are dragging Yemen into a regional war against the will of its people. It's that they are solidifying an image of Yemen in the international imagination as a land without people—a mere geography subject to a game of corridors and strategies. What appears as support for the resistance is nothing more than a trade-off: the future of Yemen and its people's right to development and stability are sacrificed to cement Iran's position as a regional power.

What's more disturbing is that the world accepts this equation without objection. Yemen is seen only as the Bab al-Mandab Strait, as a shipping lane that dictates oil prices and a passage for



vessels—not as a nation with an ancient history that predates most of today's existing nations. This utilitarian perspective is not new; it is the product of a savage, pragmatic mindset that sees the land but not the people, the corridor but not the children, the geography but not the right to life and development.

Yemen is not a footnote in history. This land gave birth to great kings, the Himyarite monarchs, who built enduring civilizations and constructed dams and agricultural and commercial movements that spanned centuries. The Yemeni people even excelled during eras of decline, such as the time of King Shammar Yar'ash, who was known for his debauchery but led an extraordinary expansion. This paradox proves the ability of Yemenis to create civilization under the most difficult and absurd circumstances.

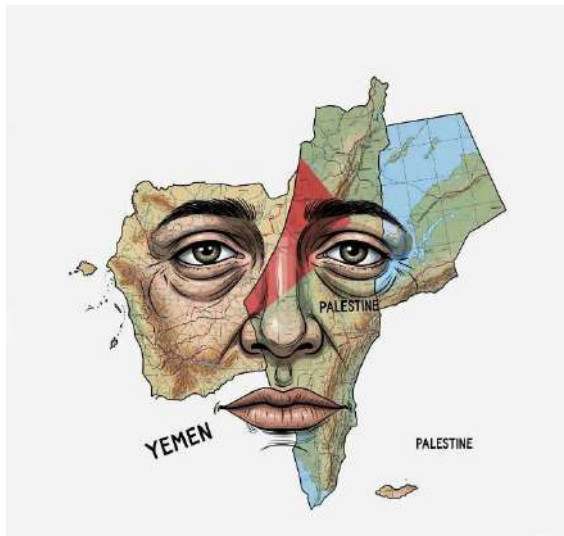
This is why the need for new leadership in Yemen has become urgent. A leadership that raises "the right to development" as an existential slogan—even if through tactics or exaggeration, as Abiy Ahmed did in Ethiopia when he made the Renaissance Dam a symbol of national sovereignty. Unless someone from Yemen emerges who can sharply articulate this slogan, the people will remain trapped between the hammer of militias and the anvil of a global perspective that sees them only as fuel for the wars of others.

The world, with its institutions and states, is a partner in this catastrophe. Egypt, which should have been a natural ally for Yemen, has withdrawn from its regional role. The major powers view Yemen through the lens of arms deals and corridors, not through the standards of human dignity. Everyone is complicit, either through silence or action, in reinforcing the image of Yemen as a land without people.

But amidst the tragedy, our voice remains clear: Palestine is our cause. Today, it faces a documented genocide and a war of starvation, captured in sound and image. Supporting Palestine is a humanitarian and moral duty before it is a political one. However,

Yemenis must not become fuel for Iran's policies under the banner of "resistance," nor should they pay a heavy price with their security and stability to be presented as a gift in the equations of others. My dream is to wake up one day to a safe world where Yemenis, Palestinians, and all the oppressed live in freedom, without war criminals like Netanyahu, without Abdelmalek, without Abbas, and without all the esteemed majesties, excellencies, and owners of thrones and yachts.

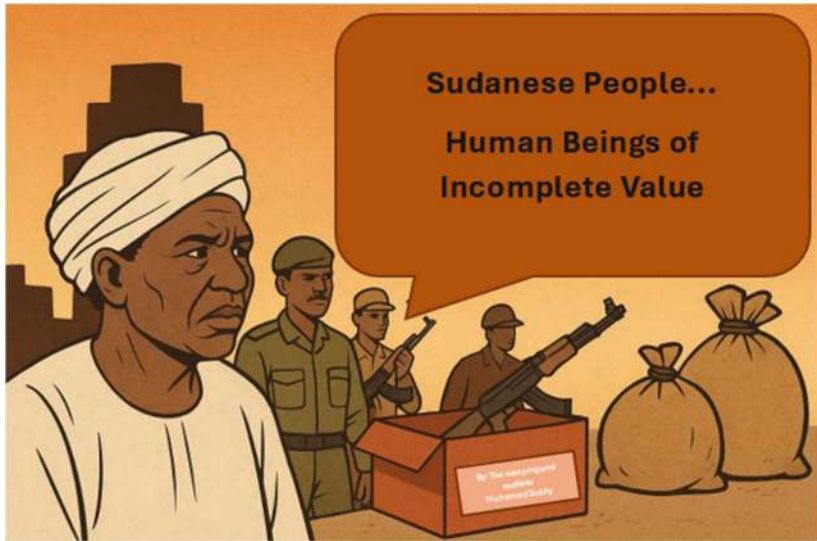
Yemen and Palestine are two sides of the same coin. Both are living witnesses to the fall of humanity when interests become a global religion and when human blood becomes a mere detail in arms, oil, and sea corridor deals. What Palestinians are subjected to—genocide and a starvation siege—and what Yemenis endure—slow death and the denial of their right to development—are but two



images of the same crime: a world without a conscience. And if this world buries its head in the sand, let our cry be clearer: Yemen and Palestine together expose the nakedness of the international system and confirm that people, no matter how tightly they are strangled, are capable of redefining dignity and seizing their right to exist.

Sudanese People... Humanity Discounted

A Reading on the Crisis of the Great Sudanese People



TYRANNY RECYCLED

The fall of Omar al-Bashir was not liberation. It was recycling. One dictator leaves, another enters, and the machine keeps running. Bashir did not choose between the khaki of the army or the thobe of political Islam. He wore both—and claimed both patriotism and religion—so he could rule forever.

Unlike others, he didn't just tame the army. He privatized it. The military became a syndicate of interests, its leaders turned into merchants, and its officers into shopkeepers. Sudan's national army was no longer a defender of sovereignty but a business franchise.

MILITIAS, INC.

Out of this came militias. Not ragtag fighters, but full-blown corporations with guns. They own ports, shipping companies, security firms. They run the country's resources as if they were stocks in a marketplace. In Sudan, the line between a general and a

businessman disappeared. Sovereignty itself became a contract in someone's briefcase, not the will of a state.

And let's not pretend this is unique. The formula is on sale everywhere: parallel armies, private security firms, "businessmen" who make more decisions than parliaments. Sudan just gave it a local brand name.

GOLD, GUNS, AND SILENCE

Scandals? No—business as usual. A plane stuffed with cash and gold vanishes. A private company manages the state border.

Officials nod as if these were achievements. One man owns the



borders, another owns the market, a third owns the TV stations. Together they own the country, while the government plays dead. Once, fathers planted roses and used oil to bargain for Arab dignity. Today, their sons plant militias and sell blood like they sell wheat. They wrap it all in that tired slogan: "security and stability."

CIVIL SOCIETY: SUFFOCATED ON PURPOSE

And where is civil society? Strangled, starved, erased. No funding, no space, no international concern. The world doesn't care—because Sudan is not "strategic." In the eyes of the great powers, if

you don't sit on oil or a strait, you are not human. At best, you are a human with incomplete value.

This is the cruel equation: if your suffering doesn't shift markets or borders, it doesn't exist. Your blood is cheap unless it buys someone leverage in a geopolitical game.

THE TRAPPED CITIZEN

But the Sudanese citizen still exists—on the streets, demanding life itself. Not luxury. Not miracles. Just life. And for that, he is crushed between militias that operate like corporations, a state that cannot protect him, and foreign allies who see Sudan as a bargain sale.

Egypt might see its own reflection here—but this is Sudan's tragedy, first and foremost. A country auctioned off piece by piece, with its citizens left holding the receipt.

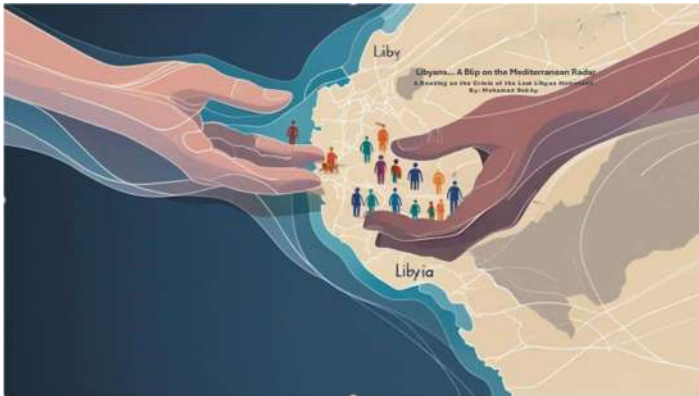
HUMANS ON DISCOUNT

Sudan was not stolen only by bullets and tanks. It was sold off through contracts, monopolies, and privileges. The citizen was not just killed—he was commodified, tagged, and priced. This is not a civil war. This is a clearance sale of a nation.

And so the bitter question remains: *when will the Sudanese be seen as full humans—without discount stickers, without asterisks, without conditions?*



Libyans... A Blip on the Mediterranean Radar



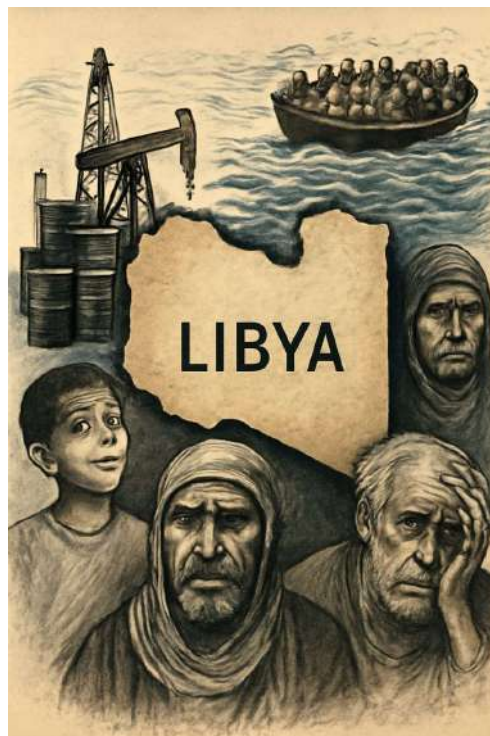
Libya, a country that has lived for more than 42 years under the rule of Muammar Gaddafi, is rich in gas and oil. Its coffers are full, fuel is sold to citizens at a low price, and its roads are filled with the latest cars. Yet, if a citizen needs the most basic medical care, they must travel hundreds of kilometers to Egypt or Tunisia because their country lacks real hospitals, infrastructure, and institutions. An artificial stability was enforced under a man who wanted to take the world back two hundred years and become the “Emperor of Africa.”

And so, like its North African neighbors, Libya found itself with all the elements of power on paper. But in reality, it became a mere gateway for illegal migration toward the Mediterranean and a stage for the world to negotiate over human beings before oil. What fate awaits a country so rich in resources yet so poor in the destiny of its people?

North Africa is not just a line on a map that looks out onto the Mediterranean. We are, in truth, the south of Europe and its major gateway, especially Egypt and Libya. This is where the equation of illegal migration begins, with boats of human beings traveling from our shores toward the Old Continent. Thus, the region has become

a focal point in the security, migration, and economic equation a permanent bargaining chip with Europe.

Migration is no longer just a fleeting movement of Africans escaping poverty or war; it has become a full-fledged bargaining chip that everyone understands. Imagine an African citizen (Sudanese or Chadian) who enters Egypt or Libya illegally and is then arrested. Their dark days begin at the police station, and they may never get out. But if that same person makes it to Europe, they will be treated with respect and may find a dignified life. From this perspective, the journey in a "boat of death" across the Mediterranean becomes preferable to staying in Egypt or Libya. Europe, Africa, Egypt, Libya—the whole world knows the value of this weapon and accepts it, yet we all pretend to be silent.



Colonel Muammar Gaddafi was the first to put this card on the table without shame. *"I will flood you with millions of Africans,"* he warned. It was a frank statement that made Europe pay and turn a blind eye. After him, anyone who sat in a seat of power in Cairo or Tripoli—or even on an oil barrel with a rifle in Benghazi or Misrata—brandished the same threat. There is no difference between a head of state or a gang leader; everyone has used the same language: *"Either you silence your criticism and open your coffers, or we will open our coasts."*

Over the years, the bargaining chip was passed from hand to hand: from Mubarak, who would remind the West that "migration is a sensitive security issue," to the Military Council after 2011, and finally to President Sisi, who turned the issue into a fixed item on the table of every negotiation with Brussels. The result: Europe constantly pays, while the Mediterranean is threatened with turning from a sea of tourism into a floating cemetery.

As for Europe, the silent partner in this game, it acts like a factory owner who doesn't want to see poor workers at his door: he pays a doorman to keep them away. And here, a new doorman appeared, named "the South Mediterranean." Suddenly, dilapidated regimes and militias became the first line of defense for so-called "civilized" Europe. The European Union pays millions to Egypt, to Libyan militias, to Tunisia—to any entity that controls the coasts. The main thing is that migrants don't reach Europe's shores.

In 2017, for example, Italy signed an agreement with the Libyan coast guard, not just to stop the boats, but to hand over the people directly to detention camps. The same Europe that was moved by the image of the child Alan Kurdi is the very same one that has paid Gaddafi, Sisi, and any party that keeps human beings away from its shores.

In short, Europe views the migrant as "a person with a dash": someone who is human, yes, but not fully entitled to rights—a person who can be bought and sold in deals, as long as they don't arrive at Europe's doorstep. And this is where the bigger story

begins: How have human rights become a currency that is spent selectively and frozen at the borders whenever they conflict with Western interests?

The Libyan poet Mohammed Al-Faitouri writes: *"Libya, my land, between oil and death, between freedom and betrayal."*

This image reflects the reality Libyans have endured: wealth without a life, sustenance without dignity, and leaders who exploited human beings as a negotiating tool. Gaddafi said, *"Oil belongs to those who protect it."* Mubarak made "security first" the slogan of all his negotiations. And today, Sisi boasts that "Egypt is the line of defense for Europe." Every phrase reveals a double standard, every slogan justifies the exploitation of human beings, and every verse cries out for the squandered rights of its citizens. As for the impact on the lives of Libyan citizens, they are the biggest losers. The absence of basic services like healthcare and education, their deprivation of freedom of movement, and the presence of militia controlling ports and coasts make their daily lives full of danger and limitations. They watch their wealth pass before their eyes into the coffers of others and live in economic and political isolation, with the constant feeling that their basic rights are not respected.



Regional and international ambitions, along with attempts to balance power between competing international poles, have turned Libya from a mere state into a battleground for multiple interests:

- Egypt sees it as a matter of national security and a peaceful border, dealing with migration as a strategic security issue.
- Turkey sees it as a source of gas, maritime interests, and regional influence, supporting certain factions to achieve its goals.
- The Gulf states (Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar) intervene politically and economically, supporting different parties to gain regional influence, control resources, and affect the future government's form.
- Europe sees it as a barrier against migration and terrorism and pays to prevent the arrival of migrants while protecting its economic interests in oil and gas.
- America and Russia see it as a bargaining chip against rivals and a strategic foothold in the Mediterranean.

Libya has been transformed into a large chessboard where regional and international powers clash and distribute influence based on their interests. Each country views Libya as a resource tank, a protective wall, or an arena for influence. The balance of power is always fragile, and local militias act as pawns in this game, while the Libyan citizen remains the last to be considered in the equation.

Elsewhere, Al-Faitouri says: *"The cry of the citizen was lost between bullets and gold."* This line summarizes the tragedy of the Libyan citizen: their wealth is in the hands of others, their rights are lost, and they have no say in their own destiny.

This begs the question:

For how much longer will human beings remain mere pawns on the chessboard of self-interest?

The Orphan on the World's Maps... The Forsaken People of Syria

A Reading on the Syrian Labyrinth and the Lost Citizen



In Egypt and Sudan, there's a deep-seated legend among the people that they were once a single country. But the truth is, that never happened. However, the two Arab nations that actually united and became a single country, even if for just one day, were Egypt and Syria in the "United Arab Republic." A short-lived dream that died before it was even born, as if it were nothing more than a rehearsal for the loss of the Arab person themselves.

Since then, in every experiment, the citizen has become a mere marginal detail amidst maps drawn with politics and steel, while their life remains on hold on the chessboard of others.

The country that Hafez al-Assad built to his own size was a map of tribes, ethnicities, and sects drawn in blood and iron: Alawites on the mountaintops, Sunnis in the cities and countryside, Druze in the south, Kurds in the north, and scattered Turkmen and Armenians in the center, alongside a mix of tribal clans. In the Fertile Crescent, where Arab flags before Sykes-Picot carried the crescent and stars as a symbol of shared identity, Syria emerged from the heart of history to become a laboratory for international powers and a stage for settling scores.

THE ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS MAP

Syria is a complex mosaic:

The Sunnis, the majority who bore the greatest share of the conflict.

The Alawites whose fate became tied to the regime's.

The Kurds who sought foreign-backed autonomy.

The Christians with their various denominations.

The Druze who tried to remain on the sidelines.

The Turkmen in whom Turkey found an additional pressure card.

The Ismailis and other small sects.

A mosaic that turned into a mosaic of blood.

In Syria, all contradictions came together:

The regime, its security apparatus, and its allied militias.

The political and military opposition.

The organizations classified as terrorists: ISIS and Al-Nusra (Hayat Tahrir al-Sham).

The Kurdish forces (SDF).

And each side found someone to feed it:

Turkey supported Sunni factions and some internationally designated terrorist organizations to achieve its influence. America invested in the SDF to ensure control over oil sources.

Russia stood with the regime as a strategic ally and a pathway for the return of Soviet glory.

Iran linked Syria to its regional project extending from Iraq to Lebanon.

Israel watched everyone, striking when it wanted and investing when it needed to.

The result: hundreds of thousands of victims, including detainees, disappeared, killed, and displaced, but the world saw Syria as nothing more than a chessboard.

A mosaic that could have been a source of wealth became a battlefield.

If the poet Al-Mutanabbi once said:

"When you take a risk for a sought-after honor, do not settle for anything less than the stars."

The Syrian was denied the right to dream in the first place, so their only honor became surviving for one more day.

And just as Al-Jahiz described: *"Kings seek the world, the public seeks a livelihood, and religion is lost between them,"* today, Syria is a place where regional and international powers seek influence,





factions seek spoils, and the citizen is lost between them, without value.

Assad the father handed his son a republic of terror, but Bashar inherited only a fragile facade. His brother, Maher, remained a shadow in the background: a bloody officer closer to the fictional Maher Al-Sharaa than any statesman.

Here, Ahmed Fouad Negm would sarcastically quip: *"The truth is, the dogs are the rulers, and the human is the pathetic one."* If he had lived to see Syria, he would have said: *"Very pathetic."*

And the outside world? It treated Syria like a gambling table.

America and Israel raise the "terrorism" card whenever they please and withdraw it whenever it suits them.

Everything in Syria happened in plain sight of the world:

Barrel bombs.

The "Caesar" leaks.

Scenes from the detention centers and the Saydnaya prisons.

But the world did not take a real stand. And when the regime suddenly collapsed, the scene changed:

Assad and Maher transformed from "presidents" into "bloody dictators."

Suddenly, there was talk of Saydnaya as if it were a new discovery.

And Al-Joulani, from an "international terrorist" to a "local leader" who can be negotiated with.

Even more shocking: Al-Joulani was removed from terrorism lists before sanctions were lifted from Syria as a state, because what's important isn't the Syrian people but who serves the interests of others.

The world didn't see the "Caesar" leaks that exposed the bodies of unknown detainees, but it suddenly discovered that Bashar was a "criminal" only when his cards fell out of the equation.

That's when they remembered that there was a "Syrian people" who needed sympathy!

As Ziad Rahbani sarcastically said: *"All of them means all of them... just let us live."* But in Syria, there is no "all of them" and no "living."

Maher al-Assad and Maher al-Sharaa, as if destiny is laughing at us: a version of tyranny meets a version of the opposition... and in the end, there is no difference between the two except their position on the chessboard.

There is only a delayed death and a chessboard moved by strange hands.

And the Arab League? The entity that people see as mere decoration, I see it—despite its weakness—as an important indicator. Not because it makes decisions, but because it reflects the face of the Arab system. It is the same League that warmly welcomed Bashar al-Assad days before his fall. And it will welcome the "new chessboard soldiers" after him with the same applause and smiles.

Syrian sovereignty is not being violated... because it never existed in the first place:

Borders open to smugglers and terrorists.

A sky crossed by Israel, America, Russia, and Iran without permission.

A land that has become a corridor for influence and a factory for producing "Captagon," the finest of drugs.

AND HERE WE ARE

My friend, did you notice that we've reached the end of the article without once mentioning the Syrian citizen?

Not Assad. Not Al-Joulani.

Not Russia. Not America.

Not the Arab League. Not the UN.

Not Israel. Not Iran.

Not the Kurds. Not the Alawites.

Not the Sunnis. Not the Shia.

Not the SDF. Not Hayat Tahrir al-Sham.

No one... no one sees the Syrian human.

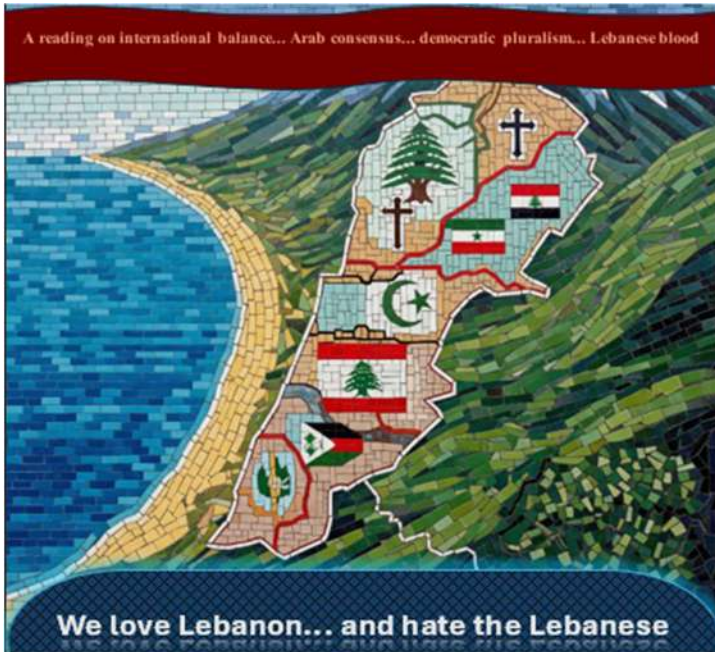
Forget him. Let's get back to what really matters: Syria's Captagon.
Syria's drugs. Syria's lands. Syria's factions.

*Goodbye, my friend... We live in a world with no room
for humans, only for criminals with their accounts—
so that a place can be drawn for them on the map.*



We love Lebanon... and hate the Lebanese

A reading on international balance... Arab consensus... democratic pluralism... Arab blood.



Lebanon is a country where you can experience four seasons in a single day. You can go down to the corniche in Beirut, find the sea right in front of you, and it feels like summer. Two hours later by car, you can drive up the mountains and find yourself surrounded by snow and cold. It's a small country in area, but rich in climate, and its natural diversity is a direct reflection of its human and cultural diversity. It has music that blends folklore and jazz, cuisine that includes both tabbouleh and burgers, and the voice of Fairuz, which can make any Lebanese person agree with their rival, even if just for a minute.

But the country that God blessed with all this has been turned, politically, into a closed arena, where pluralism has been shattered and transformed from a blessing into a curse.

THE CHRISTIANS OF ONE FAITH HAVE BEEN DIVIDED INTO:

- The Maronites: Historically the most powerful Christian sect; the president of the republic must be a Maronite. They have a traditional relationship with France and are always the card that the West uses to guarantee its influence.
- The Orthodox: A minority but influential in the economy and culture.
- The Catholics and Armenians: A considerable presence but politically on the sidelines.

THE MUSLIMS WHO BELIEVE IN THE SAME BOOK HAVE BEEN DIVIDED INTO:

- The Sunni Muslims: The prime minister must be from their sect. Historically; they were the face of the Arab (especially Saudi) project and are distributed among political families (like the Hariri) and local influence in Tripoli and Saida.
- The Shiite Muslims: The most demographically fast-growing sect. Politically, they are a duality of the Amal Movement (Nabih Berri) and Hezbollah. Hezbollah represents the strongest military militia in the country and perhaps in the entire world, and it is Iran's strategic card against Israel and the West.

THE DRUZE

A small minority but always the "king maker," the deciding component in many conflicts. Walid Jumblatt is a perfect example of a leader who changes his alliances with the shifting winds. All this diversity could have been a reason for Lebanon to be a world leader if it had been exploited for the benefit of the nation, rather than for the struggle between ideas to make one prevail. We are faced with ideas and projects that clash with weapons,

conspiracies, tricks, and foreign support for the sake of a faction, even if the nation is lost.

- The Arab Lebanon: A movement that sees Lebanon as an extension of Arab identity (Beirut is part of Damascus and Baghdad).
- The Western Lebanon: A movement that sees the country as a "civilized facade" linked to the West (especially France).
- The Resistance Lebanon: Hezbollah and its supporters consider the country a base for confrontation with Israel.
- The Liberal/Civil Lebanon: Young voices who dream of a civil state that transcends sectarianism (emerged strongly in the 2019 protests).



My friend, sitting with me behind the news screen, trying to understand the nature of foreign interventions in Lebanon in light of the struggles we've tried to understand... Let's go on a journey that I promise will be the worst of your life.

FIRST: THE SUNNI MUSLIMS AND THE GULF

Saudi Arabia is the historical patron of the Sunnis, especially through the Hariri family. The support is financial, political, and media-related, focusing on linking Lebanon to the Sunni Arab axis. The goal: to counter Iranian influence in the country and keep Beirut in the Saudi orbit. The West in general, and America and France in particular, overlook Saudi interference because it balances the scales against Hezbollah.

SECOND: THE SHIITE MUSLIMS AND IRAN

Hezbollah is Iran's strongest weapon outside its borders. Funding, training, and weapons come directly from Tehran. The party is not just a militia; it also has parliamentary and ministerial representation, meaning it's a part of the state itself. The West, God spare us their habits, acts with double standards: sometimes it classifies Hezbollah as a "terrorist," and other times it communicates with it under the table to ensure a calm front with Israel or to secure internal settlements. The result: all of Lebanon is treated as a "hostage" in Iran's negotiations with America and Israel.

THIRD: THE CHRISTIANS AND THE WEST/FRANCE

The Maronites: France considers itself their "loving mother." The president of the republic must be a Maronite, a Western guarantee that the head of state is linked to the West. By the way, historically, some Maronite leaders preferred to ally with Israel (during the civil war), and the West always covered this up, considering it an "alliance of necessity." And of course, I don't need to tell you that the West sees Christians as the "modern face" of Lebanon, which they can present as a model in the region.

Fourth: The Druze and the Balancing Act

They are a small but very influential minority, especially in Mount Lebanon. The Druze move between axes: a little with Syria, a little with Saudi Arabia, and sometimes with the West. And because the West is diligent in its double standards and professional in using human beings in developing countries as playing cards, it sees the Druze as a "tactical card" to be used to tip the scales in any direction during times of crisis.

Do not expect, my friend, that we are done. The catastrophe of Lebanon is far greater than we can imagine.

Do you remember the previous article... yes, Syria... The orphan on the world's maps... the lamented people?

You can revisit that article to try and grasp the strangeness of the scene.

FIFTH: THE DIRECT EXTERNAL PLAYERS

Yes, my friend, Syria is the first of the external players in the Lebanese scene: it was militarily and politically present until 2005, and it still has security influence with some sects, led by Hezbollah, under Bashar. We don't know what will happen with Al-Sharaa.

Israel: Which deals with Lebanon as Hezbollah's backyard. It strikes whenever it wants, and the West, of course, of course, of course, justifies it as "self-defense."

The United States: The record holder in the sport of using the financial stick: sanctions on Hezbollah, pressure on banks, and linking any aid to impossible changes in the sectarian system.

FRANCE:

The closest colonial power to the hearts of the region's wealth: it tries to maintain its historical influence (the Maronites + the economy + culture).

The Gulf: Especially Saudi Arabia and the UAE, they not only fund media and politics for the Sunnis but also for some Maronites.

Iran: The most obvious player in the South and the Suburbs, holding Hezbollah militarily and politically.

Lebanon is not a "state" as much as it is an arena for a conflict of interests:

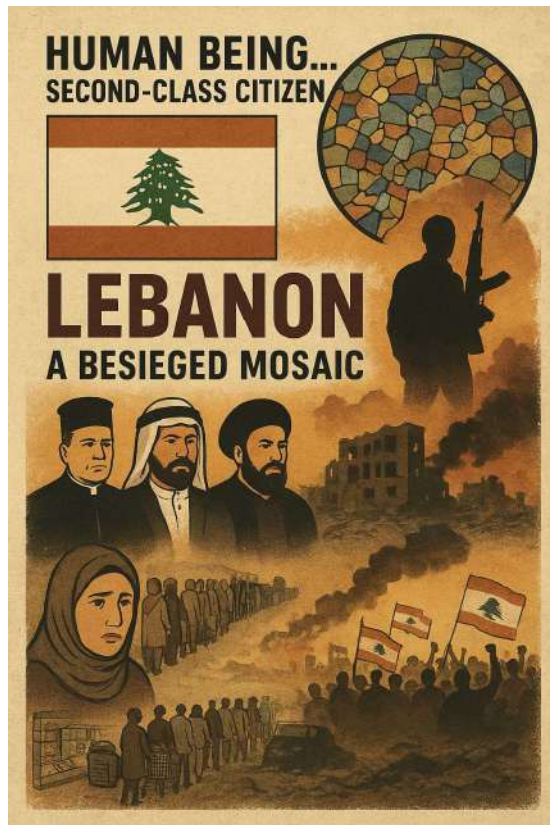
Every sect is tied to an external thread.

Every internal decision is contingent on the approval of an embassy or a foreign capital.

The West calls this "balance," but in reality, it is a guarantee that Lebanon remains in limbo, neither dying nor living.

This map is like a chess game, but every piece is tied to a string from abroad: Saudi Arabia holds the Sunnis, Iran holds the Shiites, France holds the Maronites, and Israel stands at the door. And the West maintains the situation this way to guarantee that Lebanon does not rise.

Let's take a look at the natural result of this distorted map.



THE CIVIL WAR (1975 – 1990)

It started as an internal conflict between the Maronites and the Palestinians, but Syria, Israel, America, France, and Iran quickly entered. But the ordinary Lebanese citizen was the one who paid the price: displacement, massacres, a "Green Line" dividing Beirut in two. And the beautiful West called this a "proxy war," but the truth is that it was a bloody experiment for all intelligence agencies on Lebanese soil.

The Israeli Invasion (1982)

Israel entered Beirut, and the international community stood by and watched. The Sabra and Shatila massacres happened right under the eyes of the Israeli forces, and the West was content with condemnation. The real goal: to strike the Palestine Liberation Organization, in addition to paving the way for the rise of the "Maronite-Israeli alliance." And the simple citizen? He was just a number among UN reports.

THE SYRIAN HEGEMONY (1990 – 2005)

After the Taif Agreement, the Syrian army entered Beirut under the title of "maintaining stability." But in practice: Lebanon became a Syrian protectorate. And I don't need to tell you that the West left Syria holding Lebanon as a prize for its support in the first Gulf War against Saddam Hussein. The Lebanese person lived for 15 years watched and suppressed, but the West called this "Arab consensus."

THE ASSASSINATION OF RAFIK HARIRI (2005)

A massive political shock, so much so that even as a child at the time, I still remember the terrestrial broadcast being cut on all channels and their complete focus on this crime for a long time. The shock, of course, created an internal division: March 14 (anti-Syria) vs. March 8 (pro-Syria and Iran). The streets were filled, but not out of a love for truth or justice; each sect went out for the sake of its embassy. The West used the incident as a pretext to pressure Syria and remove it from Lebanon, but justice itself is never our story. If you're asking who the killer is, that's not our topic at all. The

world has more important things: balance, consensus, and all that blah blah.

THE JULY WAR (2006)

Israel bombed Lebanon for 33 days. The destruction was immense, with hundreds dead and hundreds of thousands internally displaced. The West was content with calls for Israel to "exercise restraint." Later we learned that the real goal was (in bold Arabic letters): to test Hezbollah's capabilities, not to protect civilians. So they killed civilians for the sake of the test.

THE ECONOMIC COLLAPSE (2019 – PRESENT)

The banks collapsed, the lira evaporated. Millions of Lebanese lost their savings. The street exploded with the October 17 Revolution, but as usual, sectarianism came back and broke any hope for change. And the West? It offered a little humanitarian aid and tied any rescue plan to impossible political settlements. The Lebanese citizen found himself in lines: for gas, medicine, bread... as if he were living in a war without bombs.

THE BEIRUT PORT EXPLOSION (2020)

One of the largest non-nuclear explosions in history. Thousands of homes were destroyed, hundreds were killed and injured. Even today, five years later, there has been no real accountability. The West exploited the catastrophe as an additional means of pressure on the political elite, not as a humanitarian event deserving of urgent justice. The Lebanese human being became just a picture in the Western media: a child covered in dust, a mother screaming, streets in ruins... and then "we move to the next news story."

Any internal crisis (from electing a president to forming a government to an economic collapse) is not solved until the "big players" agree. The West calls this "democratic pluralism," but the truth is that it's intentional paralysis that keeps Lebanon as a card in regional and international negotiations.

If you want to know how we got to this scene, I'll tell you that colonialism never really left; it just changed its form. The French mandate established sectarianism as a system of life, and since

then, any crisis in Lebanon has been linked to the game of influence between external and internal forces. France took it under its mandate and systematically entrenched sectarian power-sharing: a Maronite for the presidency, a Sunni for the premiership, and a Shiite for the speaker of parliament. This structure continued after independence in 1943 in the "National Pact," but in reality, it was not complete independence as much as it was a redistribution of influence among internal powers under foreign supervision. The crises in Lebanon are not separate events; they are chapters in a single book: the book of a country ruled by sectarian quotas and open to foreign intervention. And the Lebanese scene itself is not isolated or an exception; it's just a piece in a larger painting. If we extend the line, we will find that the entire Arab world—and even Africa—is shaped in the same way: a chessboard on which torn internal powers move, and external fingers move the pawns according to their interests. In Lebanon, it's sects; in Iraq, it's denominations; in Sudan, it's tribes; and in Libya, it's militias... but the core is the same: the human being has no value, and only interests rule.

Here, the international community's double standards become clear. Lebanon, for the West, is not just a state but a ground for settling scores. When Israel invaded Beirut in 1982, the "right to self-defense" excuse was ready in the drawers of Western capitals, while the blood of civilians in Sabra and Shatila couldn't even find a place in the news. And when Rafik Hariri was assassinated in 2005, the Security Council moved at lightning speed, and a special tribunal was formed by international resolution, while hundreds of assassinations and crimes targeting activists, journalists, and ordinary people in the same country passed without a tribunal or accountability.

If we compare this to, for example, Ukraine now: just a Russian invasion, and the whole world moved—sanctions, armament, 24-hour media coverage. But when Israel strikes Beirut or southern Lebanon, it's just "concern" and "calls for restraint." The difference is not in the size of the tragedy; the difference is in the value of the human being. The Ukrainian has value because he represents a Western line of defense against Russia, while the Lebanese, Palestinian, or Iraqi's value is zero unless he represents a pressure card in the game of interests.

In the end, Lebanon is not a small country lost in local crises. It is a concentrated model of how the world deals with our region: a beautiful country, rich in culture and nature, but besieged by sectarianism from within and by international chess from without. And in this equation, the human being is not a full citizen... he is merely a person with a dash, a second-class citizen.

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan ... A State on Pause



Jordan is often presented as a fragile entity — defined by Hashemite guardianship over the holy sites, and trapped by the ambitions and conflicts of its neighbors.

But in truth, this land is older than the state itself. It is the land of Petra, a rose-red civilization that testifies: the history of this country is far deeper than any modern political boundaries.

The Jordanian state, as we know it today, seemed born more indebted to foreign alliances than rooted in its own soil. Its survival tied to the satisfaction of the West, the guarantees of Washington and Tel Aviv — at the cost of ongoing economic dependency and mounting debt that shackles national decision-making.

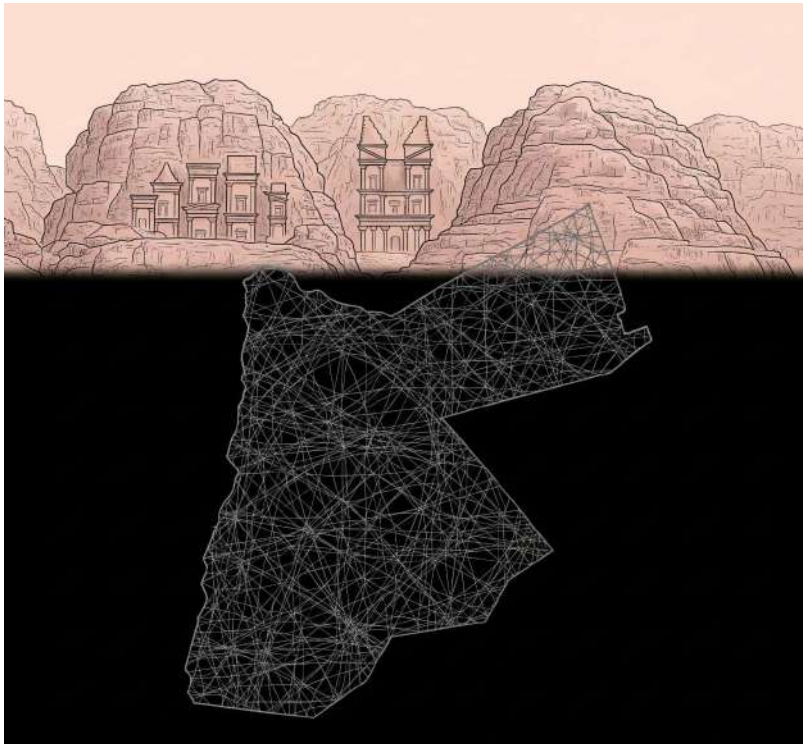
Inside, Jordanians have never known a normal political life: constitutions amended again and again to fit the ruler; elections decided before they begin; opposition either tamed or suffocated.

Tribalism wielded as a weapon of pacification, or a card of pressure. Identity left suspended between Jordanian and Palestinian, between Bedouin and refugee, between the weight of tribal legacy and a capital city straining to modernize.

But the deepest dilemma is balance:

How can a regime that markets itself to the West as the guardian of stability and Israel's security convince a people — whose hearts carry Palestine — that Palestine is not their direct cause? This contradiction has forced Jordan to live on the edge of an impossible equation: to please the ally without losing the people, and to please the people without breaking the ally.

Thus, Jordan appears as a “state under political and economic lease.” Yet the truth is that the roots of this land run deeper than narrow calculations. Petra, with its rose-red stones, reminds us



that Jordan is not just a fragile regime — it is a history no debt, no treaty, can erase.

It is as if Jordan lives between two equations:

a paper-state mortgaged by agreements and debts,
and a real land that bears witness to civilizations no conqueror
could erase.

In Petra — where the silence of stone speaks louder than the
speeches of politicians — we read that peoples endure while
regimes pass.

As Mahmoud Darwish once wrote:

"On this land, there is that which deserves life."

And on this land, there is that which deserves to be a true state —



not a state under guardianship, nor an entity on hold.

And here, Nimr bin Adwan, with his authentic Bedouin voice, calls
us to liberation:

*"O rider, tighten the saddle-straps,
Rise, my beloved, mount high above the barriers..."*

As if to say: rise above the chains,
let Jordan ascend toward a horizon of freedom and belonging —
not suspended, not subordinate,
but on its true journey toward itself.

Two Rivers of Blood and Oil... Iraq, the Nation Cursed with Governors



A black stone bore humanity's first written law: the Babylonian stele of Hammurabi. From that stone, civilization announced itself. Not far from Babylon—down south in Lagash—stood the great Urukagina, the first reformer in politics, finance, and administration, laying down the foundations of institutions no different from what we now call the modern state, a model the West would only discover thousands of years later. This land of the two rivers gave us the House of Wisdom, the mighty al-Mutanabbi, the poet al-Jawahiri, and al-Basri, who once said: *"Never have I seen a land I hated to leave more than Basra, nor a land I wished to die in more."* But as Qatadah ibn Da'amah remarked: *"Iraq is a nation plagued by its rulers and orators."*

Iraq was never merely geography. It has always been a testing ground for grandiose dreams, and a laboratory for superpowers' games.

Saddam Hussein saw in Gamal Abdel Nasser the image of the “immortal leader.” He tried to replicate it: charisma, fiery speeches, pan-Arab dreams, and the iron fist. The Arabs who wept for Nasser were the same ones who cursed Saddam. A double-edged sentiment mirroring double-edged interests.

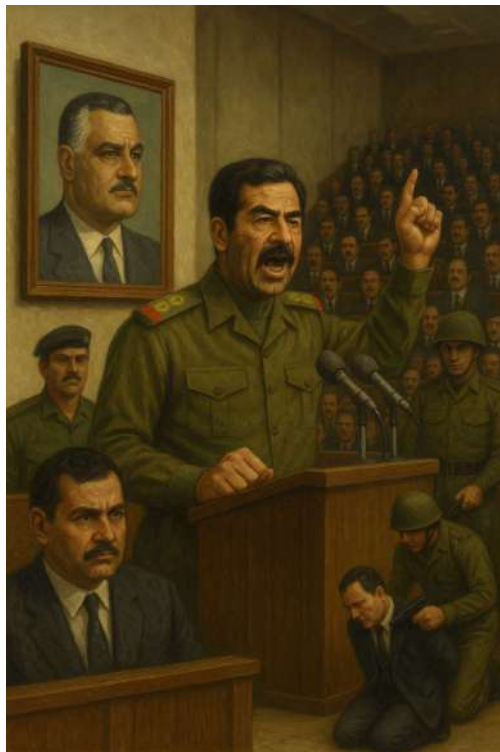
Saddam was not just a president—he was the lead actor in a bloody theater. In the infamous “Hall Massacre,” he executed political rivals on live broadcast, turning politics into a public horror show. It echoed the old proverb of “slaughtering the cat,” much like al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf al-Thaqafi, who once thundered: *“I see heads ripe for the harvest, and I am their reaper.”*

The Ba'ath Party, chanting *“One Arab Nation with an Eternal Mission,”* was born already split: Shi'a vs. Sunni, Arab vs. Kurd, rival tribes at each other's throats. The rhetoric was unity, the reality—fracture.



In the Arab consciousness, Iraq was *“Palestine’s eastern lung.”* The first Arab missile to hit Israel after October 1973 was launched by Saddam in 1991. Yet it was a missile without allies. The same Arabs who applauded that act opened their bases to U.S. bombers in the Gulf War. Hypocrisy at its peak: *“Jerusalem in speeches, Washington in practice.”*

When Saddam invaded Kuwait, he did not see himself as a conqueror but as a “unifier.” War debts from Iran, oil disputes, and a hunger for leadership pushed him over the cliff. The Arabs who should have “understood each other as brothers” became launchpads for American warplanes. Arab consensus became a cover for destruction, proving Arabism was nothing more than a slogan without protection.



Twelve years of sanctions bled Iraq dry and killed its children in silence. Mohamed ElBaradei at the IAEA warned against a war without evidence, but his voice drowned in the Pentagon's drums. Lakhdar Brahimi saw with his own eyes how Baghdad was turned to ashes—under the banner of the UN.

Then came the 2003 invasion, revealing the true face of “democracy”: Abu Ghraib, secret prisons, and the American torturer dressed in the mask of liberty. Military bases sprouted across a land supposedly sovereign.

The first mission of that criminal war? To deepen sectarian and ethnic rifts within Iraq. The new map: Kurds in the north, Shi'a in the south, Sunnis in the center, tribes scattered everywhere. Saddam had used tribes as tools of control; the occupiers used them as tools of division. The outcome: a country split along lines of blood and identity.

Ever since the diplomats of Britain and France sat at the Sykes–Picot table, Iraq was nothing more than a shape drawn with rulers, not blood. They imported a king who knew Iraq only from Baghdad Airport, sat him on a throne above a powder keg of sectarian and tribal conflict. Later, they backed Saddam as long as he guarded their interests against Iran, until the “dictator” suddenly became a liability. The result? A country destroyed three times—by wars, by sanctions, and by occupation.

After 2003, they dismantled the state in the name of democracy, leaving a vacuum from which ISIS emerged—the monster born of their policies, only for them to return to fight it in yet another staged drama.

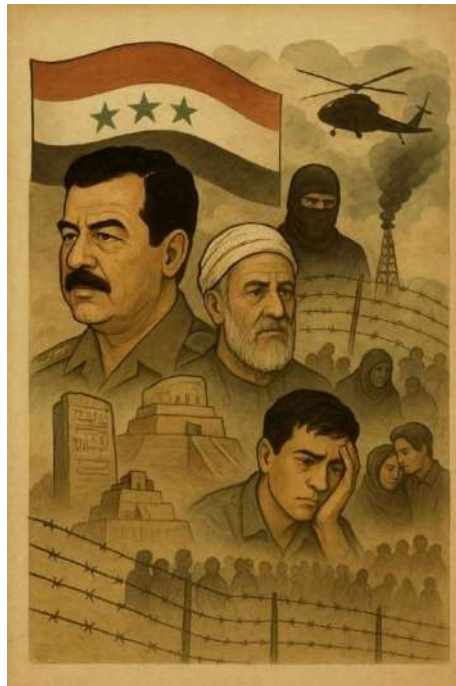
Iraq has always been a testing ground for Western rhetoric. They speak of human rights while Abu Ghraib's shadow haunts the memory. They wave the banner of democracy while oil deals are struck in backrooms. They condemn “sectarianism” while drafting a constitution that divides Iraqis into sectarian quotas. In the end,

Iraq exposed the West more than it exposed its own people—a land turned into a mirror that reflected the hypocrisy of slogans when confronted with interests.

Meanwhile, the Iraqi citizen lived through all this noise with nothing but poverty and despair.

A hostage to Saddam in his reign, a hostage to the Americans in their invasion, a hostage to sectarianism in its wars, and a hostage to tribes in their spoils.

Even oil, which should have been a blessing, became a curse—sold abroad, burned at home.



Oil in Iraq is no longer a resource—it is a tool of international extortion, pulled between America, Iran, and the Gulf, in a game of prices and supplies. The barrel of Basra has become a bargaining chip on political tables more than a livelihood for its people. The Iraqi who should have lived off his wealth found himself in bread lines. The one who dreamed of Arab unity found himself

hunted by sectarian identity. The child who drinks from the Tigris looks up to see an American jet overhead, and beneath his feet, oil fields controlled by a foreign general.

Iraq is the mirror that reflects everyone's double standards: Saddam—a hero when fighting Iran, a criminal when invading Kuwait.

The Arabs—brothers in speeches, daggers in each other's backs when Washington calls.

The West—preachers of democracy, but patrons of Abu Ghraib and foreign bases.

From the stele of Hammurabi to Abu Ghraib's cells, from the cradle of Mesopotamian civilization to the wreckage of occupation, from the reforms of Urukagina to the sermons of Qatadah, it is the simple Iraqi who always emerges human, despite everything.

Al-Jawahiri once wrote: *"Peace upon the hills of Iraq, its rivers, its cliffs, and its bends."* But peace has never found its way to the Tigris or Euphrates.

Iraq was never just a battlefield—it has always been the mirror of all our failures.



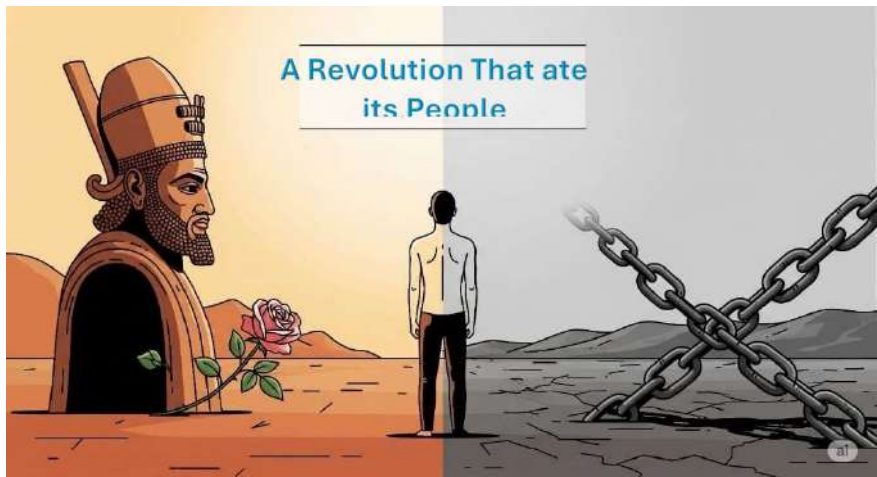
A Revolution That ate its People

Iran... An Ancient People and a Civilization Unbroken

“The first words are ours about Iran—

and of course, they have no place in the treacherous media, nor in the voice of the Americans.”

These were the words I once heard from my little one, about a place in a corner of the world that has been burning since the first day I turned on the TV at the nine o'clock news.



Cyrus the Great. Darius. The Persians—an empire that rivaled Rome and Greece.

Iran is not just a state in the Middle East. It is the land of one of the oldest civilizations in human history.

A civilization thousands of years old, pioneering in governance, religion, philosophy, and literature.

And when Islam entered Iran in the 7th century, something happened that many miss: Iranians did not dissolve like other nations. On the contrary, they preserved their identity. Islam entered, took root, but the Persian spirit endured. The Persian language did not vanish like Coptic in Egypt, nor like other tongues

erased under the pressure of religion or conquest. Iranians did something else: they fused Islam with Persian culture, and gave the world poets and thinkers like Hafez, Saadi, and Jalal al-Din Rumi.

GEOGRAPHY... A BLESSING FOR SOME, A CURSE FOR OTHERS

Geography can shield nations and grant them natural immunity. Australia was protected from invaders by the sea. The United States was made into a fortress by its oceans. Switzerland's mountains became a wall against every greedy eye.

But my friend, there are countries condemned to the "second class." For them geography became not a shield, but a curse. The Silk Road made Afghanistan a prey for occupiers across the centuries. Bab al-Mandab became Yemen's gateway to ruin. The Suez Canal turned into a permanent excuse for foreign occupation of Egypt.

And here we arrive at Iran. For the Strait of Hormuz and the Gulf, which should have been a source of prosperity, became a curse—a permanent reason for international powers to struggle over their land and their seas.



THE STRAIT OF HORMUZ

The Strait is not just an oil artery. It is one of the oldest and most dangerous sea passages in history. Since Silk Road times, ships crossed it from India and China en route to Baghdad, Damascus, Cairo, and Europe.

Control of the Strait always meant dominance in global trade. The Persians knew it long ago, the Portuguese tried to seize it in the 16th century, and then came the British.

In modern times, the Strait has become a political and economic weapon. Any tension there halts oil and gas shipments to the whole world. This is why the West lives haunted by one question: *“How do we ensure the Strait never falls fully under Iran’s will?”*

And the irony: Iran doesn’t even need nuclear weapons to terrify the world. Its mere control of the Strait’s northern shore is enough to make any great power think a thousand times before facing it directly. Iran knows this very well.

THE GULF... ARAB OR PERSIAN?

Call it “Arabian” or “Persian”—that’s not my battle. What matters is that you know: it is not large geographically, only about a thousand kilometers long, stretching between Iran to the northeast and the Arabian Peninsula to the southwest.

But it feeds the world with oil and gas. The largest energy fields lie on its shores. That’s why every state tries to brand it with its own name: to say *“this is my identity, my vital sphere.”*

For Iranians, it is the “Persian Gulf,” an extension of their ancient heritage.

For Arabs, it is the “Arabian Gulf,” part of their identity and strategic depth.

The West? It has no problem switching terms as it pleases. Trump himself admitted he alternated between “Persian Gulf” and “Arabian Gulf” to flatter whichever Gulf monarchy was writing the checks.

That line is no joke—it summarizes an entire Western policy: geography and history treated as verbal gifts, handed out to appease allies and reap gains, never to respect truth or peoples' rights.



IRAN AND THE CHURCH OF THE MIDDLE AGES

Remember Europe in the Middle Ages? When the Church was not merely a place of worship, but an absolute authority over kings, people, science, and money? When clergy held the power to “absolve” or “damn,” deciding who would enter heaven and who would burn in hell? Any objection was branded heresy, punished

with prison or execution. The result: stagnation, repression, tyranny in the name of God.

Iran after 1979 built a modern version of that: Velayat-e Faqih.

Clerics were no longer preachers or jurists, but actual rulers. Their word became final in politics, economics, media, even the arts. As the Church once stood above kings, so the Supreme Jurist in Iran stood above the president, the parliament, and the constitution. But remember: clerical rule in Europe did not last forever. It ended in bloody revolutions, rivers of blood, executions by the tens of thousands, sectarian splits, and devastating civil wars.

AS ABU AL-‘ALAA AL-MA‘ARRI SAID:

“They brought the world’s grief upon their people... may such ambitions never be blessed.”

AND AS RUMI ONCE REMINDED US: ***We were created to love, not to bind and to rule. Whoever raises the whip in God’s name, knows not God.***

A GLANCE AT IRAN’S MODERN REGIMES

- **The Qajar Dynasty (1794–1925):** A Turkmen family that rose from chaos, ruling with the sword and tribe. Iran became an arena of influence for Russia in the north and Britain in the south. They ceded land and privileges just to stay in power, even if the people starved. The “international community”? Pleased—trade and oil secured. Russia gained land. Neighbors mocked Iran’s weakness. Repression and corruption were tolerated as long as interests flowed.
- **The Pahlavi Dynasty (1925–1979):** Reza Shah and then his son Mohammad Reza Shah tried to “Europeanize” Iran. Forced modernization: unveiling women, building a military, railways, modern schools. Behind the slogan lurked the **SAVAK**, one of the most terrifying secret police in history. When Mohammad Mossadegh tried to nationalize oil in 1951, a US-British coup toppled him in 1953,

reinstalling the Shah.

The West embraced him as a golden ally. The Soviets tolerated him as an enemy. The Arabs split—Nasser saw him as a foe for allying with Israel; Sadat later stretched his hand to him, ignoring the Shah's brutal repression. Lesson: rights and blood mean nothing compared to interests.

And naturally, Western extremism triggered a reaction: a regime that stripped women's veils by force led the people to rally behind those who raised religious banners. Thus came the so-called "Islamic Revolution."



THE ISLAMIC REVOLUTION (1979)

It was a turning point. Some accused it of being "imported" from France because Khomeini came from exile there. False. He had resisted long before, exiled for years before reaching Paris. There he only found a platform. The cassette tapes he recorded and smuggled into Iran had the same impact—perhaps greater—than social media during the Arab Spring.

But it wasn't his alone. Leftists, nationalists, and popular movements all joined. Many were later executed or jailed.

Externally: at first blessing, then fear. Arabs also split. Sadat welcomed the Shah in exile against his people's will. Iran retaliated symbolically—naming a Tehran street after Sadat's assassin. That symbolic insult survived until only months ago, blocking any reconciliation between Cairo and Tehran.

And so clerics hijacked the revolution, sidelined everyone else, and established Velayat-e Faqih: absolute rule of the Supreme Leader above president, parliament, government, army. He alone held the final word.



Opposition was crushed: leftists, nationalists, even reformist clerics. The system used the slogan of “perpetual revolution” to justify executions, prisons, media censorship, systematic repression.

And the world? Pure pragmatism. The West saw Iran as a barrier against the Soviets—so it turned a blind eye to the gallows. The

Soviets stayed cautious. Arabs split: Gulf monarchies saw an existential threat; Egypt cut ties; Syria and Libya drew close. Thus began the long saga of double standards: powers preaching democracy and human rights while treating “the mullahs’ regime” as a fact, even a tactical partner.

THE FIRST GULF WAR (1980–1988)

Saddam saw his chance: a fragile new regime, a purged army, unrest in Khuzestan with its Arab minority. He invaded under the slogan “defending Arabs from Persians,” but the war was far more than a border dispute—it was Arab nationalism versus Iran’s revolutionary project.

Iran exploited it as “Sacred Defense,” using it to rally the nation and crush opposition as “traitors.” The war gave the regime its strongest internal shield.

The international stance was peak hypocrisy:

- The West (US, France, Germany) armed Iraq while secretly selling weapons to Iran (Iran-Contra).
- The Soviets leaned toward Iraq but kept ties with Iran.
- Arabs split: Gulf monarchies poured billions into Saddam as “the Arab dam against the revolution,” while Syria sided with Iran.

Eight years, over a million dead, no victor. Iraq emerged crippled, leading to its invasion of Kuwait. Iran emerged hardened, regime stronger. The world? Profited off selling weapons to both.

And here lies the bitter truth: Iran’s own regime mirrored the world’s double standards—shouting “resistance” while practicing tyranny.

EXPORTING THE REVOLUTION

With peace threatening its emergency powers, the regime found a new survival formula: exporting the revolution.

Hezbollah in Lebanon.

Militias in Iraq.

Houthis in Yemen.

Armed factions in Palestine.

Direct intervention in Syria to save Assad.

For years, Tehran boasted: “We control four Arab capitals—Beirut, Damascus, Baghdad, Sanaa.” From the Mediterranean to Bab al-Mandab.

But after October 7, the “12-Day War” exposed fragility: Hezbollah wounded, Iraqi militias exposed, Houthis pushed back, Syria collapsing inward. The very arms once Iran’s pride became burdens—financial, political, strategic.

The Nuclear Program and Sanctions

Since the 1990s, Iran pursued its nuclear program. The West called it a threat; Iran called it dignity. And while Israel holds actual nuclear weapons without scrutiny, Iran’s uranium enrichment turned the world against it.

Sanctions crushed ordinary Iranians: inflation, currency collapse, unemployment. Mothers searching for medicine. Youth jobless. Families homeless. The regime blamed the West while funneling money to militias abroad.

Inside: repression, executions, prisons.

Outside: slogans of “liberating Jerusalem” and “supporting the oppressed.”

The Iranian people themselves—among the most oppressed—remain forgotten.

FROM BUSH TO OBAMA TO TRUMP TO TODAY

Bush: “*Axis of Evil.*”

Obama: signed the nuclear deal.

Trump: tore it up, imposed “maximum pressure.”

Policies shifted, but the Iranian people remained the constant victim.

Before October 7, the world saw Iran through the lens of Mahsa Amini protests: “Woman, Life, Freedom.” Brutally crushed. The West waved it as a pressure card. Netanyahu himself addressed the Iranian people as pawns.

And yet, whenever external danger looms, Iranians rally around the state despite repression. A bitter paradox: a crushed people choosing national survival over humiliation.

JUNE 2025... THE ISRAELI STRIKE

Israel struck deep into Iran. The regime raised the banner of sovereignty. And despite misery, the people rallied once again. The West? Double standards on full display: justifying Israel's strike as "self-defense," condemning Iran for every small move. Arabs split. Russia and China seized the moment. The real victim? The Iranian people—drowning in poverty, repression, sanctions. This was not the end—only the start of a new phase of direct confrontation. What awaits is more violence, more ruin. And always, the true victim remains the same: the ordinary Iranian.

CLOSING

Iran is not merely a regime or a nuclear file. Iran is first and foremost an ancient people and civilization. Yet today this people is trapped—between a regime that bleeds them and an international community that exploits them.

The project of "four Arab capitals" is collapsing. The arms are faltering. Inside, the cauldron boils.

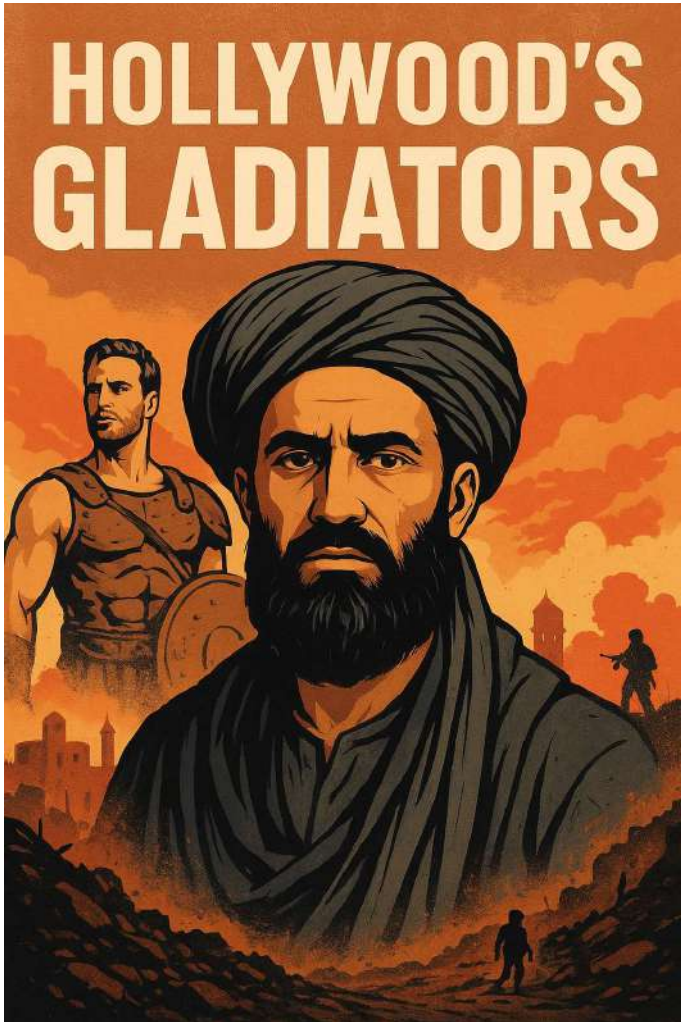
And since we are speaking of Iran, let me close with words that echo in my mind:

Hafez of Shiraz:

*Neither night remains, nor the kings—
what endures is the sigh of the lovers.*

Hollywood's Gladiators ... Afghanistan

Imagine, my friend, if you went out with a camera and a mic, stopped ten random people in the street, and asked them: “*What do Afghans look like?*” How many do you think would know? Most would picture one of two things: either the polished Hollywood image from the days when America approved of them, or the bearded “Arab” who dominated TV screens after 9/11. Between those two images, the real Afghan vanished—erased from the world’s imagination.



Afghanistan is not a small country you can reduce to a single scene. Its history earned it the title “the graveyard of empires.” The British lost three wars there in the 19th century, retreating after the massacres of Kabul and Jalalabad. The Soviets rolled in with tanks in 1979 and limped out defeated in 1989, leaving behind more than 15,000 dead soldiers. The Americans repeated the story in 2021—after their longest war abroad.

From the Silk Road that linked Asia and Europe, to the invasions of Mongols, Persians, and the British, to the Soviets and then the Americans—Afghanistan’s land has always been a theater for the clashes of great powers. And the result? Its people have always lived at the heart of the storm. The Silk Road wasn’t just about silk trade; it was a lifeline of cultures and civilizations, making Afghanistan both a bridge and a prize for East and West. Today, as



China draws its “Belt and Road,” the ghost of that old road returns—and Afghanistan stands once again in the middle. But this time, not as a trade junction—rather as a knot of politics and security.

During the Cold War, when the Soviets invaded Kabul, Afghanistan became a battleground for proxy vengeance: the Afghan jihad. For America, it was the perfect revenge for Vietnam: “*Let them drown the way we drowned.*” Through the CIA came weapons and training. Saudi Arabia poured in money and religious rhetoric—every Friday sermon became a mobilization campaign, every zakat or donation a bullet or a rocket. After Camp David, Sadat opened the door for “volunteer fighters” from Egypt, polishing his image in Washington’s eyes.

Picture it with me, my friend: a poor young man from a village in Upper Egypt, or from rural Pakistan or Yemen, hearing a sermon about the “sacred duty.” Another listening to a preacher promising him houris and a monthly salary. Suddenly, he finds himself leaving a mud-brick mosque and carrying a Kalashnikov in the mountains of Tora Bora. The Americans won that round—the Soviets retreated in defeat. But the seed planted there grew into the Taliban, then al-Qaeda... and 9/11 was the delayed bill of the Cold War.

From that chaos, the Taliban emerged. Not a political party or an elite movement, but students of religious schools in Pakistan (“the Deobandi madrassas”), trained in a rigid brand of Islam. They rose with the slogan: “*Cleanse the land from corruption, enforce Sharia.*” At first, people welcomed them—relieved to be rid of warlords’ tyranny.

But the great powers were never far. Pakistan saw in them a tool for “strategic depth” against India. America didn’t object—some reports even suggest U.S. companies saw in them a chance to build gas pipelines from Central Asia. Saudi Arabia recognized them and funneled money and religious backing. Within two years, the Taliban controlled most of the country. Black flags rose, and

the dream of justice became a harsh regime—flogging, oppressing women, silencing difference.

DID YOU KNOW AFGHANISTAN'S CURRENCY IS LITERALLY CALLED THE AFGHANI?

Wars devalued it to little more than paper scraps. Schools, when they opened, lacked even the basics. The health system resembled field tents. Women and children lived perpetually as hostages in a war they never chose. The economy survived only on subsistence farming or drug trade—the “cursed savior” that kept desperate farmers alive and propped up a state with no steady resources.

And the international community? It never treated Afghans as rightful owners of their land, but as a *means to an end*: once as noble freedom fighters, once as terrorists, once as victims paraded to stir global pity. They were never allowed to be simply human beings.

The drug trade is the starkest example. Opium became shadow currency—feeding the war economy, financing militias—while ordinary Afghans drowned between hunger, bullets, and poison.

For decades, the Afghan people have paid for every political game. Millions displaced in merciless mountains, children dying of hunger or cold in camps without heating, women walking miles for water or medicine. The few schools left are hollow shells without books or teachers. The afghani currency barely feeds a family. Ordinary Afghans—those who don't fight, don't bargain, don't play politics—became strangers in their own homeland, and even more forgotten abroad. Afghan blood became the cheapest blood—cheaper than any cause worth bargaining over.

I was supposed to write here, dear reader, a neat paragraph about Western double standards in dealing with Afghans, since this article belongs to a series: *Human... with a Police Note Attached; Second-Class Citizen*. But the truth is harsher: Afghans have never been seen as human on the West's radar. Not even as beings worthy of sight or mention.

And if I speak of Afghan rights, people may think I'm defending a Hollywood beard stereotype, not a flesh-and-blood human. That is why I say: IF WE WISH ANYTHING FOR THE AFGHAN PEOPLE, IT IS FIRST AND FOREMOST THE RIGHT TO EXIST. TO APPEAR—EVEN AS A TINY DOT UNDER A MICROSCOPE—IS BETTER THAN TO REMAIN REPLACED BY ACTORS IN A FILM WHILE THE REAL PEOPLE VANISH FROM THE SCREEN.

Think of it: if a building collapses in Europe, the world rushes with live coverage, donations, aid. If a mountain buries a village in Afghanistan, the news scrolls briefly across the bottom of the screen. The Afghan lies simply outside the “definition of humanity” the West tailored to its taste.

And the hypocrisy is glaring: when “*mujahideen*” fought the Soviets, they were “*freedom fighters*.” When their usefulness ended, they became “*terrorists*.” When the West needed them against Russia or Iran, they became “*temporary allies*.” And when America withdrew, it abandoned an entire nation to face its fate alone. Even the economy wasn't spared the game. The West preached war on drugs, all while being the first beneficiary of opium trade. The destitute Afghan farmer grows poppy to feed his children, while global money-laundering networks quietly recycle billions with approval.

And yet, out of this wreckage, voices of light emerged. Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, the thinker who dreamed of comprehensive reform for the Muslim world, came from Kabul's heart. From its streets came



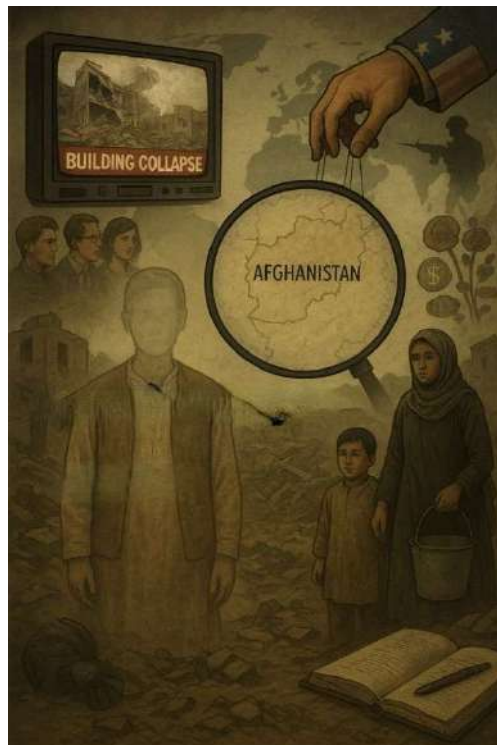
Jalal al-Din Rumi—immortalized in the West simply as “Rumi”—and his father Baha al-Din, born there too. The same soil that carried Buddhism to China gave birth to the greatest Sufi poet who filled the world with words of divine love. Alongside him were poets like Rahman Baba, who wrote:

“Do not build palaces on the skulls of the poor;

The earth belongs to God, and man is but a passing guest.”

These words are testimony: the Afghan is not just an image on a screen, but a human with heart, mind, and a profound civilizational heritage.

So let us hope, together, that the world may one day see the Afghan—even as a tiny dot under a microscope. That dot is more truthful, more dignified, than any Hollywood star paraded as a substitute for an entire people who never even got “second-class” status in the records of humanity.



The Arab Lab Rat... Tunisia

“In the name of God, the answer is Tunisia.”



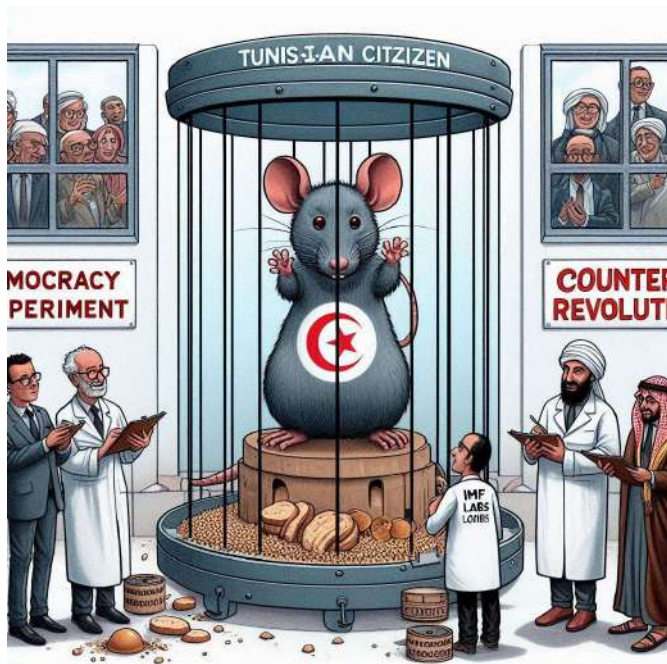
It wasn't just a throwaway punchline from the Egyptian actor Ahmed Helmy in one of his films. It was the bitter reality condensed in a joke: Tunisia, turned into a testing ground, with its people reduced to lab rats. Indeed, the answer was Tunisia—but what Zarf Tarek never told us is whether the rat survived the experiment or died inside the cage.

After decades of French colonialism, Tunisia became a field for some of the ugliest “civilizing missions”: stolen farmland, an economy reoriented to serve Paris, and locals stripped of any prospect of development. The Tunisian citizen was reduced to a day laborer in his own country while its wealth was smuggled out and drained dry.

Independence in 1956 arrived draped in hope. Habib Bourguiba emerged as the “founding father” of the modern state. The West

hailed him as an enlightened reformer, a man who could turn Tunisia into an exceptional Arab model. Progressive family laws, women's emancipation, secular education closer to Europe's standards—these were paraded before Western cameras as proof of modernization.

But behind the glitter lay a harsher truth: an economy chained to France, agriculture serving European markets, and an anemic industry that failed to absorb waves of educated youth. Western backing was never about human rights or social justice—it was about Bourguiba's loyalty to the Western camp.



The result: no democracy, a suffocated opposition, and a citizen who never truly tasted sovereignty. Tunisia under Bourguiba became the first lab rat in the region's political experiments: glossy for export, suffocating within.

In 1987, Bourguiba was toppled under the slogan of "Change," and Zine El Abidine Ben Ali rose to power. The West welcomed him as a

“pragmatist” and “security man”—precisely what they wanted: stability at any cost, even if the price was repression.

Ben Ali ushered Tunisia into a new experiment. No longer the laboratory of modernization, it became the lab of privatization and economic liberalization. The IMF and World Bank entered with scalpels, dismantling state-owned enterprises, auctioning entire sectors to regime cronies or foreign firms for peanuts.

The West was pleased: a small, stable, obedient country. European investments secured. A police state strong enough to prevent “Islamist chaos” or social uprisings.

On the ground, Tunisians grew poorer and more disillusioned. Unemployment soared, especially among the educated.

Corruption metastasized. The security services became an unforgiving iron fist.

Then came December 2010. When Mohamed Bouazizi set himself on fire, it wasn’t just a personal tragedy—it was the death notice of a false social contract that had shackled Tunisians for decades. The people rose, and the world thought it was witnessing the birth of a new democracy in the Arab heartland.

THE WEST PANICKED AT FIRST:

Their loyal ally Ben Ali—provider of security and open markets—was collapsing.

But they quickly pivoted, donning the robes of “democracy supporters.” They applauded the revolution from a safe distance, while their companies and financial institutions waited for the perfect moment to swoop on a fragile economy.

Neighbors were just as unsettled:

Egypt—first in revolution, then in counterrevolution—saw Tunisia as a contagious threat. It openly and covertly backed every path that put the army and security apparatus back in charge.

The UAE and other Gulf monarchies poured money and media firepower into discrediting the “*Arab Spring*,” branding it chaos to be eradicated.

Algeria and Libya, consumed by their own insecurities, feared the fire spreading across their borders.

As always, the Islamists seized the moment of vacuum. Ballot boxes put them in power. The West tolerated it—temporarily. Tunisia was the favorite laboratory:

COULD ISLAMISTS BE TAMED INSIDE A DEMOCRATIC GAME?

Could they govern without threatening Western and corporate interests?

When the experiment failed to bring stability, the counterrevolution struck back:

Foreign-backed campaigns to isolate or shrink Islamist influence. Deliberate feeding of political divisions.

IMF PRESCRIPTIONS OF AUSTERITY, PUNISHING THE ORDINARY CITIZEN WHILE ELITES REMAINED UNTOUCHED.

The double standards were glaring: the same West that glorified the revolution in rhetoric turned a blind eye to police crackdowns and continued plundering Tunisia's phosphates, tourism, and agriculture.

Once again, Tunisians found themselves as lab rats:

They tested "*transitional democracy.*"

They tested "*Islamists in power.*"

They tested "*counterrevolution.*"

Each time, the loser was their bread and dignity.

In 2019, the people stunned the old elites. They elected Kais Saied—a little-known constitutional law professor, no party machine, no political record—as president. His rigid classical Arabic, his ascetic image, his "pure" rhetoric against corruption enchanted youth desperate for something clean.

But the "clean model" soon revealed itself as a veiled dictatorship. In July 2021, Saied froze parliament, dismissed the government, seized control of the judiciary, and ruled by decree. He posed as a savior against chaos, while dragging Tunisia back to authoritarianism under academic and legal cover.

The West stayed silent. The EU and the US issued lukewarm “concern” statements—as if this were just another experiment in democracy’s boundaries. The reason was simple: Saied promised them border security and control of illegal migration across the Mediterranean. That mattered far more than freedom.



THE TUNISIAN CITIZEN PAID THE PRICE:

An economy gasping under IMF loans and austerity.

Exploding unemployment.

Young people boarding “boats of death” daily, fleeing to Europe.

Protests met with repression. Shrinking press freedom.

Kais Saied has become the latest edition of the “modern dictator”: no military uniform, no nationalist or religious slogans. Instead, academic jargon and legalistic decrees—while crushing opposition.

THE OUTCOME?

The West is content: Tunisia guards Europe’s borders.

The region is content: Tunisia no longer inspires anyone.

The Tunisian citizen? Standing in bread lines, or searching for a smuggler’s boat.

Between Abul-Qasim al-Shabi’s cry—“If the people one day will to live”—and today’s grim reality, where the people themselves are treated as lab rats by their rulers and sponsors, lies the cruelest irony.

The revolution that once lit hope across the Arab world has been reframed as a threat to be caged, not a dream to be nurtured. And so, as Tunisians swing between political dead-ends, economic suffocation, and the bitterness of migration or joblessness, the slogans of dignity and freedom echo only as faint ghosts of yesterday.

The deeper truth is that Tunisia did not fail alone; it was made to fail:

From within, through counterrevolution.

From neighbors, through sabotage and fear.

From the West, through double standards.

And thus, the Tunisian—like the Afghan, the Iranian, and countless others—stands lost in a storm of powers that see him not as a human, but as a tool, a bargaining chip, a rat in a cage.

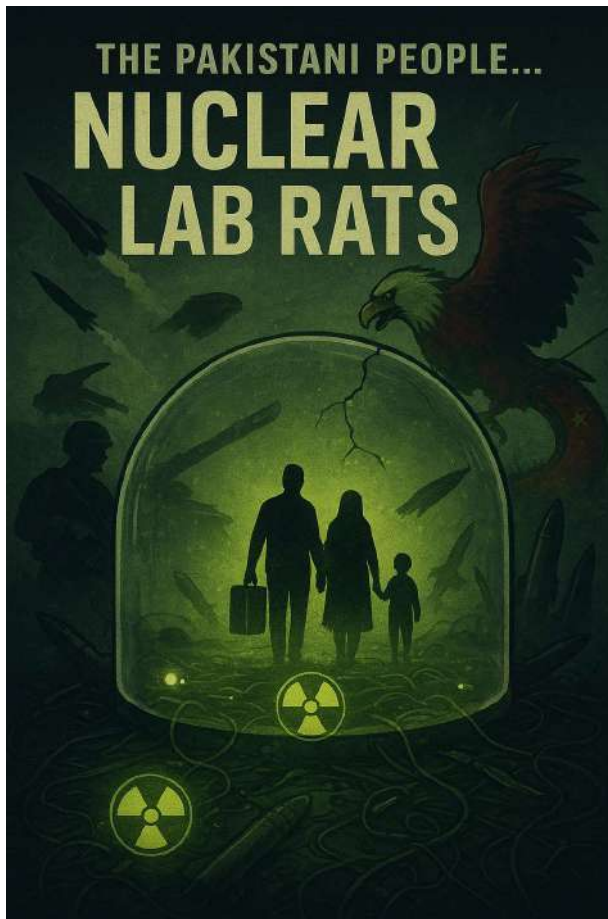
Perhaps I should end with the voice of Lotfi Bouchnak:

If you wish to know how a people triumphs... go to Tunisia, there lies the knowledge and the story.



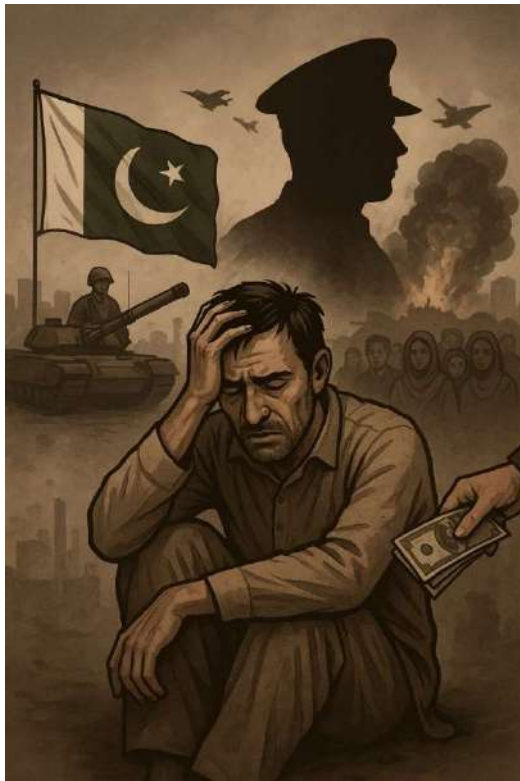
The Pakistani People... Nuclear Lab Rats

Since the dawn of 1947, Pakistan was born out of blood and migration—a dream of a homeland for Muslims after the partition of India. Millions were displaced, cities emptied of their people, and blood stained the streets that were supposed to lead to new beginnings. The newborn state was no more than a map on paper, but soon it became a vast laboratory of political, social, and economic experiments—where the citizen was always the weakest link.



The early civilian governments failed to build a stable state. Corruption poisoned institutions, while party rivalries crippled any chance at coherent economic or social policy. The army watched, the streets suffered, and the citizen groaned under poverty and forced migration.

The first military coup arrived, declaring the army the sole guardian of “national safety.” By 1971, a civil war split the country—East Pakistan became the new Bangladesh, while West Pakistan remained to face economic and political challenges alone. Every civilian government that came after was met with military intervention. Every democratic attempt collapsed. For the citizen, democracy was nothing more than a façade; military rule was the rule itself.



Under Pervez Musharraf in 1999, with the rise of religious and political parties, balance became fragile, power was concentrated between army and elite politicians, and once again the citizen stood trapped between corruption and a faltering economy.

THE CITIZEN'S ENDLESS ORDEAL

- Fragile, unstable economy: foreign debt, aid dependency, unemployment, and poverty spread across cities and villages alike.
- Limited services: education, healthcare, and infrastructure remain underdeveloped, leaving people in perpetual marginalization.
- Social pressure: crushing class inequality, political repression, and restrictive laws—especially on religious minorities.
- Daily threats: women, minorities, and youth live under constant fear of communal and religious violence.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL CONFLICTS

- Kashmir: The wound that never heals since 1947. Each war or clash is not just about borders—it is a proving ground for Western and American weapons, a training field for Pakistani troops. The citizen pays the price, while the world watches.
- Religious and social strife: Sunni–Shia clashes, Taliban's rise, extremism spreading, and harsh laws restricting daily life.
- Recent wars: Highly militarized and technologically advanced, but they left ordinary citizens in cycles of fear and poverty.

In May 2025, the Indo-Pak border saw a sharp escalation: Pakistan deployed Chinese PL-15 long-range missiles against Indian aircraft, while India tested its new Integrated Air Defense Weapons System (IADWS), featuring a high-energy laser weapon—"Project

Sudarshan Chakra.” The skies and earth of both nations became an arena for the US–China cold war, with Pakistan as the stage.

GLOBAL POWERS AND PAKISTAN

- The United States: arms the military, trains forces, and tests equipment on Pakistani soil.
- China: economic partner and strategic lifeline—CPEC projects, infrastructure investments, and constant geopolitical leverage.
- The international community: watches, pressures, occasionally calms tensions—but leaves the citizen to bear the burden of great-power games.



ECONOMY AND POLITICS TODAY

- Economy: fragile exports, shaky international aid, endless debt, and widespread poverty.
- Politics: the military guarantees “security,” civilian government is a façade, and international players dictate the balance.
- Society: citizens endure double pressure—internal oppression and external manipulation. Education is limited, youth migrate in search of life elsewhere, while the country remains a permanent testing ground for political and military experiments.

FINAL WORD

Pakistan is a perpetual field of experiments: the citizen the weakest link, the army the strongest guarantor, and international powers the manipulators. Each war, each economic crisis, each intervention forces the ordinary citizen to pay the price—while the state itself remains a stage for regional and global rivalries.

She Was Once a State... Following the Shadow of the Egyptian Citizen

Egypt has always been a historic entity, a land the world dreamed of as a stage for culture and civilization. Today, however, it has been reduced to an “*economic and political arena*”. The glory of the ancestors is evoked not as a lesson for the future, but either as nostalgia for pride or as camouflage for a grim reality.

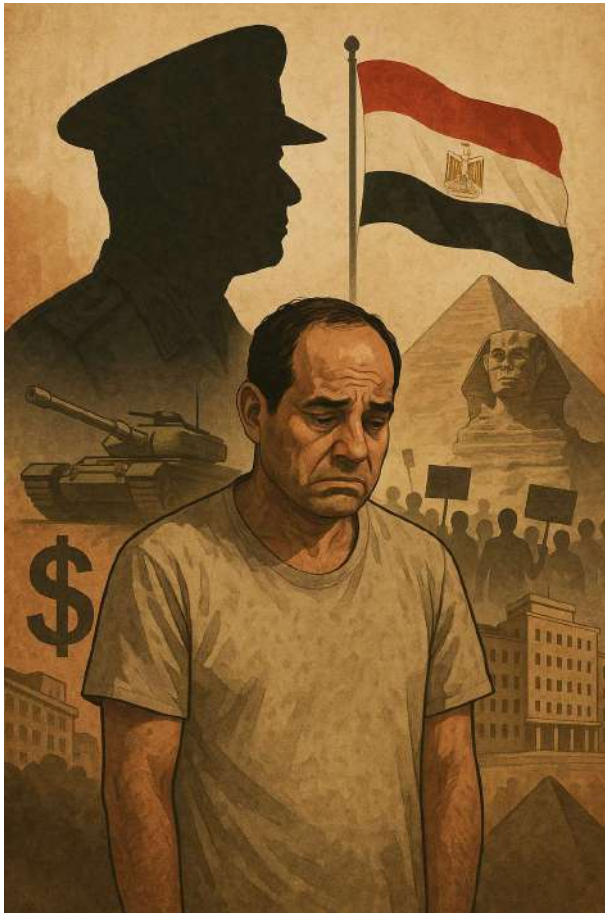


The Egyptian army is no longer just a military force; it has become a massive economic empire, controlling everything: from construction companies, through agriculture, all the way to import and export. Meanwhile, the citizen is being economically crushed through IMF programs—loans that devour his present and mortgage his future—while the regime lives in boundless luxury at

the expense of the people, as though the citizen's sole purpose is to keep paying indefinitely for generations to come.

Egypt is also the country that proved Western double standards do not stop at imperial regimes, but extend to Western societies themselves. Take the mother of Giulio Regeni, the Italian student tortured to death in Egypt, who stood before her nation's parliament and before the world's media to utter her immortal phrase:

"They killed him as if he were Egyptian."



Egypt has been both incubator and factory for Islamist movements—foremost among them the Muslim Brotherhood, the strongest Islamist organization in the country.

The Brotherhood and other Islamist groups played pivotal roles in Egypt's political scene over the past century. Their influence climaxed after the January 2011 Revolution, when they became the central actors of Egypt's unfolding drama—from Morsi's brief presidency, to his ouster, and the tailor-made constitutional amendments that followed. The West, for its part, has always acted selectively: funding civil society only when it served its own project, starving it when it didn't, secretly financing so-called "opposition" groups when useful. Rather than solving crises, it invested in managing them long-term.

Caught in all this, the Egyptian citizen survives in a fragile balance of fear, silence, and muted protests. He is trapped between a military-economic juggernaut, a constantly reinvented political system, suffocating loans, and international double standards that protect the regime while choking the people. The citizen is merely a spectator in this theater, given a voice only in rare, fleeting moments of permitted protest.

Egypt today resembles a grand, ancient edifice—its foundations still firm, yet burdened by layers of external, economic, and internal policies. The people wander its corridors like shadows, searching for a breath of freedom that will never come until history itself decides to stop playing games with their fate.

FROM SADDAM'S KUWAIT WAR TO MUBARAK'S "STRATEGIC ALLIANCE"

When Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in 1990, Egypt instantly became a "strategic ally" of the West. Egyptian soldiers fought in the desert under the American flag, sacrificing lives for interests beyond their borders. In exchange, Cairo's regime was rewarded with massive debt cancellations and easy credit lines—a safety net for the regime, while the ordinary citizen kept paying the heavy daily cost of "political stability."

On human rights, the hypocrisy was clearer still: torture centers and political prisons thrived under American cover, the regime praised as the “reliable guardian of the region.” Any dissenting voice was crushed, while the West turned a blind eye and reshaped the rhetoric of human rights according to its convenience. This mix of military cooperation, debt relief, and silence over domestic repression exposed a glaring truth: Egyptians bore the brunt of suffering, while the regime and the West laughed backstage, confirming that interests always outweighed freedom and justice.

The West’s relationship with Mubarak was like that of a director to an absurd play: publicly chanting freedom and democracy, while writing scripts in the shadows that cast the Egyptian citizen as the perpetual victim.

FROM MUBARAK TO JANUARY 2011 AND BEYOND

The citizen was crushed by taxes, inflation, and IMF loans, while the regime and military thrived. Natural gas wealth was squandered on elite businessmen and foreign corporations. The West applauded so long as contracts and profits flowed.



Then January 2011 erupted—a youth revolution expected by everyone except Mubarak and his Western allies. In the first days, the West played the cautious observer: loudly praising freedom and human rights while quietly measuring the shifting sands. To them, Egypt was not just a country—it was Israel’s guardian, the Suez Canal’s gatekeeper, the stabilizer of oil and trade routes. When Mubarak fell, only the names on stage changed: the military council was applauded as though democracy had suddenly dawned. But the repression continued under the banner of “stability.” Again, the West decided when to speak, and when to fall silent, ignoring the people’s true demands. With Morsi, the Brotherhood became the star of the scene. The West pretended to support democracy while secretly orchestrating the script: funding some civil groups, covertly fueling others, and balancing between Brotherhood and military to ensure interests prevailed. When the army toppled Morsi, Western outrage was symbolic at best. What mattered was not democracy, but guarantees for regional interests.

THE AGE OF SISI: THE PERFECT AUTHORITARIAN THEATER



Abdel Fattah al-Sisi rose to power as if destined to play the “hero” of Egypt’s modern theater. The constitution reshaped for him, elections rigged for legitimacy, dissent crushed with precision. Trump openly called him his “favorite dictator.” Biden tried to appear critical, only to compromise whenever strategic needs demanded. The West adjusted its rhetoric like a painter changing colors—yet the final painting always looked the same: Western interests intact, Egyptian citizens crushed.

IMF loans, military contracts, ballooning debt—all are tools to cement the regime while tightening the noose around the people’s necks. Each generation inherits a deeper suffocation, each day adds another layer of economic strangulation.

From Mubarak to the Revolution, through Morsi, and now under Sisi, Egypt has always been a stage for great-power politics. The people are forever the extras, their voices muted under the roar of interests, corruption, and double standards.

Egypt today is like a phantom monument—majestic in memory, hollow in reality. And the citizen, once the soul of civilization, is left wandering its corridors as a shadow, screaming unheard.



The Arabian Gulf... Lavish Wealth, Fragile Politics

Have you ever seen a car plated in gold?

A diamond-encrusted phone?

A villa garage stretching as far as the eye can see, filled with exotic beasts and fleets of luxury cars?



I have seen a flying car. A surreal skyscraper. Jewelry sold by the kilo.

Apartments valued at hundreds of millions of dollars... Welcome to the Arabian Gulf.

One might think this series is about the so-called “third world” or developing countries. But the truth runs deeper: Western double standards make no distinction between rich and poor, Arab or non-Arab.

In the West, there is no difference—except when it comes to interest.

The Gulf, with all its borders and especially Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Bahrain, is a land of dazzling wealth but political fragility.

These are not poor countries in need of financial aid. Yet their political reality remains weak, built on the continuous support of Western powers—a dependency that began at the very moment of their creation.

SAUDI ARABIA: FROM BRITISH SUPPORT TO AMERICAN ALLIANCE

The modern Kingdom traces back to the early 20th century, when the British backed King Abdulaziz Al Saud in unifying the land. In 1915, he signed a treaty with the British, granting him sovereignty over Najd and strengthening his hand. That support was crucial in defeating local and regional rivals.



Then came oil. In 1933, its discovery attracted America's attention. By 1945, President Franklin Roosevelt met King Abdulaziz aboard

the USS *Quincy* in the Suez Canal, cementing an oil-for-security pact that still defines relations today.

The UAE: From British Protection to American Partnership

Before its founding, the Trucial States lived under British protection. In 1971, the rulers of the seven emirates united to form the UAE—backed quietly by London. This support materialized in defense and economic agreements that stabilized the young federation.

BAHRAIN: FROM BRITISH COLONY TO U.S. OUTPOST

Bahrain remained a British protectorate until 1971, when it gained independence. Yet even under British rule, its defense and foreign affairs were dictated by London. After independence, Bahrain turned westward, establishing close ties with the United States. Today, it hosts the U.S. Fifth Fleet—making it a permanent



American stronghold in the Gulf.

A PATTERN OF DEPENDENCY

Over time, these relationships matured into full-blown strategic partnerships. The UAE allowed U.S. forces to use Al Dhafra Air Base in wars from Afghanistan to Iraq. Saudi and Bahraini stability continued to rest on Western guarantees.

The conclusion is clear: Western powers shaped the modern Gulf states, securing their regimes in exchange for oil, bases, and influence.

But this bargain came at a cost. The West sacrifices the ordinary Gulf citizen in secret deals over oil and arms. It exploits regional tensions to keep Gulf monarchies dependent—trapped in fear and tied to American protection.

DOUBLE STANDARDS IN BROAD DAYLIGHT

Nothing exposed this hypocrisy like the brutal murder of Saudi-American journalist Jamal Khashoggi. Sawed into pieces with a bone saw, his assassination shocked the world—but Western outrage was short-lived. Oil, trade, and arms contracts ensured that nothing truly changed.

Meanwhile, Saudi prisons filled with thousands of unjustly detained men and women. Beheadings took place in public squares after trials that no independent observer could ever monitor. And yet—Saudi Arabia was elected to the United Nations Human Rights Council.

COULD THERE BE A CLEARER EXAMPLE OF DOUBLE STANDARDS?

Here, money and power bury human rights violations beneath a carpet of oil and wealth.

As Donald Trump himself bluntly declared during his first Gulf tour: U.S. protection is for sale. Pay the price, and the alliance stands.

When Trump returned to the White House, media turned his words into a political auction: *“Who will pay more?”*

That, in essence, is America’s Gulf policy.

A GOLDEN MIRAGE

The Gulf glitters with gold, skyscrapers, and wealth. But behind the façade lies fragility. Citizens are often reduced to pawns, while sovereignty is little more than a stage for big-power deals.

Western hypocrisy toward poor nations is usually dressed up—human rights used as occasional leverage. But in the Gulf, the mask is ripped off. Hypocrisy here is naked, shameless, and brutal.

HUMAN RIGHTS? EMPTY SLOGANS.

JUSTICE? A SIDESHOW.

The only language that matters is: *money, money, money.*

In the Gulf, wealth doesn't liberate man—it drags him into a void. Behind the glitter, values are hollow, politics shallow, and Western hypocrisy savage.

Double standards aren't theory here. They're lived reality—visible in politics, economics, and even in the blood of innocents.

Truth needs no decoration—only the courage to say it.

As Naguib Mahfouz once wrote: *“Truth rises above all—it cannot be overshadowed.”*

And as the Arab proverb reminds us: *“Money buys many things... except conscience.”*



This was, without doubt, the easiest piece to write in the *“Human in Shackles”* series.

The hardest one, I know, will be the last: Palestine.

My friend, you don't need deep analysis to see the hypocrisy in the Gulf.

You and I, and the world, already know it.

This article isn't an academic study, but a blunt reminder of reality—one only understood by those with eyes to see, and the courage to admit the truth.

They Are Humans... Palestine

“We are not killing humans; they are human animals.”

My dear reader, these words are not meant to provoke you into finishing this article.

They were actually said. Not as an insult or an angry slip of the tongue, but as a deliberate description of the human beings living on Palestine’s sacred soil.



And these words did not come from some settler or a fringe zealot. They came from an actual minister inside the Israeli government. This was not nonsense—it was the clearest reflection of how the world has chosen to see Palestinians: a people without rights, a land without recognition, and a country robbed in broad daylight under the gaze of the international community.

Palestine was never just a patch of land on a map. It was home to a people, a civilization, a history. But with the Balfour Declaration of 1917 and the Nakba of 1948, came expulsions, killings, forced marches, and systematic destruction. The slogan *“a land without a people”* was not a phrase—it was a policy designed to erase

Palestinians from existence and bury their rights with them. And from the very beginning, the world watched in silence, as if

PALESTINIAN BLOOD WERE NOT BLOOD AT ALL.

The three essential pillars of statehood under international law—land, people, and authority—were all present in Palestine. Yet under Western supervision, they were dismantled. The land shrank daily under settlements. The people struggled for decades just to be recognized as human beings. And the Palestinian Authority itself was born under outside arrangements, designed to remain tethered to occupation. Even with these three pillars present, Palestine was never treated as a real state. And the Palestinian individual, to this day, fights not for his rights—but merely to be acknowledged as human.

The UN Security Council, with all its solemn resolutions, never stopped the massacres. For decades, as Palestinians were slaughtered, the West armed the settlers in broad daylight—sometimes literally handing them weapons through government ministers—while the rest of the world looked away.

The myths of child-killing and atrocities, paraded before American presidents as “facts,” were debunked even by Zionist and American institutions themselves. The truth is well known, but the world prefers to hide behind abstract talk of “humanity” rather than take action. And while these empty words are spoken, tens of thousands of Palestinians die from hunger, bombardment, and humiliation—as if they do not exist on the map of humanity at all. The Arab states nearby, despite holding actual leverage—diplomatic ties, economic pressure, even simply refusing normalization—chose polished statements over meaningful action, afraid to endanger their own interests. All this unfolded while the Prime Minister of the occupying entity stood proudly on

international stages, presenting the “**GREATER ISRAEL**” map without fear of consequence.



Palestinian factions themselves were not immune to manipulation. Some were funded, others armed, their internal conflicts reignited from abroad—all orchestrated to weaken them, to make the land easier to control, and to erase any potential threat to occupation. Iran, too, exploited the Palestinian cause to expand its influence in global rivalries, reshaping Hamas from a resistance movement into a geopolitical pawn. This cynical use of the cause narrowed the space for genuine international sympathy and allowed Western media to paint the movement as nothing more than “terrorism” or an “axis of evil”—erasing the fundamental truth: Palestinian struggle is about land, dignity, and survival.

This does not mean Hamas should abandon resistance—it means the struggle must remain purely Palestinian, rooted in national legitimacy and authentic rights, not borrowed agendas that dilute its essence.

And here lies the cruelest truth: the world is not suffering from double standards—it simply does not see Palestinians as human in

the first place. Palestine is not just a political dispute—it is humanity’s ultimate test. And the verdict is clear: absolute failure. Palestinians have not only been killed by the occupation, but also by the world’s silence, and by the betrayal of those who had the power to resist injustice but chose comfort instead. Painful as it may be, it must be said: the Palestinian people have never stood in the crosshairs of “humanity.” They were never seen as humans at all.



Descendants of Noah... South of the Desert... Plundered Africa

My dear reader, if you think the West hates the Arabs, the truth is—it doesn't.

If you think the West hates the Middle East, that too is inaccurate. Allow me to take you on a journey around the world, whose most important conclusion may be: the West doesn't hate us.



The West's double standards and wordplay are not about hating us, nor about loving our enemies. This journey proves that under the current world order, law has no place, and the entire world can be a victim of double standards whenever the West finds an interest—direct or indirect—even if it takes a thousand years to gain it, and

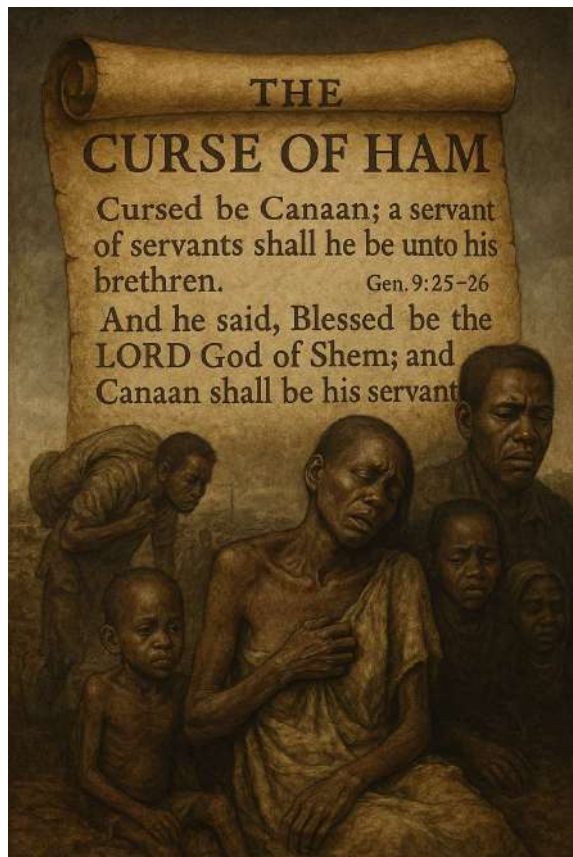
even if millions must die in the process. Interest is all that matters. Nothing else.

So let's begin our first stop: south of the desert—Africa.

THE CURSE OF HAM: A CONVENIENT MYTH

Have you ever read about Noah's Curse? That myth repeated by Zionists. Let's revisit it briefly.

In Genesis 9:20–27, after Noah disembarked from the Ark, he planted a vineyard, drank its wine, and became drunk, lying naked in his tent. Ham, one of his four sons, saw him naked and told his brothers Shem, Seth, and Japheth, who then covered their father without looking at him.



When Noah awoke, he cursed Ham: “*Cursed be Canaan, the son of Ham! He shall be a servant to his brothers*”. Canaan, son of Ham, was dark-skinned, and by this “curse,” God allegedly doomed Ham’s descendants (the Cushites, black-skinned people) to slavery until Judgment Day.

This grotesque myth became the moral excuse for European whites to enslave black Africans in past centuries.

In the past, the black man was chained, shipped across oceans, and forced to labor in European plantations so that the white man could grow rich. Today, the chains are invisible, the plantations are their own lands, yet profits still flow elsewhere. Slavery was replaced with colonialism. Colonialism was replaced with “independence.” But the gaze remains unchanged.

To the West, Sub-Saharan Africa is still “Ham’s children”—its people disposable, its resources theirs to loot, as if history and fate themselves decreed perpetual exploitation.

AFRICA REDUCED TO “LOCAL PROBLEMS”

When Western officials describe Africa’s crises as “*local problems*,” far removed from the conscience of humanity, we should pause.

This isn’t nonsense—it’s a mirror of how the world sees Africa: neglected victims, stolen rights, tragedies dismissed.

- Congo: endless wars for minerals, international companies extracting wealth, civilians dying by the thousands with no real international response.
- Sudan (Darfur, South Sudan): ethnic massacres, militias armed with weapons far beyond “local,” UN silence, international handwringing without action.
- Ethiopia (Tigray): famine, sieges, thousands displaced. The West barely moves—while even U.S. presidents used its conflicts as bargaining chips, such as Trump leveraging Ethiopia’s dam issue to pressure Egypt on Palestine.

- Nigeria: Boko Haram terror, oil exploitation, corruption, ordinary people paying the heaviest price.
- Mali and the Sahel: French and Western “anti-terror” operations that deepen misery, displace villagers, and tighten control of resources.

Africa’s conflicts are rarely solved—they are harvested. Armed factions become pawns in global games, fed with foreign money and weapons. Civilians are trapped in cycles of fear, hunger, and despair.

REGIONAL EXPLOITERS TOO

It isn’t only the West. Some of Africa’s neighbors joined the feeding frenzy:



- UAE: funding factions and governments, embedding influence through money and arms.
- Gaddafi: fueling wars and arming militias to expand his regional sway.

The outcome remains the same: civilians killed, displaced, robbed.

DOUBLE STANDARDS MADE FLESH

If a massacre happens in Europe or the Middle East, the world erupts with sanctions, campaigns, and interventions.

But when the same happens in Africa? Silence. Statements of “deep concern.” Nothing more.

France still controls gold, oil, agriculture, and mining through corporations and puppet governments. Independence is a showpiece; the substance is exploitation.

The people fought back with revolutions and resistance, but colonialism merely changed its clothes. Direct occupation became “independence” while wealth and decisions remained elsewhere.

AFRICA TODAY

Sub-Saharan Africa proves history never forgets. The so-called “Curse of Ham” never ended—it simply morphed into:

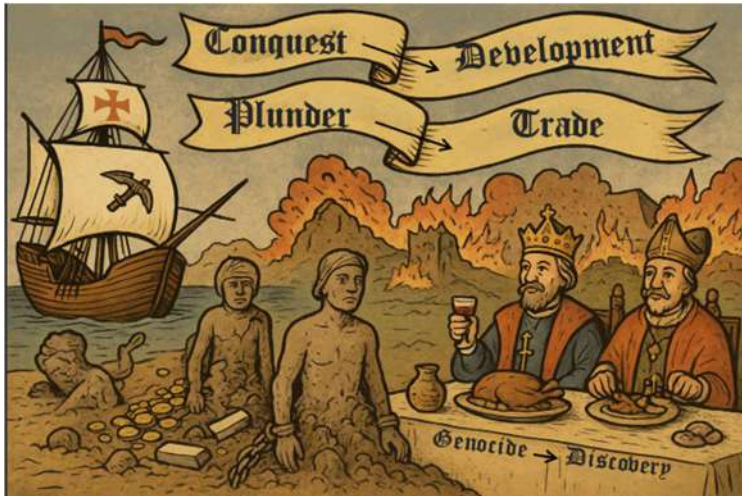
- international silence,
- double standards,
- endless exploitation of conflicts,
- theft of resources.

To truly grasp Africa’s crisis, we must look beyond headlines and official statements. We must see history, geopolitics, and the strategies of global powers.

Only then does the reality emerge: Africa is not cursed—only plundered.

They Were Humans... A Reading in the Crime of “Discovering” the New World

In Western history books: Columbus “discovered” the New World. In reality: he discovered a new way to kill millions of people, steal their gold, and then call it “civilization.”



The West insists on reminding you every single day about the Nazi Holocaust (and rightly so). But it never reminds you of the Latin American Holocaust. Why? Simple: because Hitler lost the war, while the Spaniards and Portuguese won—and the winners write history.

Before the Spanish and Portuguese invasions, the continent was home to thriving civilizations:

- The Aztecs: They built their capital, Tenochtitlán (Mexico City), on a lake, with sewage and water systems Europe hadn't yet imagined.
- The Maya: Astronomers and mathematicians with a calendar more accurate than the European one.
- The Incas: A vast road network across the Andes, with a sophisticated economic administration.

All of that collapsed within decades.

In Mexico, hundreds of thousands of Aztecs were slaughtered in wave after wave of massacres.

In Peru, the last Inca king, Atahualpa, was executed after being tricked by the Spaniards.

In Guatemala and Brazil, entire peoples were wiped out by imported diseases.

AND TODAY?

In Bolivia, 40% of the population is Indigenous, yet they are the poorest, least educated, and most discriminated against.

In Mexico, entire Zapatista communities in Chiapas live on the margins, raising their weapons only to say: “We exist.”

In Brazil, Amazonian tribes are pushed off their lands daily to make way for soy and logging companies.

The West celebrates “cultural diversity,” while turning a blind eye to entire continents whose cultures were crushed and reduced to tourist brochures.

In Bolivia, Potosí Mountain still stands as a monument to the greatest economic crime in history.

By the mid-16th century, people said the silver extracted from Potosí could build a bridge of metal stretching all the way to Spain. The harsher truth? Another bridge could be built from the bones of the slaves who died inside it.

Millions of Indigenous people—and later Africans brought in chains—worked the mines to death.

Spain built palaces and lavish churches in Madrid, while Bolivia today remains one of the poorest countries on earth.

Spain and Portugal did not come to build a “new continent”—they came to strip-mine it.

The tons of gold and silver that filled the treasuries of Madrid and Lisbon produced nothing but marble castles in Europe and mass graves in the Andes.

There was no “development,” only destruction: destruction of local

economies, and the imposition of a dependency that continues to this day.

THE LEGACY LIVES ON:

- Mono economies: each country survives on a single crop or mineral—coffee, bananas, copper, oil.
- Extreme inequality: a small white or mixed elite monopolizes power and wealth, while the Indigenous majority lives in deep poverty.
- Chronic dependency: Latin America still exports raw materials while importing technology and processed food.

“Madrid was built on silver... Potosí was buried in bones.”

Here, millions of Indigenous people and enslaved Africans died underground, digging silver they would never touch.

The West built churches coated in gold, while Bolivian children still die of hunger.

Colonialism never left—it only changed its clothes:

From Spanish swords to IMF contracts.

From missionary priests to World Bank officials.

From looted gold to cheap coffee and cocoa exports—then re-imported as overpriced chocolate.

In the Western world, the citizen is the center of rights: his life is precious, his voice matters, his sovereignty is untouchable.

In Latin America, the citizen was always “second-class”: his land is expendable, his resources up for grabs, and his life not worth a pause.

No one would dare violate the sovereignty of Canada or the U.S.—but invading Guatemala or Haiti, or exploiting Bolivia’s mines, barely made the news.

Even today, every time the Amazon is plundered or Venezuela’s oil stolen, the West wraps it in moral speeches about “sustainable development”—while remaining the main beneficiary.

Agriculture was restructured for European markets: vast plantations of sugar, cotton, and coffee, owned by a tiny elite.

Local industries were deliberately destroyed, trapping the continent in the role of supplier.

The 20th century brought the “debt crisis”: the IMF forced governments to cut health and education subsidies—while Western banks pocketed billions in interest.

The irony? The U.S. subsidized and protected its farmers, while Brazil and Mexico were forced to remove subsidies for the poor. Result: the American farmer is shielded, the Latin one is crushed.

DOUBLE STANDARDS LAID BARE: HUMANITY HAS “GRADES” IN THE EYES OF THE WEST.



On the U.S. border, thousands of migrants walk thousands of kilometers from Honduras, Guatemala, and Mexico. Many die in the desert.

A child from one migrant caravan was asked: *“Why risk your life?”*
He answered: *“Because I want to eat.”*

Western media reduces such stories to statistics, while the life of a single American abroad sparks diplomatic crises.

When the Amazon burns, slogans about “the environment” are raised—yet European companies never stop buying cheap timber. When a military coup has Western backing, it’s called “correcting the path.” But when Latin Americans revolt on their own, it’s branded “chaos.”



THE WEST WRITES THE BANNER: “HUMAN RIGHTS.” BUT IN FINE PRINT, IT SAYS:
FOR OUR CITIZENS ONLY.

- If one American dies abroad: a national emergency.
- If a thousand Latin Americans die in a mine or a migrant boat: an “unfortunate accident.”
- If a single Amazon tree is cut: a global climate crisis.
- If an entire Guatemalan people is wiped out: a “local conflict.”

The only difference? **NATIONALITY.**

Their citizens are “human.” Others are “humans with an asterisk.” Latin America is still paying the price of genocides it did not commit.

From the first ship that landed on its shores, its peoples were treated like natural resources: to be consumed, then discarded.

Colonialism simply rebranded itself:

From “conquest” to “development.”

From “plunder” to “trade.”

From “genocide” to “discovery.”

And in Western history books, massacres become “discoveries,” theft is called “commerce,” extermination is renamed “conversion.”

Latin America is not just the victim of a past—it is prisoner of a present.

In Western history, they call it “The Great Discovery.”

But the truth? Nothing was discovered. Everything that existed was buried under layers of theft, blood, and moral hypocrisy.

*The truth is simpler than all the beautification:
This continent was never discovered... this continent
was killed.*

The Bad Neighbor ... A Reading in the Tragedy of Latin America

An Arab proverb says: “Better a close neighbor than a distant home.”

But if you live in Latin America, and your neighbor happens to be the United States... then that’s no ordinary neighbor.



That’s a heavy guest who won’t leave your house in peace. He’ll meddle in your food, decide how your home should look, and sometimes tear down your whole door with a military coup. Since the 19th century, Washington declared the continent its “backyard.” Any attempt at real independence = a direct threat. In 1954, the CIA toppled Guatemala’s democratically elected government because it dared to give farmland back to peasants. The result? Decades of civil war, and hundreds of thousands dead.

In Chile, 1973, they ousted Salvador Allende because he wanted to nationalize copper mines. They brought in General Pinochet — soon stadiums were filled with prisoners, and the ocean with bodies.

DOUBLE STANDARDS: **Democracy is sacred in Washington... unless it brings a president who doesn't serve U.S. interests.**

Cuba has lived under an American blockade for over half a century, just because it chose a different path.

A Cuban child once said: *"I've never seen peanut butter in my life, except on American TV."*

Haiti, the first Black republic to declare independence, was punished from the very moment it was born: France demanded "compensation" for the loss of its slaves! And the U.S. treated it as a pariah state.

DOUBLE STANDARDS: **Freedom for them is a sacred right. For others, it's a crime that must be punished.**

COLOMBIA: **the state's "war on drugs" turned into a war on peasants. Thousands of families forced off their land in the name of coca eradication.**

A woman from the countryside said: *"They claimed they were destroying drugs, but they destroyed our lives. The soil can no longer grow food."*

Mexico: the cartel wars have grown to rival the state itself. Mass killings, mass graves, thousands disappeared. And still — the drugs cross the border into America with ease.

DOUBLE STANDARDS: **The U.S. is the world's biggest drug market, yet it points the finger at Mexico and Colombia as if they alone are guilty. The buyer scolds the seller: *"Shame on you!"***

Welcome, dear neighbors. You have been the finest fuel for the American dream.

Welcome to the countries that handed their destiny to the IMF.

In the 1990s, Argentina was called the IMF's "model student." Years later, the economy collapsed. Crowds poured into the streets shouting: "*Que se vayan todos!*" — "*All of them must go!*" In Brazil, privatization policies forced the sale of national companies. Suddenly citizens were paying double for water and electricity.

Double Standards: Agricultural and industrial subsidies in the U.S. and Europe are called "legitimate economic policy." But when Latin America tries the same, it's "market distortion."

On the U.S.-Mexico border, migrant bodies are found in the desert every day.

A father from Honduras said before he died: "*Better to die trying to cross, than to die starving at home.*"

CHILDREN IN CAGES — **the images shook the world... then the world forgot a week later.**

DOUBLE STANDARDS: **The West opens its arms to Ukrainian refugees, while slamming iron gates shut on children from Guatemala and Mexico.**

Latin America today is not just a victim of colonial past. It is an ongoing laboratory for Western hypocrisy:

- Democracy here is decoration — unless it serves Washington.
- The "war on drugs" here means destroying the poor, while the consumer in New York is safe.
- The economy here runs on debt, while U.S. corporations take the profits.
- Migration here is a crime, while European migration to the Americas was once called "freedom."

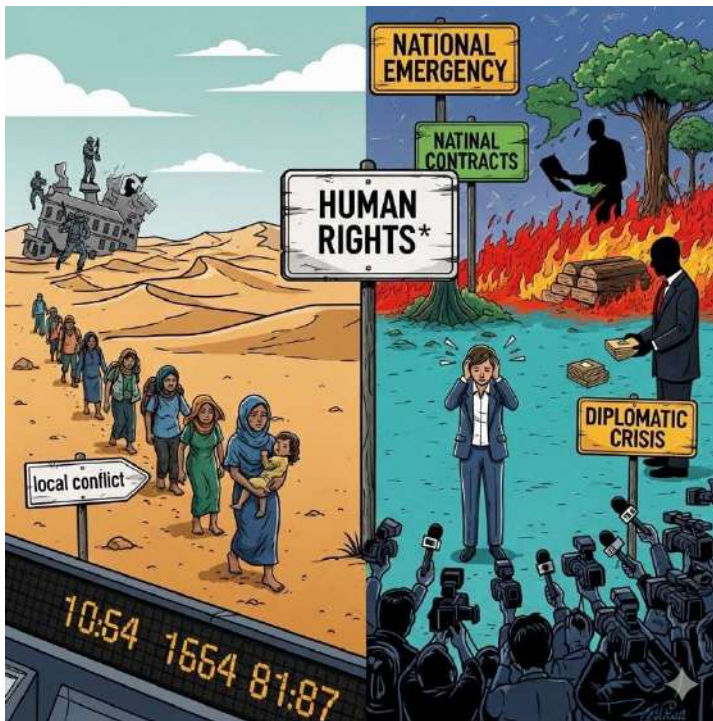
I cannot end without the scene that has haunted me most about this cursed continent.

September 2024. In a presidential debate, Donald Trump uttered words that sounded less like politics and more like a grotesque theater script:

“In Springfield, they eat dogs... they eat cats... they eat the pets of the townspeople.”

Horrifying words — even for a man who uses speech like poison spray. But this time, his words went out live, stirring a storm. A clear attempt to paint migrants as monsters, stripping them of humanity before the eyes of his hardline audience.

The truth? Absolute fabrication. Springfield’s mayor publicly confirmed there were no reports, no evidence, no such thing.



Even Haiti's UN ambassador dismissed it outright: a lie, and a cruel one at that. Yet the image stuck — fueling a wave of hate against entire communities.

1. Words as weapons: Call someone “a zombie” or “ruin,” and you create fear. But “eating dogs and cats”? That paints a starving human as a beast.
2. Double Standards: The West preaches human rights while its far-right openly feeds hatred and dehumanization — even if it leads to violence.
3. Social license to discriminate: Statements like these are crafted for an audience primed to nod. Once spoken aloud, they shape reality — threats against migrants, hate crimes, distorted refugee narratives.

In the end, the tragedy isn't just that nations were erased from history books, or that wealth was plundered, or that blood was spilled in silence. The real tragedy is this: the criminals became “defenders of democracy,” while the victims and their children are portrayed in their media as “*threats*,” “*burdens*,” or even “*animals eating pets*.”

It doesn't take academic theory to expose the hypocrisy. It only takes a conscience willing to see that a child in Haiti or the Amazon is no less human than a child in New York or Ottawa.

But the Western conscience seems to have chosen permanent moral disability — condemning here, applauding there — until the whole world became a stage for one story only: the story of the victorious white master, no matter how the acts change, no matter what the actors' names are.

As Eduardo Galeano, son of this wounded continent, once said:
“History is always written by the killer. The victim has only silence... until someone tells his story.”

But we — the children of the great South, from Haiti to Palestine — know silence is not fate.

As Muzaffar al-Nawwab cried: *“Hungry... while the whole world has food.”*

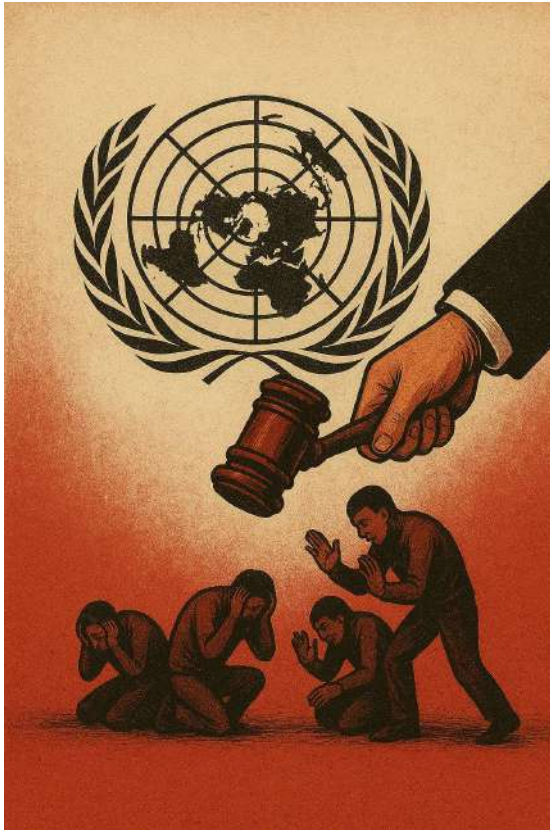
And as Mahmoud Darwish wrote: *“On this earth, there is that which deserves life.”*

Let the voices of the oppressed in the Amazon and Gaza, in Quito and Baghdad, in Haiti and Cairo, join to tell the world: the blood is one, the pain is one, and hypocrisy... is humanity's greatest enemy.

International Organizations and Selective Justice

Our ancestors lived in the “beautiful medieval age” of primitive world order, where power alone decided everything. Your borders ended where your army’s last soldier stood. An invading army storming another country? That wasn’t breaking news or a scandal—it was just normal.

But when the two World Wars erupted, and the world watched an entire city evaporate at the push of a button in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the human conscience was shaken. Suddenly, people realized that the sword and the tank were not the ultimate



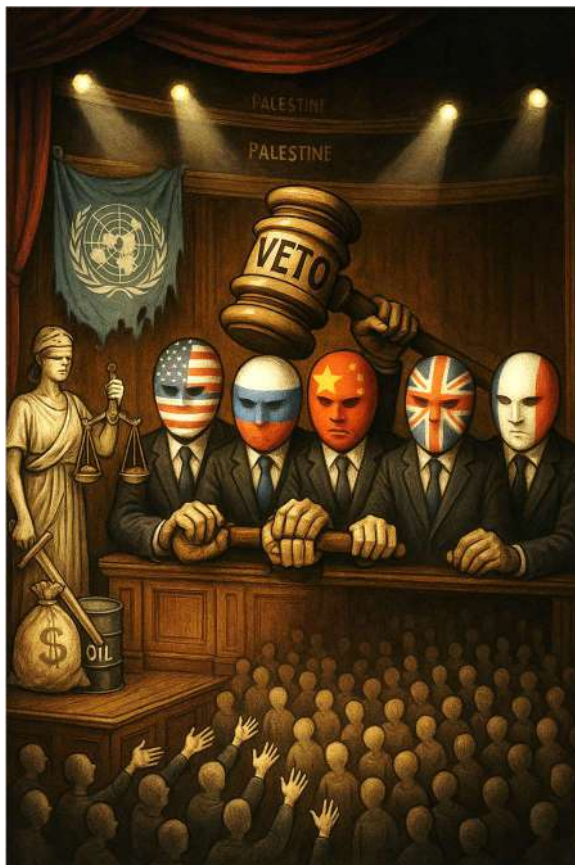
weapons—there was now a bomb that could wipe out the whole world.

This was when the new international system appeared, built on “cooperation.” But like every system, it had a back door reserved for VIPs: the Security Council and the veto. Five permanent seats, and the rest? *“Wait your turn.”*

This cooperation required a “political bribe” for the big powers. Only five states were distinguished from the rest of humanity: the U.S., Russia, China, Britain, and France. They were given a special privilege: any global decision, no matter how important, could be blocked by a single word.

EVER HEARD OF THE VETO?

The veto, as unjust as it looks, was actually one of the smartest inventions to prevent a third world war.



THE VETO: PROTECTION WITHOUT JUSTICE

Why was it granted?

When the Allied victors met in Yalta in 1945, the aim was to create an organization to ensure world peace: the United Nations.

The great powers (especially the U.S., the Soviet Union, and Britain) feared joining an organization that might limit their sovereignty.

If they were not given a special privilege, they wouldn't join or commit to the organization—meaning it would fail at birth.

THE VETO WAS A “POLITICAL LURE” FOR THE GIANTS:

- You hold the final word.
- You guarantee the new order.

The veto was meant as a tool of stability: to prevent any binding decision being forced on a major power, which could otherwise respond by withdrawing—or starting a new war.

For example: if the Security Council voted to send troops against the U.S. or Russia, they would simply refuse by force, and the entire UN would collapse.

So historically, the veto was a “necessary evil” to move from raw power to international cooperation.

BUT IN REALITY?

IT TURNED INTO A TOOL OF GLOBAL BLACKMAIL.

- The U.S. shields Israel.
- Russia shields the Syrian regime.
- China shields North Korea.

The result: international justice is no justice at all—it's just a game of influence.

The veto is not absolute evil—it's a “necessary evil” that prevented another world war. But it paralyzed international justice. The system can protect us from global war, but it cannot restore stolen rights.

IN THEORY:

The veto ensured the UN's success by pulling the big powers in, protecting the world from another bloody global conflict.

IN PRACTICE:

It became a sword hanging over the weak, blocking any decision that displeases the great powers.

This is where the real story of double standards begins...

International organizations are supposed to be neutral institutions: regulating relations between states, guaranteeing respect for international law, maintaining peace and security, defending human rights.

But reality reveals another face: they often become legal tools to serve great power interests, practicing double standards.

Condemn here, stay silent there. Act fast on one file, deliberately stall on another.

- **The Security Council: Selective Legitimacy**
Moves quickly when great power interests are at stake (Iraq 1990, Libya 2011).
Falls silent when the oppressed are weak (Palestine, Rwanda, Bosnia).
The veto became not just a balance tool, but a weapon against justice itself.
- **The International Court of Justice: Justice on Hold**
Rulings are enforced if against small, weak states.
Rulings are shelved if they affect great powers or their allies.
Cases involving Israel or the U.S.? Usually meaningless.
- **The IAEA: Nuclear by Convenience**
Strict on Iran and North Korea.
Completely ignores Israel's nuclear arsenal.
The same treaty (Non-Proliferation), but with double standards depending on friend or foe.
- **Economic Institutions: Discipline, Not Development**
The IMF and World Bank impose recycled recipes—failed everywhere—on Global South nations: austerity and privatization.

Meanwhile, the big powers ignore the same rules (like America's massive bailout plan after 2008) with no accountability.

Economic justice is just a façade to maintain dependency.

- Humanitarian Agencies: Conditional Compassion
Even humanitarian bodies like WFP or UNICEF often tie funding to political positions.

Aid arrives swiftly for some states, while others wait endlessly—depending on donor moods.

In reality, international organizations were born to protect international law, but they often turn into witnesses of silence over major crimes.

Double standards aren't "errors"—they're part of the DNA of the system.

And here lies the question that must be asked:

Are we really witnessing international justice?

Or just a selective legitimacy that serves the powerful and leaves the weak naked before the world?

The truth is: the international system was built to prevent a new world war. It succeeded at that. But it has failed to restore even a single stolen right.

Double standards are not a side effect—they are structural.

SO I LEAVE YOU, DEAR READER, WITH THE QUESTION:

- Do you think the world needs a new international system, built on a new philosophy?
- Or is humanity still unprepared, haunted by the shadow of invasion and world war?
- Will we keep accepting this "canned international cooperation"?

Or can we invent a third philosophy...

One that restores rights to the weak without pushing the world toward self-destruction?

Double Standards in Dealing with Humanitarian Organizations

In a world that claims “humanity” as its highest standard, the facts reveal something darker: some organizations are sanctified as global icons, while others are left gasping for survival. This isn’t random. It’s a deliberate policy — one that decides who deserves support and who is condemned to the shadows, based on politics, geography, and the symbolism attached to each organization.

UNRWA vs. UNHCR

The difference isn’t just in funding. It’s in the international gaze — in who “deserves” to be heard.



- UNHCR is paraded as the gold standard of humanitarianism. Money flows without restraint, its activities glorified as models of global compassion. Backed

by Western powers, it shapes policy and enjoys unquestioned legitimacy.

- UNRWA, meanwhile, is starved and strangled. Millions of Palestinian refugees face shrinking services, not because the organization is incompetent, but because Western powers decided to weaponize its funding. Refugees' lives are treated as bargaining chips.

A stark example: In 2018, the United States cut \$300 million from UNRWA's budget — at the exact moment refugee numbers were rising. Yet support for UNHCR never faltered, never hesitated.

RED CROSS VS. RED CRESCENT

Here, it's not about work — it's about symbolism.



- The Red Cross is treated as a universal halo of neutrality. Its every move is broadcast as the embodiment of humanity.
- The Red Crescent, despite doing the same relief work, is dismissed as “local,” its credibility undercut, its funding weaker. As if a crescent carries less humanity than a cross.

Case in point: During the 2023 earthquake in Turkey and Syria, the Red Cross was showered with international support, while the Syrian Red Crescent struggled to scrape together aid for the same number of victims.

NATO VS. THE AFRICAN UNION

The contrast here borders on satire.



- NATO enjoys obscene budgets, political cover, and a blank check to intervene — even when it tears through international law. Every operation wrapped in glowing Western media coverage.
- The African Union, by contrast, is left to police its own continent with crumbs. Underfunded, underpowered, constantly sidelined.

Example: NATO's bombing campaign in Libya in 2011 came fully financed and politically blessed. Meanwhile, the African Union failed to intervene meaningfully in South Sudan — not because it lacked will, but because it lacked resources the West refused to provide.

Funding as a Weapon

Funding isn't just about enabling work. It's about deciding who lives and who disappears.

- Money floods into organizations aligned with Western interests, inflating their power and prestige.
- Others — doing the same humanitarian tasks — are starved, stripped of legitimacy, and left to die.

Example: Every cut to UNRWA has been political, not administrative. And every increase to UNHCR has followed the same logic. The message is clear: humanity is not the measure. Power is.

THE REAL STORY

This isn't bureaucratic failure. It's deliberate policy. Humanitarian organizations have become weapons in the global chess game, and funding has become the sharpest blade. In today's world, "humanity" is a performance staged for the powerful. What matters is not the work itself, but the symbolism.

In the end, the lives of refugees and victims are props. The real play is about legitimacy, prestige, and control. Humanity is no longer a principle — it's a stage show.

“International Organizations – Both Victim and Executioner”

They used to say that international organizations were created to be the “*conscience of the world*.” But in reality, these bodies sometimes lose the compass of conscience itself—swinging between becoming tools in the hands of great powers... or mere scapegoats in times of crisis.



In fact, these organizations often end up as scapegoats—sometimes indirectly, when their recommendations and resolutions are ignored, and sometimes directly, as we shall see.

WHO: BETWEEN TRUMP'S HAMMER AND BEIJING'S ANVIL

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the world needed one clear, transparent voice. Instead, the World Health Organization was dragged into the wrestling ring between the U.S. and China.

Trump accused it of “*serving China*” and threatened—then withdrew—funding. The result? The WHO was lost between political calculations and financial pressures, instead of focusing solely on saving lives.

Here, the organization was a victim—but in the eyes of many, it became an accused party.

UNESCO AND UNRWA: POLITICIZING CULTURE AND REFUGEES

UNESCO—an organization for science and culture—was undermined when the U.S. and Israel withdrew in protest against its decisions on Palestine. Suddenly, culture itself became a bargaining chip.

UNRWA—the agency created to protect Palestinian refugees—became an even starker example. Sometimes its funding was cut (as Trump did), other times it was exploited to manipulate the refugee issue as a whole.

Here UNRWA was not only a victim, but its very existence turned into a tool of pressure on refugees—people who have nothing but ration cards and endless waiting.

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS: SAVING THE RICH, STRANGLING THE POOR

The 2008 global financial crisis exposed the system. The IMF and World Bank rushed to rescue major banks and the wealthy economies of the Global North, while leaving the debt-burdened South to face its fate alone.

The irony? When Trump came to power and imposed protectionist tariffs, the very same institutions that had preached “*free trade*” and “*open markets*” suddenly fell silent.

IRAQ: ELBARADEI AND BRAHIMI BETWEEN THE HAMMER OF WAR

Mohamed ElBaradei, head of the IAEA, said it clearly: “*There are no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.*” But his voice was not enough to stop the invasion. The agency itself was stripped bare: its voice existed but was silenced before the veto and the military machine.

Lakhdar Brahimi, the UN envoy, found himself managing the chaos of occupation—as if the UN were being used to grant legitimacy to destruction rather than prevent it.

VICTIM OR ACCOMPLICE?

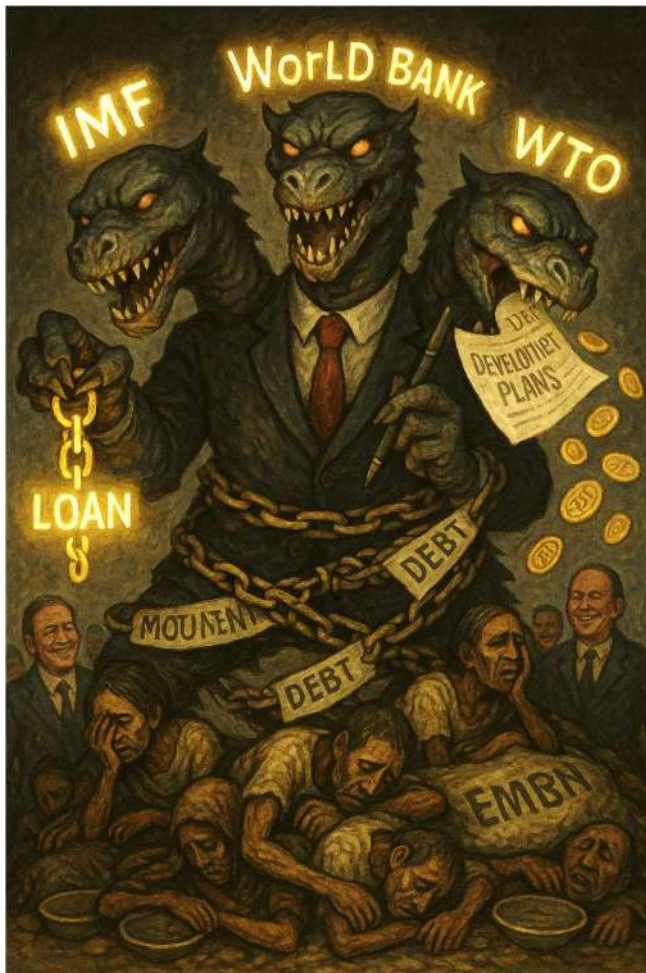
International organizations were meant to be the voice of the oppressed. But at times they turn into nothing more than microphones for the powerful. Sometimes they serve as shields protecting the strong, and at other times, they themselves become tools of destruction.

SO, THE QUESTION NOW IS:

- Should we see them as “*imperfect but useful tools*”?
- Or believe that the whole system needs to be reshaped with a new philosophy?
- Or will we simply keep watching until the entire structure collapses—and we return to a world where *might makes right*?

A Three-Headed Monster: The Global Loan Organization

Colonialism never died—it just changed its wardrobe. It took off its military uniform, put on a suit and tie, and replaced the rifle with a “loan agreement” waiting for your signature. And each time, it smiles at you and says: *“We’re here to help you.”* Then it proves that help means forcing you to do what it has never done itself.



HEAD ONE: THE LOAN—THE GOLDEN CHAIN

The IMF stretches one hand to give you a loan, while the other hand strangles you with conditions. Remove subsidies, float your currency, sell your institutions. That's what they call "economic reform."

But look at what they do in their own countries: when their companies collapse, they pump in billions to rescue them. No one forces them into austerity or subsidy cuts. For them, loans are a safety cushion. For us, loans are golden chains: they glitter in the ruler's eyes while crushing the people's necks.

- Egypt 2016: A \$12 billion loan in exchange for lifting subsidies and floating the pound → prices doubled, the currency lost more than half its value.
- USA 2008: A \$700 billion bailout for the banks → not a single American was asked to "tighten the belt."

HEAD TWO: DEVELOPMENT—WESTERN STYLE

The World Bank draws up "development" plans. On paper: neat tables and graphs. In reality: schools without teachers, hospitals without medicine, projects ending at the gates of palaces.

Ghana was the "model student." It followed every rule, took loan after loan, and its debt swelled past \$30 billion. By 2022, it was crawling back to the IMF to save its shattered economy.

Meanwhile in Europe, when Greece fell into crisis, the EU injected tens of billions to rescue it—and yet Greece remained safely inside the "European club." For them, a crisis means a lifeline. For us, a crisis means more shackles.

The double standard couldn't be clearer: development for them means citizen welfare. For us, it means glossy reports and staged photos at conferences. The Southern citizen grows poorer, while the Bank brags about "success stories." Success for whom?

Them—or us?

HEAD THREE: FREE TRADE—FREEDOM FOR THE STRONG

The WTO tells you: "*Open your markets to everyone.*" You do it, only to find that "everyone" means Western products. And if you

dare protect your own industry, you're branded an enemy of "free markets."

But look at them: the U.S. slaps tariffs on steel and aluminum, Europe shields its farmers with subsidies—yet nobody accuses them of killing free trade. The hypocrisy is laid bare: freedom for them, discipline for us.

- Tunisia opened its markets to European goods under the partnership agreement → local industries collapsed, while Europe continues to shower its farmers with more than €50 billion annually under the "Common Agricultural Policy."
- America, under Trump, imposed billions in tariffs on steel and aluminum imports. Did anyone say Washington was "killing free trade"? No—it was called "protecting national interests."

Freedom, it seems, is just a card game. They deal it at the table, then hide the winning cards in their pockets.

SIGNING YOUR OWN CHAINS

This three-headed monster doesn't kill you with a sword. It hands you the pen, and you sign your own document of servitude. The only difference between old colonialism and the new is that today's colonialism is more elegant—and far more skilled at convincing you that your shackles are your "*free choice*."

DOUBLE STANDARDS aren't a footnote in their story—they are the story. What's forbidden for the South is freely practiced in the North. What's forced on us at gunpoint is waived away for them with a single decision.

But don't worry, this was just the economic act. The next act is even uglier: the United Nations and the Security Council, where selectivity gets rebranded as "international legitimacy" and the veto becomes a stamp of life or death.

The 2008 financial crisis was the moment the masks slipped. When Western banks collapsed, nobody demanded austerity. On the contrary—they flooded trillions to save their capitalism. But for us, any minor crisis is met with the same recycled slogans: *"tighten your belts," "painful measures," "reform is inevitable."*

Ghana, Egypt, Argentina... all told to tighten their belts—until hunger set in. Meanwhile, in New York, London, and Paris, belts were never tightened. They were loosened, to make room for billions of public dollars poured into private banks.

They survive with public money. We die because of it.

They break their own rules. We die obeying them.

Second Tragedy

Human Code... Metallic Bridge

This series is being written about man when he is reduced to a cog in a machine, or to a "code" in a job listing, or to a "steel bridge" upon which everything is built except his humanity. In a world where the value of people is measured by what they produce, not by the dreams and rights they carry, man becomes merely a means, not an end.

Here, we are not writing about economics, nor about politics, nor about grand plans. Instead, we are writing about that worker who has become a number, the employee who has transformed into a file, and the citizen who is no longer seen except by the measure of the function he performs.

It is a testament of protest against a logic that turns people into "human infrastructure" to be consumed, rather than free individuals whose dignity is protected. An attempt to reclaim the simple idea that systems of production and politics have forgotten: that production was created *for* man, not man for production.



The Economy of Obedience: Living as Tools, Not People

In a totalitarian state, the citizen is not a human being with desires and dreams, but a productive unit—a cog in a vast machine called “the state.” He is not measured by his dignity, freedom, or well-being, but by his capacity to serve the system’s goals, even if the wheel of so-called development crushes him. In this model, consumption itself becomes a part of loyalty: you do not consume to enjoy life, but to prove that you are an obedient soldier in the army of the economy.



CHINA: DEVELOPMENT WITHOUT WELFARE

China's colossal projects—skyscrapers, factories glowing at night, the fastest railway network in the world—paint a dazzling picture. Yet behind this facade, millions of workers survive on scraps. Wages barely cover food and cramped, metal-box-like housing. No comprehensive healthcare, no real social security—only “service to development.”

A 2020 World Bank study showed that over 600 million Chinese live on less than \$150 per month, in a country considered the world's second-largest economy.

The state focuses on production metrics and GDP, but ignores indicators of life quality: happiness, mental health, or personal freedom.

THE SOVIET UNION: CONSUMPTION BY PLAN, NOT DESIRE

Soviet citizens did not buy what they wanted, but what the state allowed.

Store shelves were filled with similar shoes, yet empty of fruits or simple goods people longed for.

The state prioritized heavy industry over daily needs: tanks before shoes, rockets before groceries.

Long lines at bakeries and supermarkets were a daily scene, with citizens waiting hours for a loaf of bread or a piece of meat.

Even consumption was a form of control: the state gave you what it wanted you to consume, not what you needed.

The individual is crushed between two contradictory images: an official discourse of “great development” and a personal reality of deprivation.

The citizen feels like a mere instrument for displaying state success on paper, while living a muted life devoid of well-being.

This gap produces societies plagued by frustration, a sense of meaninglessness, and the feeling that life is nothing more than service to a system that recognizes humans only as numbers.

IN THE EAST: **people are forced to consume in service of the state.**

IN THE WEST: **people are forced to consume in service of the market.**

Here, lines form in front of bakeries; there, lines form outside the latest iPhone store.

In both cases, real freedom is absent: people do not consume to live better, but to serve a system larger than themselves.

In Beijing, a worker returns to a crowded room after a 12-hour shift, opening a cheap phone to see state ads about the “Chinese Dream.”

In old Moscow, a woman waits three hours in line for a slab of butter, while TV broadcasts images of “heavy industry achievements.”

In New York, a young man drowns in credit card debt because he bought things he didn’t need to feel part of the “American Dream.”

In the end, when a human being is reduced to a forced consumer rather than a free being, life becomes a reflection of a single motto:

“YOU EXIST TO SERVE, NOT TO LIVE.”

Family and Society Under State Pressure – When Human Bonds Are Strangled

The family is supposed to be the last refuge for a human being, a place beyond the watchful eyes and barbed wires of the state. Yet in repressive systems, even this sanctuary is breached: laws dictate what happens in the bedroom, reproductive choices are monitored, and society is reshaped according to the desires of authority rather than the people themselves.



At that point, the home ceases to be a home, and the family ceases to be a family—it becomes a miniature state, subject to surveillance and control.

From 1979 to 2015, China enforced the “one-child policy.” The result: millions of mothers and families fell under the harshest forms of interference in their private lives. Official Chinese estimates suggest that more than 400 million births were prevented due to this policy. Between the 1980s and 1990s, hundreds of thousands of forced abortions were recorded annually. By 2020, China had 30 million more men than women due to a preference for male children. Aging rates soared: around 18% of the population was over 60, making the society age faster than any other developing economy.

One woman recalled:

"There was a child moving inside me... They took me to the hospital and forced me to terminate the pregnancy. I left without the child, without a voice, without a soul."

This policy left scars not only on bodies but on society itself: a generation of only children, nicknamed “little princes,” grew up in isolation and psychological pressure, carrying the weight of their parents and grandparents alone.

In the Soviet Union, families were also far from free. The state sought to mold the “new citizen” from childhood:

- Children were sent to “pioneer camps” to learn loyalty to the party above all else.
- Workers were crammed into communal housing connected to factories: thin walls, shared kitchens, complete absence of privacy.
- Marriage and divorce were bureaucratic decisions, not personal choices.

By the mid-20th century, over 50% of urban residents lived in communal apartments (komunalka). These spaces often housed 5 to 7 families in a single apartment, each with a small room while kitchens and bathrooms were shared.

One person from that era wrote later:

"I grew up calling the party's name more than I called my father's. My home was just a sleeping station; my real life was in the pioneer camp."

Today in North Korea, over three million children are enrolled in strict political indoctrination programs, taught that the leader is more important than their parents. In East Germany (before the fall of the Wall), the Stasi employed around 180,000 informants, many planted within homes, making the family itself a theater of fear and suspicion.

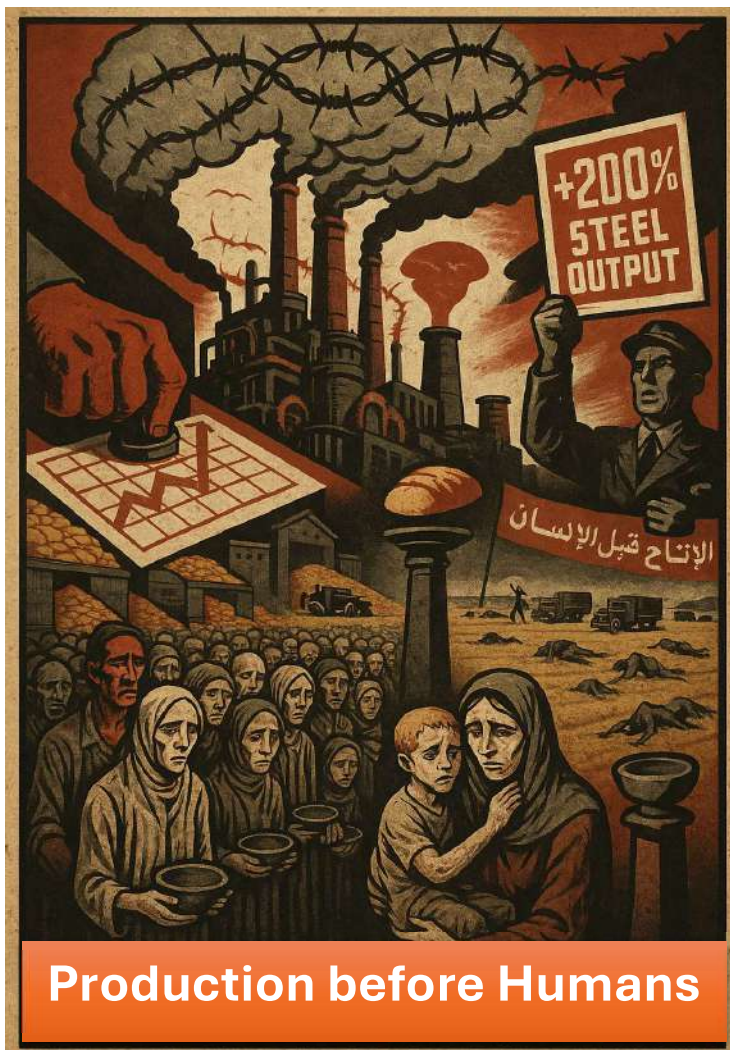
China's one-child policy left an unbalanced society: rapid aging, inability to replace the workforce, and an epidemic of psychological loneliness. Soviet communal housing killed privacy, weakened family bonds, and turned homes into quasi-camps. In North Korea and East Germany, fear of relatives as informants destroyed trust within families, making love contingent on silence. The East tears families apart through coercive laws, while the West weakens them through the market, consumerism, and media. In both cases, the result is similar: humans without real freedom to build their home or choose their life.

In the suburbs of Beijing, a mother sits in front of the image of an unborn child, crying as if the child had lived a full life. In old Moscow, a man shares a communal kitchen with strangers while his son chants the party's name in a distant camp. In Pyongyang, a trembling father sleeps, wondering if his little boy will betray him tomorrow.

The home, meant to be the warmest place in the world, has become a hidden prison. And when the family is suffocated, it is not just the walls of a single home that collapse—it is the wall of humanity itself.

Planned Economy – Humans Between Production and Starvation

At its core, the economy should serve humans: to feed them, to house them, to secure their lives and dignity. But when a totalitarian regime takes control of the economy, it transforms it from a means into an end, from a servant of people to their master.



Production is redesigned according to strict five-year plans, not based on people's needs, but on state goals and power indicators. The result: an abundance of iron and coal, yet hunger in households; impressive numbers on paper, but empty stomachs in reality.

IN THE SOVIET UNION: THE SLOGAN WAS CLEAR – THE PLAN FIRST, HUMANS LAST

In the 1930s, Stalin imposed five-year plans focused on heavy industrialization: steel, coal, tractors. Millions of peasants were forced off their land and gathered into collective farms, the "kolkhozes."

The Great Famine in Ukraine (Holodomor 1932-1933) was a direct result of these policies; millions died of hunger while grain was seized for the state.

The citizen was merely a number in the equation. If the body died, the plan continued as if nothing had happened.

IN CHINA, 1958: MAO ZEDONG'S "GREAT LEAP FORWARD"

A plan to accelerate production and turn China into an industrial power. Peasants were forced to work in massive communes, and rudimentary iron furnaces were built in villages instead of tending the fields.

The result: the largest famine of the 20th century, claiming 30 to 45 million lives.

The state slogan: "Production above all," yet the cost was millions of human lives deprived of basic sustenance.

IN NORTH KOREA: **the economy is entirely directed toward the military ("Military First Policy"), leaving the population in extreme poverty. UN reports indicate that one-third of citizens suffer from chronic malnutrition.**

IN EAST GERMANY: **despite strict organization, people faced persistent shortages of basic goods, from coffee to clothing, while the state boasted high industrial output rates.**

When humans are deprived of their most basic needs, a profound sense of humiliation emerges.

Bread is no longer just food—it becomes a symbol of the struggle between citizens' lives and state metrics.

Entire societies grew up on a “culture of queues”: waiting hours in front of bakeries or stores as a daily routine.

These queues were not merely shortages, but a practical lesson for people: your life is not a priority; you exist to serve the plan, not the other way around.

IN THE EAST: the state kills its people in the name of the plan and production.

IN THE WEST: the market kills its people in the name of profit and competition.

Here, people die of hunger because wheat is exported to the state; there, they die because the price of bread is beyond their means. In both cases, the economy is no longer a tool to serve humanity—it becomes a weapon to destroy it.

SCENES ACROSS TIME AND SPACE

In 1930s Ukraine, a mother searches for a piece of bread for her children while state carts transport grain to factories.

In 1960s China, a peasant collapses dead in the field while a local official reports a 200% increase in production.

In today's world, millions starve while global markets boast soaring profits of food corporations.

When the economy becomes an idol, humans are sacrificed to it.

An economy without humans is not a plan, nor an achievement—it is a crime the size of an entire nation.

When Words Become Chains

Language is not just words we exchange; it is the air we breathe, a mirror of the soul, and a storehouse of memory. But when power controls language, it does not just seize letters—it seizes thought itself. A person becomes a prisoner even while speaking, because the words coming from their mouth belong not to them, but to whoever wrote the dictionary.



SOVIET UNION – THE BIRTH OF “WOODEN LANGUAGE”

In the USSR, what became known as “wooden language” emerged: rigid, lifeless words, endless repetition of slogans.

A factory worker asked about his day does not say, “I’m tired,” but repeats: “I am happy to contribute to building socialism.”

Students do not write about their dreams but about “*the glory of the Party.*”

Words no longer reflect feelings—they convey orders. Daily life becomes a grand stage for empty rhetoric.

CHINA – MAO’S RED BOOK AS A LINGUISTIC GOSPEL

In Mao’s China, the Red Book became a linguistic scripture memorized by millions.

A wrong word could be considered an act of betrayal.

A child says to his father, “*I love you*”; the father replies anxiously: “*Say you love the Leader first!*”

Natural words—love, joy, complaint—became forbidden, while the acceptable words were: “struggle,” “sacrifice,” “revolution.”

The human tongue no longer belonged to the person—it belonged to the Party.

North Korea – Language as Daily Prayer

In North Korea, every mention of the Leader is sacred; no name is written or spoken without reverence.

Citizens repeat loyalty phrases like a believer repeats prayers—but these prayers are not to God; they are to humans.

Even family letters are infused with glorification of the Leader, as if love itself requires the state’s seal to be permitted.

Citizens learn to speak words they do not feel, to smile while crying inside.

WHEN LANGUAGE IS SEIZED

When language is stolen, silence becomes another language—a language of resistance.

A whole generation grows up speaking much but saying nothing.

When language is emptied of meaning, the soul itself is drained of meaning.

Worse still, people begin losing the ability to think freely, because thinking without honest words is impossible.

EAST VS. WEST

- In the East: the state imposed a dictionary glorifying the Party and Leader.
- In the West: the market imposed a dictionary glorifying advertisement and commodity.

Here, the citizen is a prisoner of slogans; there, the consumer is a prisoner of ads.

Both speak a language that is not their own, losing the ability to say a simple honest sentence: “I exist.”

DAILY GLIMPSES:

- In Moscow, an elderly man whispers a story to his child but suddenly stops, searching for a word that doesn’t exist.
- In Beijing, a little girl lifts the Red Book and repeats words she does not understand, words heavier than her age.
- In Pyongyang, a young man writes a secret love letter, his hand trembling in fear of forgetting a word glorifying the Leader.

Language, once the first homeland of the human, has become a prison.

When words fall, meaning falls with them. Humanity is left voiceless, nameless, denied even the right to say: “I am human.”

Education as a Tool of Control – When Schools Become Obedience Factories

Education is supposed to be the key that opens the doors of awareness and freedom, the path that liberates humans from ignorance. But when a totalitarian state takes hold of it, the key becomes a shackle, and the door turns into a wall. Schools no longer nurture free minds; they become factories producing identical copies of the “obedient” citizen, who repeats what is demanded and fears to ask, “**WHY?**”



CHINA TURNED SCHOOLS INTO AN ARM OF THE PARTY

Curricula are designed to teach loyalty before critical thinking. The leader's portrait on the wall is more important than any math equation.

Children are forced to chant slogans daily: "The Party is father, the Party is mother."

At universities, any dissenting voice is expelled or imprisoned. Even scientific research is censored—no room for questions that threaten the "official narrative."

Here, education is not for knowledge, but for obedience.

IN THE SOVIET UNION, THE MIND FELL UNDER IDEOLOGICAL GUARDIANSHIP

Every book, lesson, and school subject reinforced the same idea: "Socialism is absolute truth."

Russian history was rewritten to glorify the revolution and leadership, and art and literature were reproduced as propaganda tools. Students learned to march in lines, sing anthems, and view the leader as a godly shadow on earth. Anyone who stepped out of this framework was ostracized or labeled an "enemy of the people."

NORTH KOREA: CHILDREN STUDY THE KIM FAMILY'S HISTORY MORE THAN THE WORLD'S SCIENCES.

Even math textbooks contain examples glorifying the leader.

EAST GERMANY: Socialist education classes were mandatory.

Students monitored one another and learned that loyalty to the state outweighed loyalty to family.

We are faced with a generation that grew up believing that free thought is betrayal. Killing curiosity in childhood produces adults incapable of innovation, trained to repeat rather than question.

When education becomes a tool of control, it produces an "obedient" human—but empty inside, living as a shadow without a soul.

East: Education is a totalitarian tool to manufacture obedience and erase individuality.

West: Education can sometimes serve the market, turning schools

and universities into factories producing employees for companies, not free-thinking minds.

There, obedience is to the Party. Here, obedience is to the market. The result is the same: humans deprived of mastery over their own lives.

In Beijing, a child raises a hand to answer, only to be corrected:

“Don’t think outside the lesson.”

In old Moscow, a student writes a poem about freedom; their notebook is torn apart, and parents summoned for interrogation.

In the West, a graduate emerges weighed down by debt, knowing only that they must work a job to pay off loans.

When schools become factories, minds are crushed, and childhood is stolen. True education does not produce obedient citizens—it produces free humans. And when that freedom is lost, the very purpose of learning is lost too.

Stolen Childhood – Born in the Arms of the State, Not the Family

A child is usually born to find a protective embrace, a nurturing family, and a society that cherishes innocence. But in totalitarian systems, a child is born to find the state replacing the family. From the very first moment, the child is treated as a "project citizen," not a small human seeking affection. Childhood becomes a stage for military-ideological preparation, where joy is stolen and replaced with loyalty.



IN THE SOVIET UNION: CHILDHOOD IN THE STATE CAMPS

From the early years, children were enrolled in organizations like the *Komsomol* and the *Pioneers*.

Play was not free but directed: songs, uniforms, and marching in lines.

The family lost its primary educational role; the true educator was the Party, and the ideal was "Comrade Stalin."

Millions of children grew up believing loyalty was more important than love, and schedules mattered more than freedom.

IN CHINA: THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION GENERATION – CHILDREN SPYING ON PARENTS

During the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), children were used as tools to monitor their families.

Many stories recount children reporting their parents for "speaking against Mao," resulting in imprisonment or death.

Childhood became a battlefield between loyalty to the Party and love for family, and the state usually won.

The child no longer saw their parent as a source of safety, but as a potential threat that needed reporting.

IN NORTH KOREA: CHILDHOOD AS A WEAPON OF THE STATE

Schools prioritize glorifying the leader over teaching math and science.

Toys carry a military theme: plastic guns are more common than dolls.

Every child is raised to understand that their life belongs not to them, but to the leader and the nation.

Even singing and dancing are used for propaganda, in massive group performances showing children as "little soldiers" before they are human.

As a result, the child robbed of play and imagination grows up internally warped.

The absence of trust between children and parents turns the family into mere "surveillance cells."

Stolen childhood produces an obedient generation—but one without spirit, imagination, or the capacity to dream.

IN THE EAST: **The state killed childhood in the name of the "great future."**

IN THE WEST: **The market killed childhood in the name of "profit," turning the child into a small consumer before being a child.**

In both cases, the true meaning is lost: that a child should simply be a child.

In old Moscow, a child raises their hand in the Party salute instead of playing with a ball.

In Beijing, a little girl reports her father because she learned the Party comes before her dad.

In Pyongyang, thousands of children march in unison, same steps, same smile, no difference.

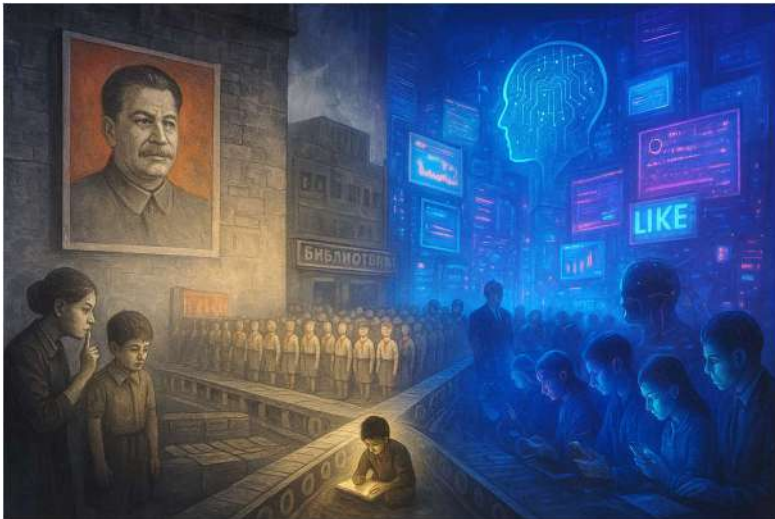
Childhood, which should be a time of dreams and imagination, is reduced to a state program.

WHEN A CHILD IS STRIPPED OF THEIR
RIGHT TO BE A CHILD, THE ENTIRE FUTURE
IS STOLEN WITH THEM.

Censorship and the Grip on Thought

In the cities of the Eastern Bloc, repression was not an abstract idea but a daily, visible detail.

The schoolchild began the day saluting the leader's portrait hanging in every classroom—before reading, not math lessons, but the Party's words. In the morning assembly, no national anthem was sung, only Party slogans. A child was not taught to ask questions, but to clap.



The public library was no refuge for the mind but a stage for the single voice: endless shelves filled with propaganda pamphlets about the heroic worker and the fearless soldier. Books that dared to ask or doubt vanished as if they had never been written. The artist who tried to paint loneliness, or write a play about love, found his work either erased or forced into transformation—his canvas turned into a Party poster, his play into an operetta about factories. On small stages, artists experimented with stories of love or solitude, but the curtain only rose if the narrative morphed into one of “factory heroics” or “soldiers’ sacrifices.” On the walls, one face

only: the leader smiling. In the square, one hand raised: the Party's hand.

In the street, people queued for bread under banners that read:

"The New Man is born here."

What new man? The one who swallows his hunger and smiles at the camera, fearing the eyes watching him.

Even at home, the radio never went silent—not for entertainment, but for reassurance: *"We hear, we obey."*

A mother lowered her voice when whispering to her son: *"Don't repeat this at school."*

In Soviet Russia, every newspaper was a copy of the other, each headline a repetition of yesterday's lie. Independent thinkers were treated like ticking bombs: exiled, imprisoned, or buried alive in suffocating silence. Journalism was written with a single pen; philosophy was silenced by a single hand.

But repression did not vanish with the fall of the Wall. It simply changed clothes.

In modern China, there is no need for a policeman to inspect your bookshelf; an algorithm inspects your phone. The internet, once a limitless horizon, has become a new Great Wall.

Every word typed is tracked, every image sent is stored, every private conversation is read. In today's Russia, "free" media hardly differs from the Soviet press—only the Party's logo was swapped for a TV channel's name.

AND THE WEST? IT WAS NEVER AS DIFFERENT AS IT CLAIMED.

There, censorship doesn't swing a baton—it deploys an algorithm deciding what appears on your screen and what disappears. Tech companies have become ministries of public opinion. Repression here does not kill questions; it drowns them in a flood of noise until they vanish.

Thus, whether in Moscow, Beijing, or Washington, the human remains an instrument:

IN THE EAST, **driven to produce.**

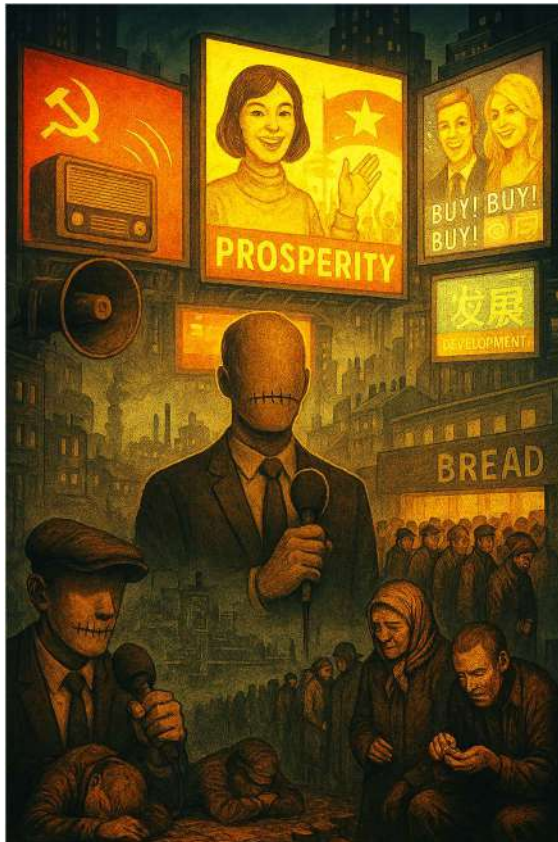
IN THE WEST, **driven to consume.**

And the human being—between hammer and anvil—has ceased to be an end, reduced instead to a means.

The rule stands unbroken: in the East, *man exists for production; in the West, production exists for profit... and humanity is lost between the two.*

The Manufacturing of Official Consciousness – The Media

A word in the hand of power becomes a weapon more dangerous than bullets. In totalitarian regimes, media is not a tool for transmitting truth, but an instrument for reshaping minds. Citizens are not allowed to see reality as it is; they are forced to see it as the state wants it to appear: a polished image of achievements and victories, stripped of every crack or wound. In this way, entire nations of *obedient spectators* are manufactured, repeating what television feeds them—even when their daily lives expose every word as a lie.



CHINA: A PROPAGANDA MACHINE THE SIZE OF A CONTINENT

Official Chinese media always presents a bright picture: the people are happy, the economy is rising, the Party is the protector.

The newspapers and television do not speak of mass suicides driven by work pressures, or of deadly pollution choking industrial cities—but only of “successes in development.”

Even the internet is monitored and fenced in: blocked sites, forbidden words, and algorithms that boost stories glorifying the regime while burying everything else.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, images of “heroes” fighting the virus spread everywhere, while the voices of doctors who had sounded the alarm early were silenced.

The Soviet Union: truth reduced to a single voice

SOVIET MEDIA ALWAYS REPEATED: *“The West is collapsing, socialism is triumphant.”*

But in reality, stores were empty and people queued in endless lines.

Millions of newspapers were printed, but every word was censored. No criticism, no opposition, no voice outside the Party.

Even natural or nuclear disasters were hidden. The Chernobyl disaster (1986) was not publicly acknowledged for days, while television kept broadcasting images of blooming fields and productive factories.

Citizens knew the media was lying, but were forced to pretend belief—for not believing could itself be treated as a crime.

We are thus faced with a totalitarian media that breeds a deadly duality: people see truth with their eyes, hear lies with their ears, and live in constant schizophrenia.

This schizophrenia breeds societies drenched in apathy—where no one trusts what is said, and no one dares to voice what they truly think.

Truth becomes a rare commodity, sought in rumors, in foreign broadcasts, or whispered secretly among friends.

EAST AND WEST: DIFFERENT METHODS, SAME RESULT

In the East, media is ruled by the stick: censorship, bans, blackouts.

In the West, media is ruled by the carrot: an endless flood of entertainment and advertising that drowns truth in noise.

HERE, TRUTH IS FORBIDDEN. THERE, TRUTH IS BURIED BENEATH A THOUSAND IMAGES AND TRENDS.

The result is the same in both cases: the citizen is denied access to a free and clear reality, given only a distorted version tailored to fit the needs of power or the market.

THE IMAGES TELL IT ALL:

In Beijing, a giant screen flashes with images of “great development,” while a worker sleeps exhausted on the pavement.

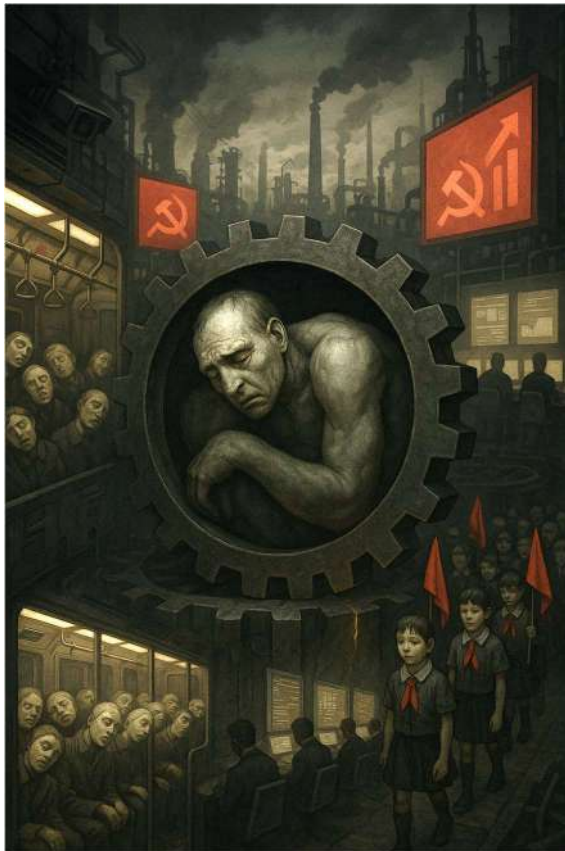
In old Moscow, a radio blares a patriotic hymn to “the great Soviet nation,” while a woman stands in line for bread.

In New York, news channels battle for ratings, turning news into a commodity and truth into an advertisement.

Media that does not reflect reality does more than lie—it robs people of their most precious right: the right to understand their lives as they are, not as others want them to be told.

The Human Cog

In Russia, China, and most countries of the Eastern Bloc, humans are no longer beings with will or rights. They have become cogs in a massive machine—every movement calculated, every thought monitored, every moment of life subjected to the machine called the state. Life itself is no longer valued; it exists only to produce, to raise development indicators or strengthen state power, without anyone asking: what about the human being?



If fate ever brings you onto the subway in Beijing, it is not unusual to see more than half the passengers asleep in their seats or in the aisles. Weary faces, half-open eyes, bodies swaying with the

motion of the train—all amidst a muffled silence of exhaustion. In China, there is no time for rest: humans are drained for production, work schedules are sacred, while rest and humanity are granted only in fleeting moments of leisure, if at all.

In Shenzhen and Shanghai, workers labor over 12 hours a day, often without adequate holidays. Cameras and monitoring systems record every movement, every second, and any mistake exposes a person to severe penalties.

In the morning lineup for party drills, workers stand like soldiers, arms synchronized, faces reflecting nothing but discipline, smiles almost forbidden. Loyalty to the system is not optional; it is a duty imposed from childhood.

Children learn to report classmates or rule-breakers, making loyalty to the state habitual from an early age. No real play, no space for imagination—only constant training in discipline and control. School hours extend to include party programs and group activities, often requiring students to complete productivity tasks beyond their natural capabilities.

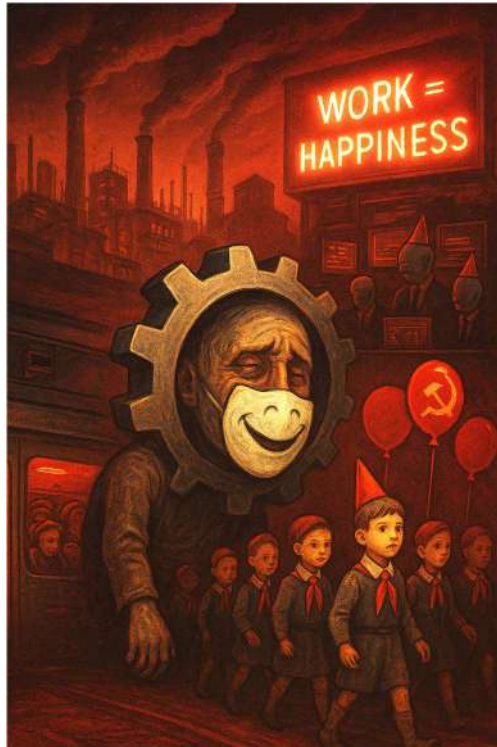
In Russia, factory and government employees endure long work hours, and any error or delay is personally penalized, as if they are mere cogs in a massive machine. Residential districts in industrial cities are strictly regulated: people do not choose their lifestyles or homes, and every detail of daily life is monitored.

Media and art are censored, and any dissenting opinion can result in job loss or imprisonment. Here, personal freedom is directly tied to productivity, not human rights.

In North Korea, forced agricultural and industrial labor turns citizens into tools of production, with no personal rights or rest. In Vietnam, state-regulated farms and industrial zones follow the same principle: individuals are subordinated to the productive machine, with no freedom to choose their profession or lifestyle. Suicide rates in Russia reach 25–31 per 100,000, linked to depression from work pressure, state bureaucracy, and lack of freedom (BMC Geriatrics). In China, about 60% of migrant workers

suffer from varying degrees of depression, with high levels of suicidal thoughts due to long working hours and constant surveillance (PMC). In North Korea, forced labor, strict monitoring, and the absence of freedom exacerbate psychological stress and depression among workers.

In these systems, humans are not the focus of development—they are merely production tools. Every breath, every movement is accounted for in a merciless machine. Daily life becomes a chain of duties leaving no space for humanity or well-being.



Even in the West, despite slogans of freedom and human rights, these rights are often conditional or unavailable to all, highlighting double standards. The real difference is that the Eastern system does not hide its repression, while the West often masks contradictions behind flashy slogans.

Humans in Russia, China, North Korea, and all Eastern Bloc countries are reduced to numbers, subjected to endless pressure. Suicide and depression rates due to work exhaustion and constant surveillance show the cost of this system: humans sacrifice their mental and physical lives to serve the machine of the state. The question remains: can humanity achieve development without sacrificing humanity itself, and can East and West learn from each other's mistakes to create a system that respects humans before respecting production?

When the Day Belongs to the State, Not the Individual

Time is the most precious possession of any human being. It is the space in which one decides how to live, how to work, how to rest, and how to dream. But when the state becomes the “owner of time,” the individual is stripped of the essence of freedom. One no longer owns the day or the night, but lives according to a timetable prepared in advance to serve higher goals in which there is no place for personal desires.



IN THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC (GDR), THE DAY DID NOT BEGIN WITH PERSONAL CHOICE, BUT WITH WHAT THE STATE HAD PLANNED:

Working hours were meticulously organized, and absence or tardiness was not merely a mistake, but a “social crime” that could be recorded in official files and affect one’s future.

Cultural activities were not a free choice, but part of the state’s program to mold the “new human”: plays that glorified the party, politicized concerts, and even sports managed according to state ideology.

Daily life schedules were governed by the logic of “productive time”: every hour had to be invested in work, study, or collective activity, until free time disappeared altogether as a personal space.

NORTH KOREA: THE “DAILY GUIDANCE PROGRAM” – THE CONFISCATION OF PRESENT AND FUTURE

In Pyongyang, the state does not stop at regulating working hours but manages even the smallest details of life:

The “Daily Guidance Program” imposes strict schedules on citizens covering work, study, ideological activities, and even rest periods.

Every person is obliged to attend “evening guidance sessions,” where citizens discuss their daily behavior and confess any “shortcomings” in front of the group.

Sunday, which elsewhere might be a day of rest or family, becomes a day of “collective service,” with everyone required to clean the streets or do forced agricultural labor.

One North Korean defector testified:

“I never learned the meaning of the word free time. Even if I sat in my room, I knew I had to think about what I would say in the evening session, or what questions my colleagues might ask. Time belonged to the leader, not to me.”

In the Soviet Union, factories and universities imposed “five-year time plans,” where time was not measured in days or hours, but in grand production targets.

In Maoist China, peasants' days were recorded in detail: from work in the fields to nightly party meetings, leaving no space for rest or private life.

THE COST OF TIME STOLEN

The loss of individual freedom over one's own time turned humans into machines that never stopped, resulting in high rates of chronic exhaustion and depression.

In East Germany, studies conducted after the fall of the Berlin Wall showed that about 40% of former citizens felt they had "never truly owned their private lives."

In North Korea, UN reports indicate that more than 80% of workers live under systems of forced labor tied to brutal schedules.

EAST AND WEST: DIFFERENT METHODS, SAME THEFT

If the East steals time through surveillance and totalitarian planning, the West often steals it through an unforgiving market: long working hours, consumer pressures, and leisure hijacked by screens and advertising.

The outcome is the same: a human being without real time for themselves, without the space to decide how to live their own day. In East Berlin, a man returns from work only to attend a compulsory party activity, unable to find a single hour to dedicate to his child. In Pyongyang, a woman sits in an evening self-criticism session,



confessing her “failure” to clean the street, while her heart burns because she had no time to tell her child a bedtime story.

In old Moscow, a worker writes secretly on a scrap of paper: *“Time passes, but it does not belong to me.”*

When the state seizes time, the individual is left only with a tired body and a drained mind.

TIME IS FREEDOM, AND WHEN TIME IS
CONFISCATED, ALL OF HUMANITY IS
CONFISCATED WITH IT.

Modern Slavery

They told us as children that slavery had ended, that iron had broken, that chains had melted with the sun of freedom. But the truth in the East is that the iron never broke—it was reshaped into national slogans, “modern” labor laws, and false promises of development. Humans became mere cogs, driven by the minute and consumed by the hour, until they were exhausted.



In the heart of Shenzhen, China, all you hear is the roar of machines, as if the city itself were a massive, unstoppable engine. Workers do not live their lives—they rent them to the company.

Dormitories resemble tin boxes: triple bunk beds, suffocating air, cold neon light oblivious to night or day. These are not places to sleep, but waiting rooms for the next shift.

On the production line, the worker stands as a shadow of a machine. The starting whistle reminds them they do not own their time, and every second without production is recorded as a sin. Twelve continuous hours raising and lowering their hands, assembling and fixing, like part of a robotic arm. But unlike a machine, which is lubricated and maintained, the worker faces exhaustion and collapse.

WHO statistics indicate that China witnesses over 700,000 suicides annually, many linked to psychological pressure and chronic exhaustion from harsh work conditions. A 2023 *Frontiers in Psychiatry* study found that around 60% of migrant workers suffer from varying degrees of depression.

In the fields of North Korea, the scene might seem like a pastoral painting: men, women, and children working together. But in truth, it is a camp.

Farmers do not plant for their own sustenance, but for the state. The harvest does not reach their hands, and productivity is measured by loyalty, not hunger. Slogans read: “*Work is love for the homeland.*” But what homeland swallows its starving children? Children are led from schools to the fields, learning from a young age that childhood is not a right, but a stage for training their muscles to endure the “worker army.” Amnesty International (2021) confirmed that thousands of children are forced to participate in agricultural and industrial projects as part of “*national education.*”

In the West, slavery does not announce itself—it dresses up in the mask of individual freedom and “market rights.” Yet it exists, more insidious because it is presented as a choice.

Migrants in Europe and America toil in restaurants, farms, and factories, long hours for meager wages, without real protection. The International Labour Organization (2022) estimated that 27.6

million people live in forced labor conditions worldwide, many in countries that boast of human rights.

In the U.S. alone, over 8 million people work two or more jobs just to cover living costs. They move from one job to another, then sleep on couches in their clothes. Freedom here is not freedom of time or dignity, but freedom to exhaust oneself to death.

Japan—even with its democratic facade—still suffers from *karoshi* (death from overwork), with thousands of employees dying suddenly due to excessive work. In France, France Telecom faced major scandals after dozens of employees committed suicide due to work pressure between 2008 and 2010.

HUMANS AS TOOLS – THE GREATEST IRONY

- In China: drained in the name of economic development.
- In North Korea: drained in the name of national glory.
- In the West: drained in the name of economic freedom.

The result is the same: humans are tools. Machines get maintenance; humans get graves.

In every factory echoing with machine roars,
in every field watered with sweat, not water,
in every office where a worker collapses—slavery has not disappeared; it has just changed its face. No longer a master lashes the back of a slave; now a state raises the banner of “development,” a company proclaims “efficiency,” a market chants “freedom.”

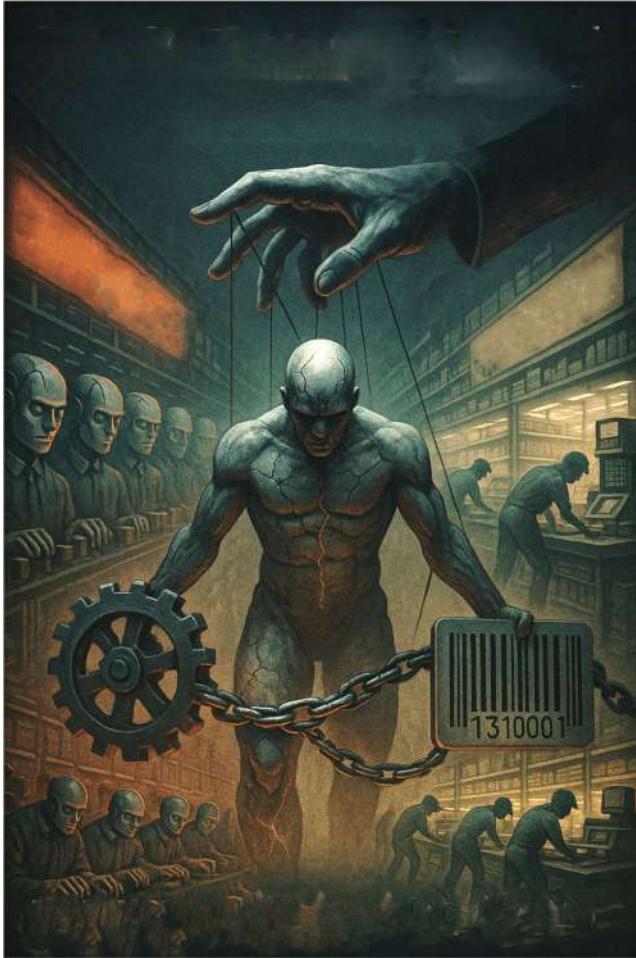
Yet the naked truth remains: humans are still fuel, consumed until extinguished.

The simple question: what civilization builds its glory on the ruins of human lives?

Can humanity achieve development without turning humans into fuel, or will history repeat itself in a new guise, where the state is master and the citizen a slave?

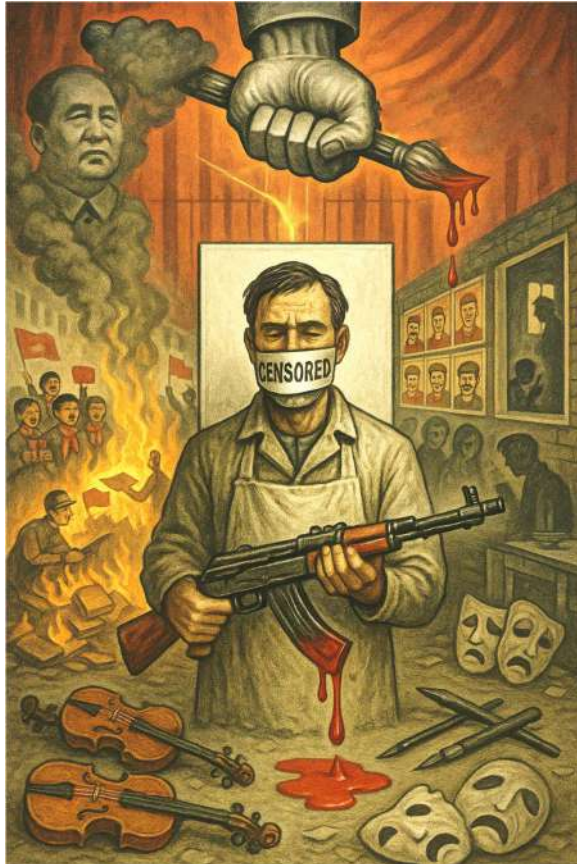
One suppressed cry remains:

“I AM NOT A MACHINE... I AM HUMAN.”



When Art Turns into a Weapon Against Humanity

Culture and art, at their core, are the voice of free humanity: a space for dreaming, protesting, and searching for meaning. But when a totalitarian state seizes culture, it turns art into a propaganda tool, literature into a political leaflet, and theater into a



compulsory lesson in loyalty. At that point, expression is no longer free—people are forced to accept a single version of reality, forged by the state's iron hand, which shuts all windows to the outside world.

IN CHINA, WHERE IMAGINATION WAS BURNED UNDER MAO’S RULE, art was not simply creativity—it was a “political front.” Every play praised the Party, every song was a revolutionary anthem, even folk dances were rewritten to carry ideological messages.

Millions of books were burned because they did not align with the Party’s vision. Libraries were emptied and restocked with nothing but *The Quotations of Chairman Mao*.

Thousands of intellectuals and artists were imprisoned or sent to “re-education camps,” where forced labor and endless hours of indoctrination awaited them.

Chinese writer Ji-li Jiang testified:

“I no longer wrote stories for children. Instead, I wrote for children how they should love Mao. I had to betray my imagination to survive.”

AND IN SOVIET RUSSIA: SOCIALIST REALISM – THE STATE’S TRUMPET

In Moscow and Leningrad, literature was only published under strict censorship. Books had to glorify workers, peasants, and socialist heroism.

Visual arts were not free but forced into “socialist realism.” Pain, despair, or poverty could not be painted—only bright and cheerful images of the system.

Poets who dared to write about suffering or criticize the state—such as Osip Mandelstam—ended up in prisons or exile.

Russian author Yevgeny Zamyatin said after the Soviet collapse:

“We wrote about happy workers, while we knew they were starving. Literature lied, and we were forced to lie with it.”

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL TOLL WAS DEVASTATING.

Monopolizing culture destroyed human diversity and reduced art to lifeless repetition.

Whole generations grew up with a deformed culture—knowing only slogans and loyalty—losing the ability to think critically or create freely.

In China, studies show that the generation of the Cultural Revolution still struggles today with self-expression because of prolonged cultural repression.

In the Soviet Union, after its collapse, there was an explosion of literature and art that had been silenced for decades—revealing the vast emptiness censorship had left behind.



IF THE EAST SUPPRESSES ART BY BRUTE FORCE, THE WEST OFTEN SUPPRESSES IT WITH THE MARKET.

There, novels were banned because they did not praise the Party.

Here, they fail to spread because they do not guarantee profit.

There, the artist was forced to paint the leader.

Here, the artist is forced to paint what sells.

In both cases, culture is hijacked from its true function: to be the voice of free humanity—not the trumpet of authority or the market.

IMAGES OF A SILENCED ART:

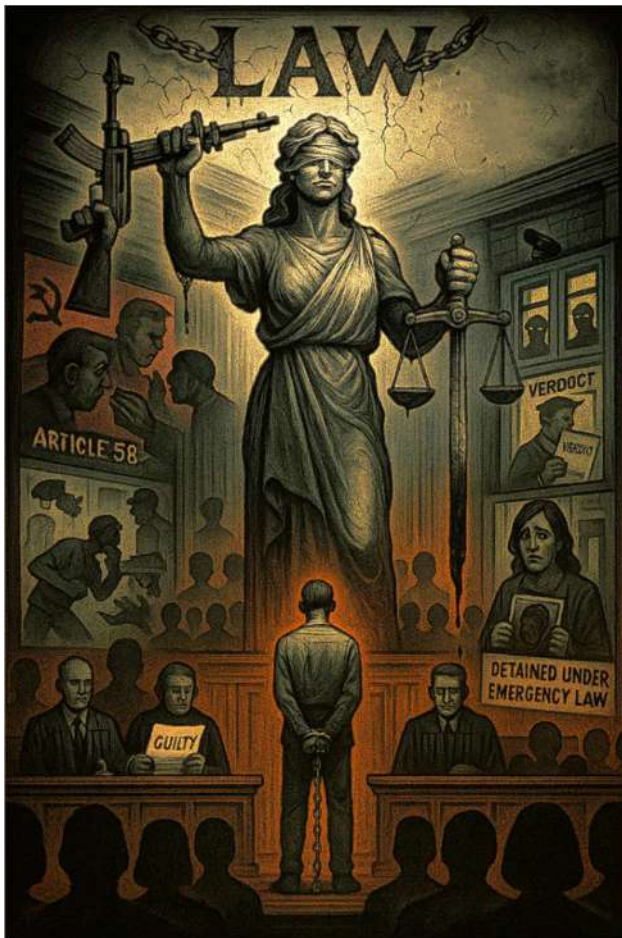
- In Beijing in the 1960s, an artist burns his own paintings before the police arrive to burn them for him.
- In Moscow in the 1970s, a poet whispers his verses in a kitchen, fearing even the walls might betray him.
- In today's world, a musician changes his melody because the market does not like sadness.

Culture that does not reflect humanity becomes a prison, no matter how brightly its walls are painted with slogans.

And when a person is forced to embrace a single version of reality, imagination dies—and with it dies the dearest thing humanity possesses: the freedom to dream.

Armed Law: When Justice Turns Into the State's Baton

Law is supposed to protect humans from injustice, providing a framework that guarantees equality among citizens. But in repressive regimes, it becomes the opposite: a weapon in the hands of the state, a tool for the ruler. Instead of protecting citizens, it pursues them; instead of restoring rights, it seizes them. In such a reality, the law loses its meaning, and justice becomes a staged performance, with judges delivering verdicts already written in advance.



IN THE SOVIET UNION – ARTICLE 58: THE CRIME OF THOUGHT

During the Stalinist era, Article 58 of the Criminal Code instilled terror in millions of hearts.

Anyone could be accused of “anti-state propaganda” or “conspiring against the system,” even for a fleeting comment in a private setting.

Official statistics show that between 3 to 5 million people passed through forced labor camps (Gulag) from the 1930s to the 1950s, many on fabricated charges.

Daily life: a factory worker complains about long hours and is reported by a colleague for fear of being accused himself. The worker is arrested, erased from society, as if the law existed only to swallow him.

IN EAST GERMANY – STASI AND THE SILENT COURT

The Stasi intelligence agency turned the law into a surveillance web encircling every citizen.

It was not just arrest—it was total life engineering: monitoring phones, reading letters, planting informants even within families. Over 90,000 official employees and around 200,000 unofficial informers worked for the Stasi. Nearly one in every 60 citizens was a spy.

In court, defense made no difference; the verdict was predetermined. A tragic scene: a defendant enters the courtroom, the judge reads the charge, then announces the sentence while the lawyer barely looks up.

IN HONG KONG – THE LAW FOR THE NEW ENEMY

In 2020, China passed the “National Security Law,” expanding the definitions of “terrorism” and “treason.”

Any dissenting activity—even a peaceful protest—could be considered a crime threatening national security.

In the first year alone, over 10,000 people were arrested, many students or youth holding signs or posting online.

Daily scene: a university student holds a blank paper in a silent protest, only to be arrested because the paper is deemed a symbol of political dissent. The law here is no longer a text; it is a shadow chasing intentions before actions.

IN THE ARAB WORLD – EMERGENCY AS A PERMANENT STATE

In Egypt, the state of emergency lasted almost continuously from 1981 to 2017, over three decades.



The law allowed arrests without judicial approval and indefinite detention. Human rights organizations estimate tens of thousands of political prisoners exist in Egypt alone.

In Tunisia, before 2011, the emergency law served as a pretext to ban any opposition gathering—even a cultural seminar.

Daily scene: a young man distributes a simple political pamphlet, then disappears behind prison doors for years without trial.

THE CONSEQUENCES

The result: a generation sees the law not as a refuge, but as a lurking monster.

The law strips citizens of trust in justice, driving them to manipulate the system instead of following it. “Injustice” becomes the rule; “justice” the exception.

Courts become sad stage plays, where everyone knows the outcome before the curtain rises.

Humans lose their sense of dignity because the law meant to protect them has become the source of fear itself.

EAST VS. WEST

- In the East: the law is hijacked for the state, wielded like a club over people’s heads.
- In the West: the law is bent for the market, where influence and money buy justice.

Here, citizens are imprisoned in the name of the law; there, they are exploited in the name of the law. In both cases, real justice is absent.

DAILY GLIMPSES:

- In Moscow, a defendant is dragged to court for “hostile thoughts,” convicted before speaking.
- In East Berlin, a neighbor reports another under “the law.”
- In Hong Kong, a student holds a blank sheet and is arrested for “terrorism.”
- In Cairo, a mother searches for her son and finds only a dry phrase: “*Detained under the emergency law.*”

When law becomes a club, humans lose their last shield against state injustice.

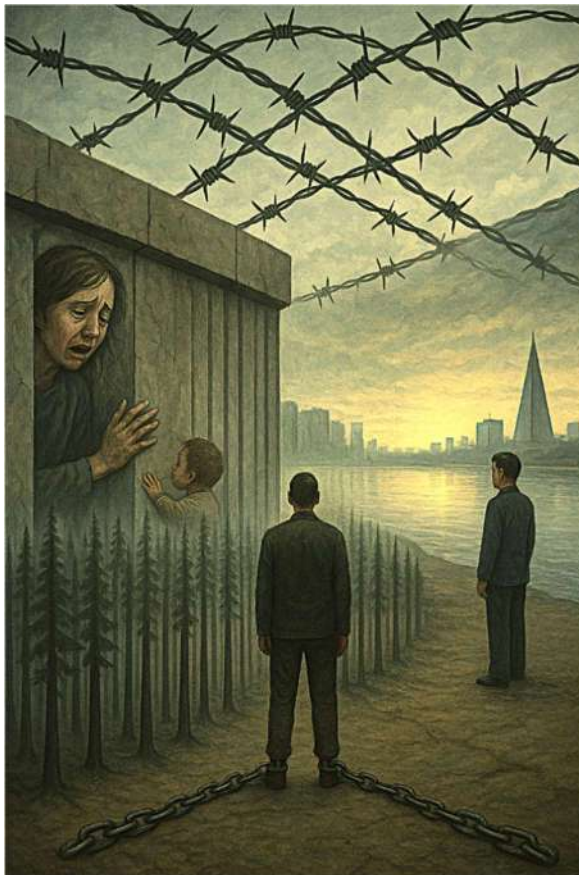
When justice is reduced to a pre-written verdict, merely being alive makes the citizen guilty.

The Confiscated Homeland – When Geography Becomes an Open-Air Prison

Land is not just a patch of geography; it is home, memory, and identity.

But when the state seizes control of space and turns it into a tool of surveillance and domination, the human being is stripped of his most basic right: to live where he wishes, to move as he wishes.

Cities become massive barracks, villages turn into garrisons, and borders become walls that suffocate the soul before the body.



IN THE SOVIET UNION: GEOGRAPHY AS PUNISHMENT

Entire cities were closed—entry and exit only possible with official permits.

Workers were exiled to Siberia as a form of “productive punishment,” where the land itself became a permanent prison.

Villages were razed to make way for factories or dams, and people were herded into cramped communal housing.

The human being no longer owned the land. The land owned him—and dictated his fate.

IN EAST GERMANY (GDR): THE WALL AS ICON OF OPPRESSION

Berlin was split by concrete and barbed wire. The wall was not just cement; it was a symbol of tearing the human being away from himself.

Families divided, friendships severed, cities cut in half.

Every attempt to cross geography was an attempt to cross the system itself, often paid for in bullets.

Geography was no longer a shelter. It became a weapon in the state’s hands.

IN NORTH KOREA: THE HOMELAND AS A MILITARY CAMP

No one has the right to travel freely. Cities and villages are chained by a permit system.

A citizen needs permission to leave his village—even to visit the next one.

Borders are not just lines on a map but psychological walls that tie people to the Leader more than to the land itself.

There, the homeland is not a home—it is a vast cage.

**FRIEND, WHEN GEOGRAPHY IS
CONFISCATED, THE HUMAN BEING IS
UPROOTED FROM HIS VERY GROUND.**

He learns that place is not his to belong to, but his prison.

A generation grows up seeing the homeland not as a refuge, but as a chain.

Estrangement deepens: even when living on ancestral soil, one feels no belonging—for the land has been turned into a tool of control, not a home.

IN THE EAST: geography was strangled by surveillance and restrictions.

IN THE WEST: geography was sold to the market, where cities became luxury estates owned by the few.

Here, space is a prison. There, space is a commodity.

In both cases, the human being lost his simplest right: to live freely in the place he calls “home.”

In Siberia, a worker looks out at the endless forest, and sees it as an infinite wall.

In Berlin, a gray wall separates a mother from her child, as if concrete were stronger than blood.

In Pyongyang, a young man stands by a river that marks the border with China, staring at the opposite bank as if it were another unreachable continent.

The land—meant to cradle the human being—became his shackle. And when place is confiscated, nothing remains of the homeland but a word shouted in slogans: no home, no freedom, no horizon.



When Grand Projects Become Small Graves – Humanity Versus Development

Development is supposed to serve human beings, yet all too often it turns into a machine that crushes them beneath its wheels. Mega-projects are presented as national symbols in the evening news, while those who pay the real price are farmers, workers, and the simplest of people—those with no place on the official platforms.



INDIA: WHEN THE HOUSE SANK WITH THE RIVER

In Madhya Pradesh, *Ramu* sat on a high rock, watching the waters of the Narmada Dam swallow his mud-brick home. Pointing at a mango tree that once grew beside it, he said: *“My father planted it the day I was born. Now it will drown too... just like us.”*

Neither Ramu nor hundreds of his neighbors received proper compensation. They didn’t know where to go. Some ended up in slums in the cities, working temporary jobs—without security, without land, without identity.

THE SOVIET UNION: THE FACTORY FIRST, THE HUMAN LAST

Yevgeny, a former worker in one of the Ural factories, recalled his youth, saying:

“They told us we were building the nation’s future. But we were building our graves. We worked until our hands cracked, and if one of us stopped producing due to illness, he was replaced instantly... as if we were cheap tools.”

Stories of forced village evacuations for factories and dams were not mere administrative measures—they were uprootings of entire families, transplanted into gray housing blocks stripped of identity.

CHINA: THE THREE GORGES... TEARS BEHIND THE RESERVOIR

Li Wang, a woman in her sixties from Hubei province, wept as she left her village—later submerged beneath the Three Gorges Dam:

“This is where I married, where my ancestors are buried, where my children played. How can I carry all that in a suitcase?”

She received a small apartment in the suburbs of a nearby city, but the spirit of her place could not be replaced. She became a stranger—surrounded by neighbors she did not know, in a land that held no memory of her.

The common thread between Narmada, the Urals, and the Yangtze is that “development” was not conceived as a means to serve people, but as an end in itself. The state, the party, or the

corporation sees the land and rivers as empty spaces on a map—drawing straight lines across them, indifferent to the fact that those lines cut through homes, dreams, and bodies.

AND THE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL TOLL

In India, many displaced by dam projects suffered poverty rates 40% higher than the general population, with double the rates of depression.

In the Soviet Union, forced labor in infrastructure projects claimed tens of thousands of lives, while forced relocations turned village communities into faceless masses.

In China, reports indicate that more than 60% of those displaced by the Three Gorges Dam could not integrate into their new communities, remaining in a state of psychological and social alienation.

The East builds its dams and factories at the expense of its people's lives, without pretense. The West raises the slogans of "sustainable development," yet funds these projects or profits from their fruits—leaving others to pay the price. Both take part in sacrificing humanity on the altar of "progress."

Development that uproots people is not progress—it is a new form of enslavement.

Dams and factories may look like triumphs on paper, but within them echo the cries of thousands who lost their homes and dreams.

And the question remains:

**WHAT IS THE VALUE OF A RIVER THAT LIGHTS UP CITIES IF
IT HAS DROWNED THE VILLAGES THAT LIVED UPON ITS
BANKS?**



Development that devours human beings is not development at all.

The Economy of Obedience: Living as Tools, Not People

In a totalitarian state, the citizen is not a human being with desires and dreams, but a productive unit—a cog in a vast machine called “the state.” He is not measured by his dignity, freedom, or well-being, but by his capacity to serve the system’s goals, even if the wheel of so-called development crushes him. In this model, consumption itself becomes a part of loyalty: you do not consume to enjoy life, but to prove that you are an obedient soldier in the army of the economy.



CHINA: DEVELOPMENT WITHOUT WELFARE

China's colossal projects—skyscrapers, factories glowing at night, the fastest railway network in the world—paint a dazzling picture. Yet behind this facade, millions of workers survive on scraps. Wages barely cover food and cramped, metal-box-like housing. No comprehensive healthcare, no real social security—only “service to development.”

A 2020 World Bank study showed that over 600 million Chinese live on less than \$150 per month, in a country considered the world's second-largest economy.

The state focuses on production metrics and GDP, but ignores indicators of life quality: happiness, mental health, or personal freedom.

THE SOVIET UNION: CONSUMPTION BY PLAN, NOT DESIRE

Soviet citizens did not buy what they wanted, but what the state allowed.

Store shelves were filled with similar shoes, yet empty of fruits or simple goods people longed for.

The state prioritized heavy industry over daily needs: tanks before shoes, rockets before groceries.

Long lines at bakeries and supermarkets were a daily scene, with citizens waiting hours for a loaf of bread or a piece of meat.

Even consumption was a form of control: the state gave you what it wanted you to consume, not what you needed.

The individual is crushed between two contradictory images: an official discourse of “great development” and a personal reality of deprivation.

The citizen feels like a mere instrument for displaying state success on paper, while living a muted life devoid of well-being.

This gap produces societies plagued by frustration, a sense of meaninglessness, and the feeling that life is nothing more than service to a system that recognizes humans only as numbers.

IN THE EAST: people are forced to consume in service of the state.
IN THE WEST: people are forced to consume in service of the market.

Here, lines form in front of bakeries; there, lines form outside the latest iPhone store.

In both cases, real freedom is absent: people do not consume to live better, but to serve a system larger than themselves.

In Beijing, a worker returns to a crowded room after a 12-hour shift, opening a cheap phone to see state ads about the “Chinese Dream.”

In old Moscow, a woman waits three hours in line for a slab of butter, while TV broadcasts images of “heavy industry achievements.”

In New York, a young man drowns in credit card debt because he bought things he didn’t need to feel part of the “American Dream.”

In the end, when a human being is reduced to a forced consumer rather than a free being, life becomes a reflection of a single motto:

“YOU EXIST TO SERVE, NOT TO LIVE.”

The Human Vs. The Beyond Human

From the very beginning, we traced the threads of oppression:

From modern slavery, where bodies are drained in the name of labor,

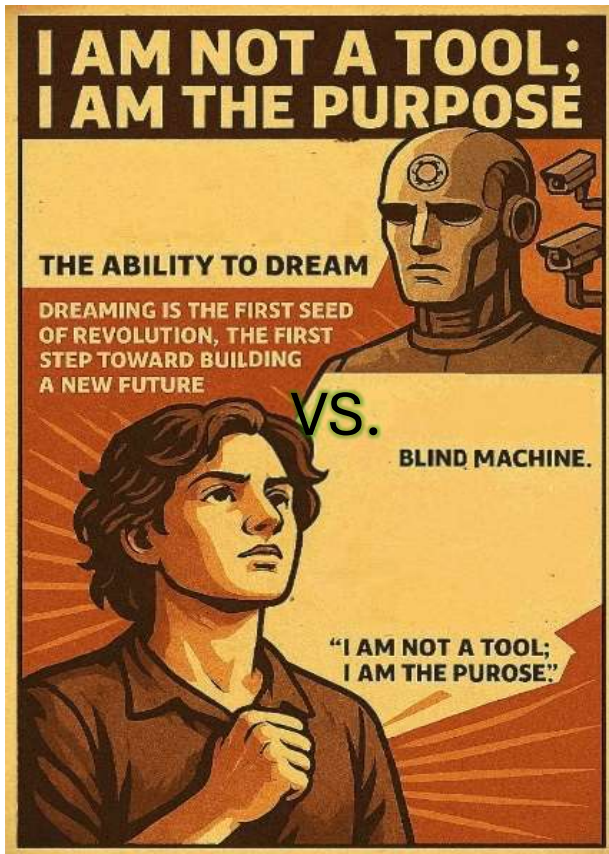
To development at the expense of humans, where dams and factories rise atop destroyed homes,

To the dismantling of family and society in the name of control,

To the manipulation of time and daily life,

To the confiscation of culture and thought,

To reducing citizens to mere consumers of the state,



Up to the armed law that criminalizes humans instead of protecting them,

And finally, to a repressive future where technology becomes a cage and humans are reduced to surveilled numbers.

Every article was a mirror reflecting one aspect of tyranny. But the ultimate question remains: what comes after all this?

THE ABSENT HUMAN... THE PRESENT HUMAN

The totalitarian regime seeks to erase the human: body, family, culture, time, even dreams.

But it forgets that humans are more than the sum of these parts.



There is something that cannot be erased: the ability to say No.

The Soviet Union collapsed when citizens stopped believing in the lie of the “eternal state.”

China, despite the digital wall of censorship, cannot stop the dreams of a young person aspiring to a wider world.

North Korea, despite its open prisons, cannot prevent youths from sharing a song via USB.

When chapters of oppression accumulate—from forced labor, to the crushing of family and society, to the swallowing of law, culture, and time—it may seem as if the end is inevitable: a future without humans.

But history is not written by regimes alone—it is written by people who refuse to be erased. And in the moment the regime believes it owns everything, a spark emerges where it is least expected.

The totalitarian state, past and present, built grand projects and towering cities, yet all collapsed when it ignored the human. The Soviet Union did not fall solely to Western cannons, but from citizens' fatigue, the loss of faith in the law, and the inability of a corrupted culture to give life meaning.

Every system that reduces humans to a number in a file or a tool in a machine writes its own demise—because what distinguishes humans from machines is their capacity to say: No.

DAILY RESISTANCE – INVISIBLE THREADS

- When workers whisper about injustice in factories.
- When a mother tells her children a story of freedom, despite surveillance.
- When an intellectual writes in secrecy, knowing no one will read it today, yet planting seeds for tomorrow.

THESE ARE NOT TRIVIAL DETAILS—THEY ARE SMALL LIGHTS PIERCING THE WALL OF DARKNESS.

- A young person in Beijing opens a secret window via VPN to read what is blocked.
- A student in Pyongyang hides a forbidden song under her pillow, brought by a friend via USB.
- A simple worker in any Arab city whispers to their children at night: *“The world is bigger than the walls of the state.”*

These small acts are not just escapes—they are a quiet declaration that the human has not yet been erased.

THE FUTURE IS NOT WRITTEN

It can be redefined:

- Development is not only dams and bridges, but human dignity and a voice that is heard.
- Law is not the whip of the state, but a social contract protecting the weak from the strong.
- Technology is not a tool of surveillance, but a tool of liberation, opening new horizons of consciousness.

Systems that preach the “Beyond Human” forget that humans are not replaceable machines, nor bodies to be exploited endlessly. Humans carry a secret that cannot be measured by productivity or obedience: the ability to dream.

Dreaming is the first seed of revolution, the first step toward building a new future.

In the end, it is not the state that decides the fate of the future, but the humans who refuse to be mere fuel in a blind machine.

HISTORY IS ALWAYS WRITTEN BY THOSE WHO HOLD ONTO THEIR HUMANITY, EVEN IN TIMES WHEN HUMANS SEEM OBSOLETE.

And perhaps the greatest possible resistance is not only against prisons, cameras, or laws—but in a simple phrase whispered in every heart:

“I AM NOT A TOOL; I AM THE PURPOSE.”

This series was never just about the East or the West—it was about humans facing all forms of alienation and oppression.

- In the West, citizens are drained in the name of the market and consumption.
- In the East, they are crushed in the name of state and security.

- Yet the common thread remains: humans are pushed to the margins.

If the state dreams of a “Beyond Human” world, the greatest resistance is for each individual to cling to their humanity: To say simply, in the face of every machine, every fake law, every massive project built on the ruins of humans:

“YES, I AM NOT A TOOL. I AM THE
PURPOSE.”



Third Tragedy

"The Lost New Republic"

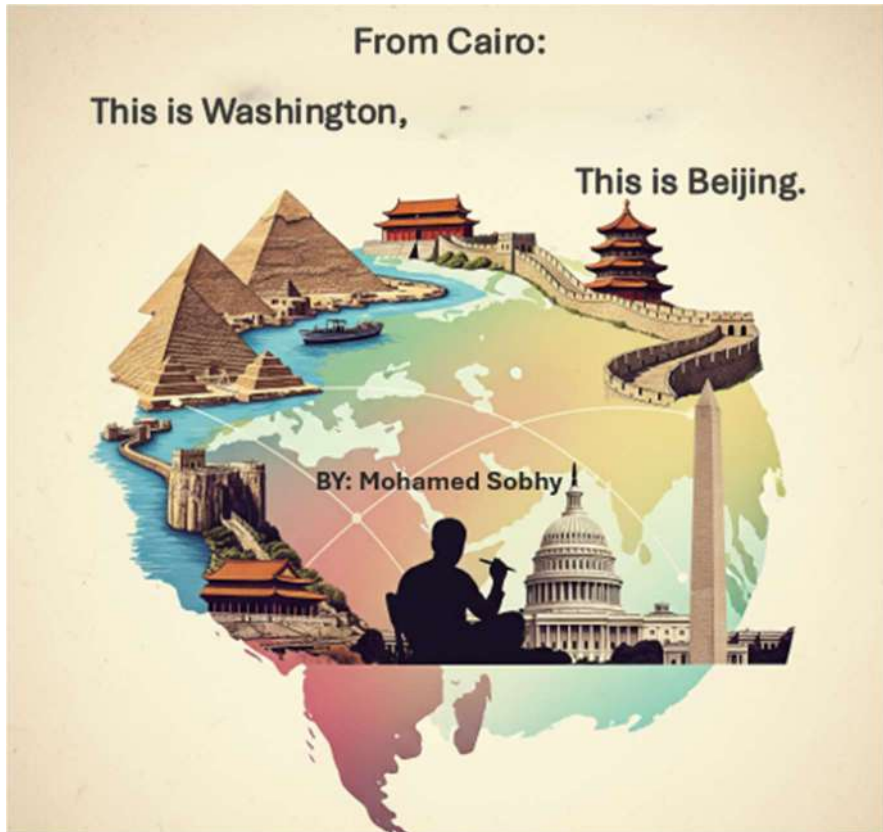
A series of critical articles, some of them satirical, that expose our fragmentation between the ideas of the East and the West. It reveals how the worst parts of each model were imported, leaving our peoples lost amidst these ill-conceived experiments.

The goal of this series is to affirm and remind readers that we are the inheritors of great civilizations, and that true progress is possible if we govern with awareness, keeping distance from both ignorance and external domination. It reminds us that we can simply proceed with feasibility studies, not the delusions of divine inspiration.



From Cairo... This is Beijing , From Cairo... This is Washington

Egypt Caught in the Fire of Values and Political Models



In a world heading toward open conflict between major powers, with multiple poles declaring the end of the era of a unipolar world. Cairo is no longer merely the capital of a regional state. It has become an arena where the influence of Washington and Beijing

intersects, and where the Western liberal state model clashes with the Eastern authoritarian model.

Between the desire for development, the longing for stability, and the fear of freedom, Egypt stands at a crossroads: Where is it headed? Who inspires its political and cultural decisions? Who wins the hearts of the state and the minds of the citizens?

"HERE IS BEIJING": THE DREAM OF DEVELOPMENT WITHOUT FREEDOM

China presents itself as a great success story: a disciplined, developmental state; constantly on the rise. This model resonates in Cairo through:

Official rhetoric that glorifies achievement at the expense of rights.

Media admiration for infrastructure and high-speed trains.

Justifying authoritarianism as a necessity for economic recovery.

With growing aversion to Western pressure—in the eyes of some elites, particularly those openly on the right of power or those playing the role of the tame opposition—China appears to be a "non-interference" partner, one that doesn't question freedoms but provides loans and technology.

"HERE'S WASHINGTON": THE WEST, IN RETREAT BUT ALWAYS PRESENT DESPITE ITS DOUBLE STANDARDS

Despite everything, the West remains a powerful presence:

The United States and the European Union remain major economic and military partners.

The international institutions that pump money into the Egyptian economy are mostly Western-oriented.

Western ideas, from freedom of expression to democracy, still find a following, especially among youth and civil society.

However, many feel let down by the West, either because of its double standards or because it supports undemocratic regimes, which opens the door to new competitors like Beijing and Moscow.

HERE'S CAIRO: PLAYING BOTH WAYS... OR FALLING BETWEEN THE TWO?

Egyptian politics has been practicing a balancing act for years: Getting closer to China and Russia without severing ties with Washington.

Taking advantage of the competition between major powers to gain investment or international legitimacy.

Using the rhetoric of "cultural specificity" to evade international human rights obligations.

But this balance carries its risks:

Cairo could become a sphere of influence rather than an independent actor.

Or international contradictions could be reflected internally in Egypt, deepening cultural and social divisions.

And the Egyptian citizen remains caught between conflicting values.

The conflict between Beijing and Washington is not merely a geopolitical one; it is a struggle over the meaning of public life:

IS FREEDOM A THREAT OR A RIGHT?

Does success mean obedience or participation?

Is the state above the individual, or vice versa?

Egyptians face these questions daily: in education, in the media, and in their relationship with the state and society. The hidden conflict between models reshapes their consciousness and thinking, without them even realizing it.

FROM CAIRO... WHICH MODEL DO WE BELONG TO?

From Cairo, we hear echoes of Beijing and Washington clashing in rhetoric, decision-making, and culture. But the real choice has yet to be made. Will Egypt choose a path that achieves development with dignity? Security with freedom? Or will it be content with imitating one or the other?

The answer does not come from Beijing or Washington, but from within:

FROM THE ABILITY TO BUILD A TRUE EGYPTIAN MODEL THAT BALANCES IDENTITY AND OPENNESS, AND BETWEEN THE STATE AND THE INDIVIDUAL.

Human rights are not the exclusive domain of the West, nor is development; the domain of the East. Egypt was not born yesterday or the day before yesterday. Cairo, the capital of a nation with a history spanning thousands of years, can create a model that combines freedom and development if it wants to be a beacon of guidance for Beijing and Washington, whether they want it or just let it.

Democracy on the Chinese Way

How Are Authoritarian Models Marketed in Egyptian Discourse?



In recent years, a new tone has begun to creep into official and media discourse in Egypt: that Western democracy "does not suit us," and that there are "alternative models" more compatible with our cultural and developmental specificities. At the forefront of these models is the "Chinese model," promoted as a disciplined or "participatory democracy" that works for development and stability.

But behind this promotion lies a fundamental question: Is what is being marketed as an "alternative model" truly a democracy? Or is

it merely an attempt to justify authoritarianism with an intellectual template imported from the East?

THE EGYPTIAN STATE DOES NOT OFFICIALLY FULLY ADOPT THE CHINESE MODEL, BUT IT POINTS TO IT AS AN EXAMPLE OF:

Development without political turmoil

Long-term rule by a "strong and rational" leadership

Reducing the role of the opposition to protect "stability."

This is evident in:

Official speeches about "democracy that suits our specificities"

Opinion articles discussing the "failure of the Western model"

The media focus is on China's achievements, without mentioning repression or the lack of pluralism.

The media discourse shifts from "privacy" to "developmental democracy," with increasing use of terms such as:

We need a developmental democracy, not anarchy

The West imposes its standards on us, while it itself is failing

The people want development, not ballot boxes



This discourse recycles Chinese and Russian arguments, but it is presented in local language that justifies existing repression, not as a call to adopt a new, effective model.

One of the most important examples of the similarity of Egyptian and Eastern discourse is

First, regarding the priority of "stability" over "freedom."
Chinese President Xi Jinping's statement:

*"Development cannot be achieved without stability.
If the country is plunged into chaos, how can we talk
about human rights?"*

In Egypt, a discourse is repeated that links the 2011 revolutions to chaos and blames excessive freedoms for the collapse. Example:
Statement by Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi (October 2021):

*"We want freedom? Well, the revolution brought
freedom. Look what happened to us... The country
was almost lost."*

Second, statements related to the focus on economic development as an alternative legitimacy.

Statement by the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

*"Human rights begin with the right to life and
development. Democracy is not a one-size-fits-all
solution."*

Egypt: National projects and infrastructure are presented as evidence of the regime's success and an alternative to demands for political rights.

Statement by Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi (2020):

*"Human rights are not just freedom of expression...
Human rights mean health, education, work, and
decent housing. He continued, "I don't know how to*

teach, I don't know how to treat, and they talk to me about human rights."

Also, identical statements related to hostility to so-called "foreign interference."

Statement by President Xi Jinping (2021):

"We will not allow any foreign power to theorize about democracy and human rights."

President Sisi's statement (2022):

"We will not allow anyone to interfere in our affairs... We are a sovereign state and we know what is in our country's best interest."

In addition to identical statements demonizing civil society organizations and linking them to chaos

Statement by a Chinese official (2020):

"Foreign-funded organizations may be used as a tool for destabilization."

President Sisi's statement (2018):

"Not everyone who works in civil society is a patriot... There are some who work against their country in the name of rights."

Finally, Egyptian media and political discourse converge with discourses that can be described as (Eastern or Eastern Bloc discourses, led by China and Russia) in the use of terms such as "disciplined democracy" or "cultural specificity."

Official statement by the Chinese Foreign Ministry (2022):

"Democracy is not the property of the West... We have our own democracy that suits our culture."

President Sisi's statement (2016):

"We can't take Europe's experiences and apply them here... We have our own circumstances and history."

THE QUESTION NOW IS, IS THE CHINESE MODEL TRULY DEMOCRATIC?

From a Western and liberal perspective, the Chinese model is not considered a democracy at all:

- There are no real elections.
- A single party dominates the state and society.
- There is no freedom of expression or independent press.
- Censorship and spying are part of daily life.

However, the Chinese Communist Party markets its model as a "disciplined democracy" based on non-electoral representation and "participation through formal organizations."

This concept resonates with authoritarian states seeking to improve their image before their people and the world.

Why is this model being promoted in Egypt now?

It is a model that can be exploited

as a justification for a security clampdown: confronting crises requires "firmness," and democracy is portrayed as a burden.

As a competitor to the West: In light of Egypt's confrontation with Western criticism, the **CHINESE MODEL APPEARS A "COMFORTABLE"**

ALTERNATIVE.

As a verbal trick:

flirting with the word "democracy" to empty it of its true meaning.

This is dangerous in emptying democracy of its meaning.

When "democracy" becomes merely development without rights, or participation without pluralism, we are not establishing an alternative system, but rather legitimizing tyranny, while cloaking it in modern language.

If citizens lose confidence that democracy means rights and participation, this leads to the normalization of oppression as a permanent fate.

I see no alternative but a genuine local democracy, not a fake one.

What Egypt needs is neither a Western clone nor an imitation of China, but rather:

A democratic model that takes into account local realities without abandoning fundamental rights.

A genuine political participation that guarantees accountability and opens the door to criticism and pluralism.

A DEVELOPMENT BASED ON TRANSPARENCY, NOT ENFORCED SILENCE.

In concluding my remarks today, I believe it is necessary to emphasize that "Chinese-style democracy" may seem attractive to some authoritarian elites, but it is not a real solution for peoples seeking dignity and justice. What is required is a redefinition of democracy from within the Egyptian experience, not a replacement of local oppression with authoritarian rhetoric imported from the East. Development is not a substitute for rights, as there can be no true development without guaranteeing human rights.



Human. Development that comes at the expense of dignity and freedoms is nothing but empty cement and steel projects, upon which a strong state cannot be built.

No trade-off: Security cannot replace freedom, nor can bread replace dignity.

The moral and political reductionism that says "either security or freedom," or "either development or democracy," is a manipulation of consciousness unbecoming of a self-respecting state.

The path to a just future does not pass through importing authoritarian versions from abroad, but rather through formulating a true Egyptian model that respects rights and freedoms and believes that citizens are partners, not subordinates. Human rights are not an elitist luxury, but rather a necessary condition for building a just and stable state.

Slippers and Toilets

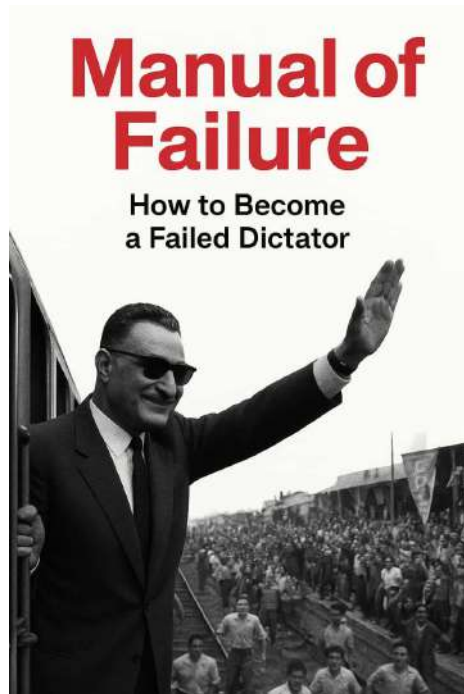
Your Guide to Becoming a Failed Dictator... An Eastern Epic of Repression

Dear citizen, dear poor man,

“If you dream of being a dictator remembered by history... but alas, your luck—or perhaps our luck—will land you on the list of failures.”

Do you want to learn the art of tyranny without ever reaping its fruits?

Here’s a tested recipe: a dose of Nasser, a sprinkle of the Communist Party, and voilà... a poor man’s dictatorship.



PEN AND PAPER, MY FRIEND, AND WRITE THIS DOWN:

In the 1960s, Gamal Abdel Nasser launched what he called the *“Battle Against Bare Feet.”* A state that promised social justice found the ultimate cure to poverty: distributing plastic slippers to millions of Egyptians.

Decades later, the Chinese Communist Party declared a *“Toilet Revolution.”* A nation on the verge of conquering space suddenly discovered that millions of peasants were still relieving themselves in muddy pits.

Slippers and toilets are not just details. They are headlines



summarizing an entire philosophy of governance: superficial cosmetics for a deep tragedy. Instead of addressing the root illness, it's the politics of sweeping dirt under the rug.

Nasser and his fellow Free Officers on one side, Xi Jinping and his predecessors on the other, share much in common.

For example:

FIRST, THEIR POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

China clung to strict communism, then fused it with economic reforms that created a growth miracle.

Egypt raised the banner of “Arab Socialism,” and gave birth to a hybrid: neither capitalist nor socialist, just a malformed creature.

THEN CAME THE POPULIST RHETORIC

China promised the “Chinese Dream.”

Egypt’s revolution sang of “national dignity” and “The Voice of the Arabs.”

Both models played their symphonies on collective emotions, trampling individual rights in the process.

AND OF COURSE, POLITICAL REPRESSION—THE NATIONAL SPORT OF ALL

CHINA: **one party, uniting all factions and ethnicities, deciding everything.**

EGYPT: **dissolving parties, creating one Socialist Union. Any dissent—even over the tiniest detail—was rewarded with a prison cell.**

THE EASTERN MAGIC FORMULA FOR DICTATORSHIPS, AND FOR “NON-ALIGNED” STATES TOO, COULD BE PRINTED ON A GIANT BILLBOARD OVER ANY CAPITAL CITY:

“Development in exchange for Human Rights.”

China sacrificed freedom, but built real development.

Egypt sacrificed freedom, and lost development too.

AS FOR POLITICAL ISOLATION—IT’S THE HOBBY OF EASTERN REGIMES.

China invented a “United Front” of parties for decoration, where “partnership” meant following orders.

Egypt’s Nasser invented the “*Arab Socialist Union*.” Same play, same stage: a single party clapping for itself.

And of course, the excuses to feed your people: the eternal bogeyman of the “external threat,” pulled out of the cupboard only on holidays and national days, waved around, then safely put back until the next performance.

China: *“Imperialism and Taiwan.”*

Egypt: *“Colonialism and Israel.”*

In both cases, repression at home was justified by the enemy abroad.

AND AFTER ALL THE SIMILARITIES—BAREFOOT PEASANTS, THE UNEMPLOYED, THE HUNGRY—THE OUTCOMES SPLIT:

China, despite its dictatorship, became a global power.

Egypt, with the same dictatorship, drowned in economic and social failure.

Had I been born just ten years earlier, I'd have gone up to Moqattam to visit our uncle, Ahmed Fouad Negm, and asked him to edit his poem *“THE PRESIDENT’S BIRTHDAY.”* He compared Egypt and Japan after '52—Japan destroyed, we ahead. Twenty years later, Japan in the sky, us in the dirt.

If Negm were alive today, he would have swapped “Japan” for “China.” He would have said:

“Remember the Chinese? Dictators just like you... look where they are, and look where we are.”

In the end, I can only conclude this:

The Chinese built their miracle over the corpse of freedom.

We built nothing but graveyards.

The tragedy is that Egypt borrowed China's repression but not its progress. We learned from the East the worst it had to offer: tyranny without reward.

China built factories and skyscrapers on the backs of its oppressed.

We built prisons and walls on our bare backs.

At least they ended up with clean toilets.

WE'RE STILL LOOKING FOR OUR MISSING SLIPPER, UNDER THE ENDLESS PARADE OF “FREE” LEADERS FROM THE SO-CALLED FREE OFFICERS.

Between China and Europe: How Does Egypt Balance Political Models in the Fundamental Rights File?

In a world where political models clash between liberal democracy and developmental authoritarianism, Egypt finds itself in a complex position, attempting to balance the European model based on individual rights with the Chinese model founded on stability and development. How does this balancing act affect the human rights file within Egypt? Has Egypt become closer to adopting a "pragmatic" East Asian vision, or does it still adhere to Western standards under political and economic pressure?



FIRST: EUROPE... THE HISTORICAL PARTNER AND RIGHTS PRESSURE POINT

The European Union is Egypt's largest trade partner and provides significant developmental and financial assistance.

Europe represents a constant source of pressure in files concerning:

- Freedom of expression.
- Fair trials.
- Prison conditions.
- Suppression of the opposition and civil society.

However, this pressure has become less severe in recent years due to:

- Europe's fears of illegal immigration.
- Egypt's role in border control and counter-terrorism.
- Increasing European reliance on Egyptian gas following the Ukraine crisis.

The Result: Flexibility in European stances, without human rights criticisms disappearing entirely.

SECOND: CHINA... THE RISING ALLY AND POLITICALLY "SAFE ALTERNATIVE"

China represents a development model offered without political preconditions.

It promotes the idea of "cultural specificity" and "rejecting Western hegemony."

It has encouraged Egypt to adopt the rhetoric that prioritizes:

- "Stability before freedoms."
- "Economic and developmental rights are more important than political ones."
- "Refusing interference in internal affairs."

The Chinese influence is evident in:

- The language of the official Egyptian discourse.
- The expansion of partnerships in major projects without human rights conditions.

- The justification of restrictions under the banner of "national sovereignty."

The Result: A gradual adoption of the "control in exchange for development" model, as promoted by China.

THE CURRENT QUESTION: HOW DOES EGYPT BALANCE THE TWO MODELS?

Egypt does not clearly adopt a single model; rather, it uses a pragmatic, selective approach:

- Human Rights: Pressure is accepted conditionally—if tied to aid—but without political preconditions. Criticism is accepted at times and ignored at others.
- Economic Partnerships: They generally lean toward China for rapid expansion and an official discourse unconstrained by freedoms.
- Official Rhetoric: It focuses on sovereignty and development, meaning the Egyptian system adopts a discourse closer to the Chinese model.
- Civil Society Engagement: Conditional support or outright disregard, often characterized by domestic tightening combined with external token representation.

THE DRIVERS OF THE BALANCING ACT

There are internal and external reasons pushing Egypt to balance between the Western and Eastern models:

- Internally: The political regime seeks to avoid pressure and protests and sees the Chinese model as an example to emulate.
- Externally: European support, both financial and political, cannot be dispensed with.
- Regionally: Competition with powers like Turkey and Iran requires a diversification of allies and positions.
- Strategically: Maintaining international legitimacy without making genuine internal concessions.

Ultimately, Egypt plays a complex role in an arena contested by major political models. Between the Western rights discourse and the Chinese development model, the Egyptian state leans toward an eclectic mix that serves its political survival and minimizes pressure without fundamental changes.

The biggest challenge remains: Can this balancing act continue without the Egyptian citizen paying a heavy price in terms of their freedom and dignity?



China's Participatory Democracy: When Participation Becomes a Tool of Control

In recent years, China has put forward an alternative model to liberal democracy, known as "*Participatory Democracy with Chinese Characteristics*," presenting it as a more stable and suitable formula for the Global South. This model, which is anchored by the leadership of the Communist Party and replaces pluralistic elections with internal consultation mechanisms, might seem like a practical alternative at first glance. However, upon closer scrutiny, a set of structural flaws emerges that undermine the model from within, revealing a failure to achieve the core essence of democracy: empowering the people and holding authority accountable.



THE ABSENCE OF GENUINE POLITICAL PLURALISM

One of the most prominent defects of China's participatory democracy is the exclusion of multi-partyism. The Chinese Communist Party holds a monopoly on power, and there is no real space for the circulation of authority or the emergence of opposition forces. The "multiple opinions" presented within the system are, in reality, a diversity of views *within the party itself*, not an expression of genuine political competition. This effectively drains participation of its true meaning, as it takes place within a predetermined, closed framework.

PARTICIPATION IS FORMAL, NOT ACTUAL

Despite the talk of "popular consultation" and "surveys," most participation mechanisms in China do not lead to actual change in public policies. Citizens are consulted, but the final decision rests with the party elite. Institutions such as the "Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference" lack genuine legislative powers; they are closer to platforms for endorsing and legitimizing the regime.

LACK OF TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Participatory democracy in China suffers from a deficit of independent oversight tools, where:

- There is no free press capable of exposing or investigating corruption.
- The judiciary is not independent and is subject to party directives.
- Independent organizations or individuals are not permitted to criticize state policies outside official channels.

The result: participation without oversight, and consultation without accountability, which contradicts one of democracy's most fundamental pillars.

EXCLUSION OF GROUPS INCONSISTENT WITH THE PARTY'S NARRATIVE

Participation in China is conditioned on "political loyalty" or, at the very least, "silence." Activists, intellectuals, ethnic minorities (such



as Uighurs and Tibetans), and any dissenting voice are excluded from the public sphere. There are no guarantees for freedom of opinion or assembly, which turns "democracy" into a tool for reproducing submission, not participation.

THE DELIBERATE CONFUSION BETWEEN STATE AND PARTY

In the Chinese experience, the ruling party *is* the state, and the state *is* the party. This fusion means that any critique of state policies is effectively considered an attack on the "legitimacy of the party," and is therefore met with suppression. This contradicts the basic concept of democracy, where authority must be subject to criticism and change.

CONCLUSION

While China promotes the "participatory democracy" model as an alternative to the Western model, it is clear that this model lacks the most basic standards of essential democracy: freedom of expression, pluralism, transparency, and accountability. Although it might achieve relative stability in the short term, the absence of genuine political openness leaves this model fragile and vulnerable to internal implosion should the balance between repression and development fail.

Democracy doesn't just mean "listening" to the people; it means, first and foremost, that the people are capable of choosing, changing, and criticizing without fear. And this is what the Chinese model fails to provide, no matter how shiny it appears on the surface.

Human Rights: Between "Cultural Specificity" and the Universal Model

Egypt in the Mirror of East-West Conflicts

In the Egyptian political discourse, it's often asserted that "*Western human rights concepts don't suit our culture*," and that we need a "model of our own" that stems from "*cultural specificity*." In the background, the global cultural and political struggle deepens between the liberal West and the Eastern bloc, led by China and Russia, which promotes authoritarian models that reject international human rights standards.



But what exactly does "*cultural specificity*" mean in the Egyptian context? And does it represent a genuine rejection of Western hegemony, or a means to justify retreating from universal human commitments?

The discourse of "specificity" emerged as a response to Western pressure regarding freedoms and human rights, especially after the Egyptian Revolution and the subsequent political setbacks.

THE DISCOURSE RELIES ON SEVERAL PILLARS:

- Religious Identity: Islamic and Christian values differ from Western values (especially on issues of gender and family).
- Civilizational Specificity: Egypt has a history and culture that cannot be measured by the standards of others.
- National Sovereignty: No external party has the right to impose its vision on a society with its own unique circumstances.

However, these pillars are often used politically, not culturally, to justify authoritarian exceptionalism.

BETWEEN BEIJING AND WASHINGTON: A WAR OF VALUES REFLECTED IN CAIRO

With the increasing Chinese and Russian influence, some nations—including Egypt—are adopting views closer to the East on the human rights file, where:

- Development is prioritized first, and freedoms are later (or never).
- Concepts like freedom of expression and pluralism are rejected as being "used to dismantle the state."
- "Rights" are redefined as privileges granted by the state, not inherent entitlements.

IN CONTRAST, THE WESTERN SYSTEM CALLS FOR:

- The centrality of civil and political rights.
- International oversight of violations.
- Linking economic aid to countries' human rights records.

Thus, human rights transform from a humanitarian issue into a card in a geopolitical conflict.

THE QUESTION NOW: DOES SPECIFICITY MEAN REJECTING INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS?

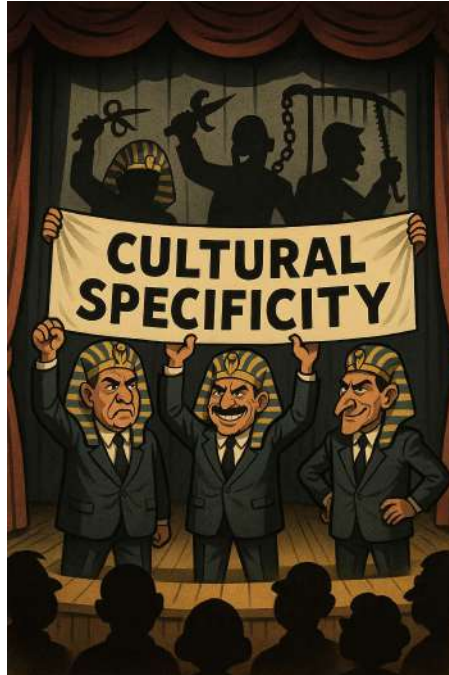
It's important to distinguish between:

- Genuine Cultural Specificity: Adapting rights to the local context without emptying them of their substance (e.g., how to apply freedom of expression in a traditional society).
- False Specificity: Using culture as a pretext for suppression, prohibition, and concealment.

When "specificity" is used to prevent journalism, justify torture, or close the public sphere, it's not specificity... it's evasion of accountability.

ANOTHER QUESTION: THE EGYPTIAN CITIZEN IN THE MIDDLE: VICTIM OR AGENT?

Victims** when deprived of their rights under the pretext that **"they don't suit them."



Agents when they realize that their rights are not imported from the West, but stem from their human dignity.

Popular awareness that rights are not a Western luxury, but a necessity for a safe and dignified life, is what foils attempts to "localize despotism."

IN THE END: SPECIFICITY DOES NOT CANCEL UNIVERSALITY

Rights are not a Western invention, but a shared human evolution. Any society can adapt them to its culture without conceding them. What Egypt needs is neither blind importation nor absolute rejection, but intelligent localization of rights that puts the human being at the center, not the state.

Does the Chinese Model Succeed in Egypt?

A Reading of the Popular Acceptance of the Developmental Authoritarian Model



With the global decline of the Western democratic model and the rise of anti-Western rhetoric within Egypt, questions have begun to emerge about the feasibility and suitability of the "Chinese Model"—that is, authoritarian rule accompanied by economic and developmental progress—as an alternative model that may be more acceptable to segments of the Egyptian population. Can this model actually succeed in Egypt? Will the average Egyptian citizen accept it? And what are the fundamental differences between the Chinese and Egyptian contexts?

Let's begin with the "Chinese Model": it's a governance system with a central authoritarian nature, under the control of a single party, that does not permit genuine political pluralism. However, it achieves high rates of economic growth, infrastructure development, and an improvement in some public services. This model is promoted as an "effective" alternative to Western liberal democracy, especially in the Global South.

THE QUESTION: WHY IS THIS MODEL BEING PROPOSED IN EGYPT?

- Official Egyptian Discourse Tends to Glorify the Chinese Model: Egyptian media focuses on China's economic success and its ability to impose stability, without mentioning the restrictions on public freedoms or the tight censorship over society.
- Popular Frustration with the Failure of Democracy Post-2011: Many believe the post-revolution experience led to chaos, and that "stability" has become a priority, even at the expense of freedoms.
- Admiration for Development and Infrastructure: What impresses some citizens are the images of "smart cities," "high-speed trains," and "Chinese technology," leading them to link authoritarianism with success.

BUT DOES THE POPULAR BASE IN EGYPT TRULY ACCEPT THIS MODEL?

- Many Egyptians might accept an authoritarian model, but this acceptance is conditional: it must bring about a real improvement in their standard of living, health, education, and job opportunities. If this is not achieved, authoritarian rule is viewed as a burden, not a savior.

- Silent Resistance Among Youth: Despite the admiration for some aspects of Chinese discipline, the youth segment tends to favor freedom and expression more, especially those who follow Korean or Japanese culture. They prefer systems that allow for individual choices not available in authoritarian models.
- Increasing Egyptian realization that the Chinese model succeeded for reasons related to Chinese culture, history, and human resources, and not solely because of repression. This makes replicating the experience as a "carbon copy" unrealistic.

DO WE WANT A CHINESE COPY? OR AN EGYPTIAN MODEL?

Perhaps the more important question is not, "Do we want to become like China?" but rather: How do we build an Egyptian



model that guarantees stability and development, without crushing freedoms and human dignity? Egyptian society is inherently diverse, vibrant, and innovative, and cannot be reduced to a closed authoritarian model.

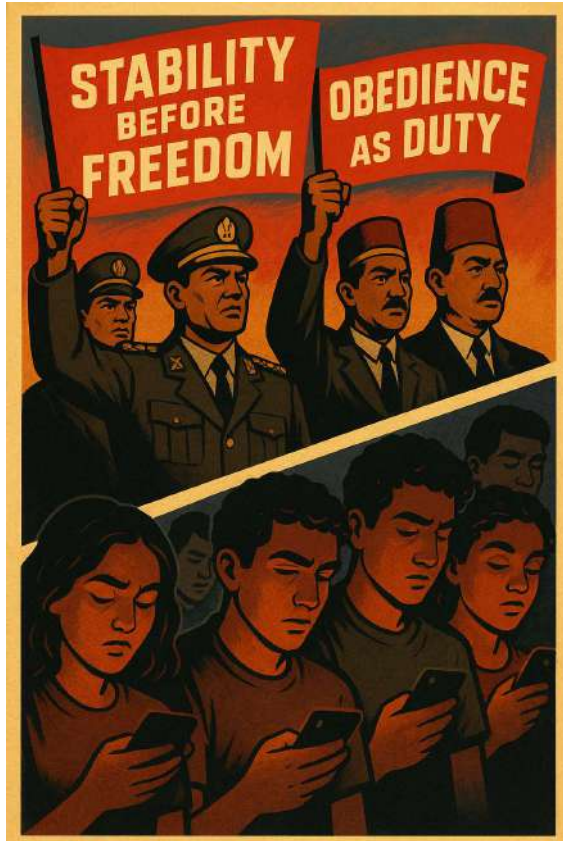
The Chinese model is tempting in appearance, but it cannot be transferred as is to Egypt. We can learn from it, yes, especially concerning discipline and production, but without abandoning our aspirations for freedom, justice, and participation. Success does not come from imitating others, but from creating a local model that springs from the needs of the people and safeguards their dignity.



Conflict of Values Between the New Generation and the State

Where Does Egyptian Youth Derive Its Cultural Reference?

In a rapidly changing world, Egyptian youth finds itself in direct confrontation with a value system that the state attempts to impose as "national constants," while the youth is immersed in an open digital space where diverse global ideas and values flow. This clash is not overtly violent, but it is deep and cumulative, expressing itself in language, dress, ways of thinking, and even the new generation's view of concepts like freedom, authority, religion, and identity.



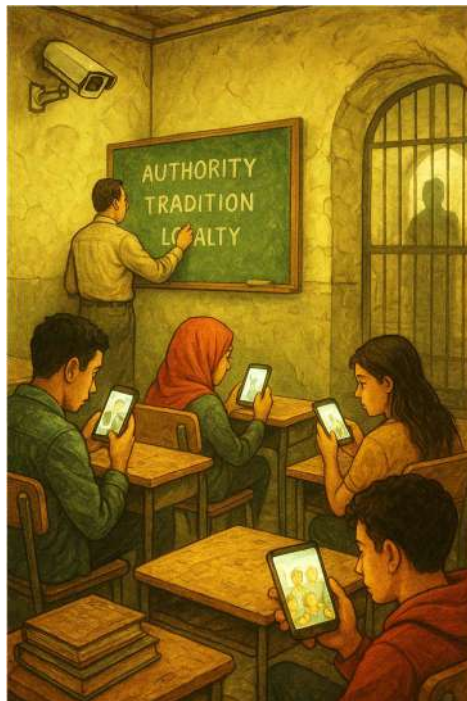
THE NEW GENERATION HAS BROKEN TRADITIONAL CULTURAL BARRIERS

It is no longer possible to speak of Egyptian youth as being confined within the borders of the nation-state. Through the internet, specifically platforms like TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram, young Egyptians are exposed to lifestyles and ideas from the West (such as individualism, minority rights, freedom of expression), and sometimes from the East (such as the culture of work and discipline in the Asian model).

A significant gap has emerged between what is taught in schools and official media, and what the young person actually receives in the digital sphere.

THE STATE'S EFFORT TO MAINTAIN CULTURAL CONTROL

The Egyptian state is striving to control cultural awareness and constantly seeks to maintain a conservative cultural model that blends religious and national values, emphasizing obedience, stability, and development before freedom. This model is partly



influenced by an Eastern vision inspired by China or Russia, where Western freedom is viewed as a cause of chaos and collapse. However, the problem is that this model no longer resonates strongly with the youth, especially with the absence of real dialogue and the closure of the political horizon.

SELECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS: SEEKING A UNIQUE MODEL

Interestingly, Egyptian youth does not fully adopt either Western or Eastern values; instead, they select what suits them. From the West, many admire the idea of individual freedom and self-expression, but they sometimes reject what they consider to be "the dismantling of the family" or "moral dissolution." From the East, they show interest in development success and discipline (as in the Korean or Chinese models), but they reject tyranny and silencing.

Here we see a selective consciousness that does not follow a specific ideology but searches for a model that guarantees dignity, freedom, and success together.

However, the reality is that young Egyptians are fighting a real war taking place in a silent arena of conflict

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS: A SYMBOLIC BATTLEGROUND

Educational institutions are no longer the primary source for shaping awareness, but they remain a symbolic battleground. Many young people see the curricula taught as "old and fossilized," incompatible with the world they live in on their phones. Some consider school a place for censorship more than learning, while the university often turns into an arena for repression instead of a platform for freedom.

THE WIDENING GAP

The gap between the youth generation and the state is widening, especially with the absence of serious discussion about the country's future and identity. The state's continuation of imposing a single cultural model may lead to further disconnection between the authorities and the people, while involving the youth in shaping the future of culture could open the door to a unique Egyptian model that combines global openness and local roots.

The clash between the state and the youth is not just a political



struggle; it is a struggle over cultural reference. Should we live according to what the authority dictates? Or according to what we discover for ourselves in the world? The answer is yet to be determined, but it will be decisive for Egypt's political and social future.

Confronting the Eastern Bloc's Discourse on Human Rights

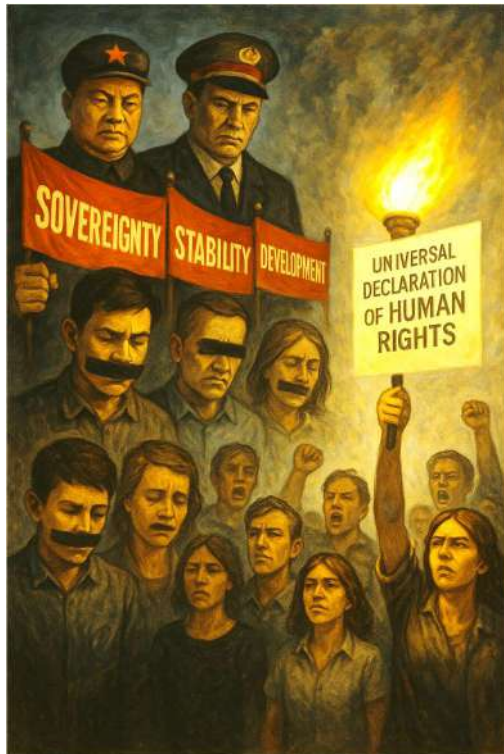
In recent decades, a new discourse has emerged from the nations known as the "Eastern Bloc"—primarily China and Russia—which redefines the concepts of human rights from an angle focused on sovereignty, development, and stability, often at the expense of individual and political freedoms.

This narrative, presented as an alternative to the Western liberal model, represents a profound challenge to the idea of the universality of human rights as enshrined after World War II in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



FEATURES OF THE EASTERN BLOC DISCOURSE

- **State Sovereignty Above Individual Rights:** These nations argue that human rights must not exceed state sovereignty but must instead be exercised within conditions imposed by the national context.
- **Priority for Economic Development:** Development and prosperity are presented as the measure of a state's success in "protecting human rights," downplaying the importance of civil and political rights.
- **Critique of Western Double Standards:** The Eastern Bloc exploits Western violations—such as military interventions

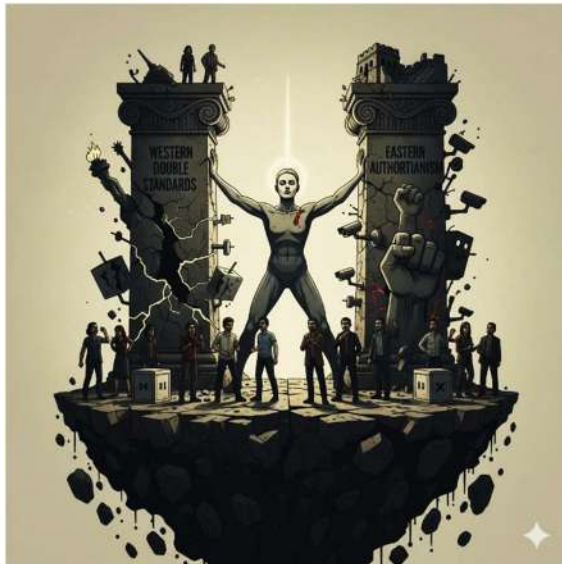


or support for authoritarian regimes—to justify its rejection of international human rights pressure.

THE DANGERS OF THIS DISCOURSE

Distorting the Universal Concept of Human Rights: This discourse serves to empty human rights of their core essence based on individual dignity and freedoms.

- **Justifying Authoritarianism and the Suppression of Freedoms:** This model is used to rationalize censorship, the imprisonment of dissenters, and the closure of the public sphere.
- **Creating Ambiguity Among Citizens:** Where citizens feel that talk of freedoms is an external tool for destabilization rather than an inherent right.



WHY MUST WE UPHOLD GENUINE HUMAN RIGHTS VALUES?

It is imperative to ask: Why do we need to reinforce genuine human rights values?

- To restore confidence in the value and dignity of the human being as an end in itself.
- To empower the citizen with participation and accountability, as this is the cornerstone for any sustainable reform or development.
- To immunize societies against political exploitation, whether by authoritarian regimes or international powers.

THE PATH FORWARD: WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

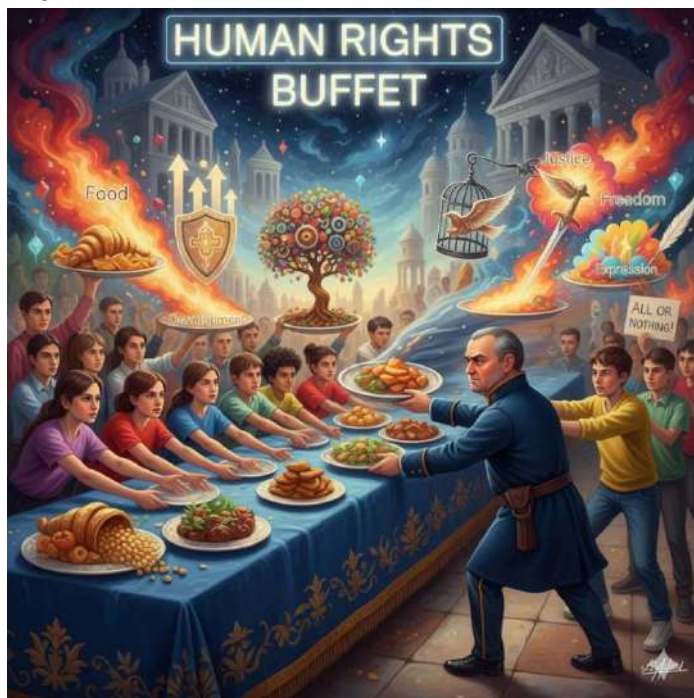
The question now is: What is the solution? Should we allow the true concept of human rights to be trampled in the conflict between the West's double standards and the East's authoritarianism? What is to be done?

- An Alternative Human Rights Discourse That Speaks the Citizen's Language: Concepts of freedom and democracy must not remain confined to elites but must be simplified and connected to people's daily realities.
- Exposing the Contradictions in the Eastern Model: Through on-the-ground documentation and media openness to the experiences of victims.
- Connecting Rights to Daily Life: Such as demonstrating how freedom of expression means the right to object to corruption that steals public resources.
- Supporting Local and Independent Human Rights Initiatives: To serve as alternative voices within communities.

In conclusion, I can only say that in a world witnessing a rise in the discourse of power at the expense of dignity, the defense of human rights is no longer merely a legal or political responsibility—it has become a moral and intellectual necessity. Confronting the Eastern Bloc's narrative requires more than theoretical rejection; it demands cultural, social, and media work that restores consideration for the human being as the end, not the means.

Human Rights: An Indivisible Unit and a Path That Cannot Be Compromised

In the midst of escalating official rhetoric in Egypt calling for "comprehensive development" that bypasses – or postpones – rights and freedoms, the danger of fragmented concepts of human rights is growing. These concepts offer us security at the expense of dignity, food at the expense of freedom, and infrastructure as a substitute for justice. This approach is not new, but currently, it is taking shape within a broader vision that seeks to "legitimize" the Chinese model or what is sometimes known as the "Eastern model," considering it the optimal solution for our societies, while disregarding Egyptian specificity and the political and social history of this country.



RIGHTS ARE INTERCONNECTED, NOT A MENU

Human rights are not an à la carte menu where some items can be picked and the rest ignored. The right to life is incomplete without the right to food, and the right to food cannot stand firm in the absence of the right to freedom of expression and political organization. How can a person feel secure when they cannot express their opinion or criticize mismanagement? How can a citizen be asked to endure poverty and corruption without even being granted the right to protest against them? Rights are interlinked and intertwined: there is no security without justice, and no development without freedom.

THE CHINESE EXPERIMENT IS NOT SACRED DESTINY

Recently, some ruling and media circles in Egypt have been promoting the idea that the Chinese experience is a suitable model to emulate, considering it a "successful" experience in achieving



development without the need for democracy or political freedom. However, ignoring the cultural, historical, and institutional differences between Egypt and China is a grave mistake, and a real danger.

China has strict party institutions, a strong state system, and deep bureaucratic traditions spanning thousands of years. Egypt, in contrast, is a state that emerged from two revolutions in one decade, suffering from a crisis of confidence between the state and society, and institutional and administrative weakness. An authoritarian model cannot be imported and implemented in a different context without disasters. What is considered "stability" in China could turn into "repression" and an inevitable social explosion in Egypt.

DEVELOPMENT IS NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR RIGHTS

There can be no real development without guaranteeing human rights. Development that comes at the expense of dignity and freedoms is nothing more than empty concrete and iron projects, upon which neither a strong state nor a cohesive society can be built. In successful experiences around the world, democracy and popular accountability have been the guarantors of sustained and equitable growth. What is the benefit of bridges and new cities if the voice of the people is absent in determining their fate? How can we ask youth for creativity and innovation in an environment where mouths are gagged and public spaces are closed?

**NO TO BARTERING: SECURITY DOES NOT
COMPENSATE FOR FREEDOM, NOR DOES
BREAD FOR DIGNITY**

The moral and political reductionism that says "*either security or freedom,*" or "*either development or democracy,*" is a manipulation of consciousness unworthy of a self-respecting state. People do not choose between their rights; they demand them all. Security is important, yes, but it must not be a pretext for oppression. Bread is important, but it does not compensate for the right to expression. Bellies may be full, but minds cannot be suppressed.

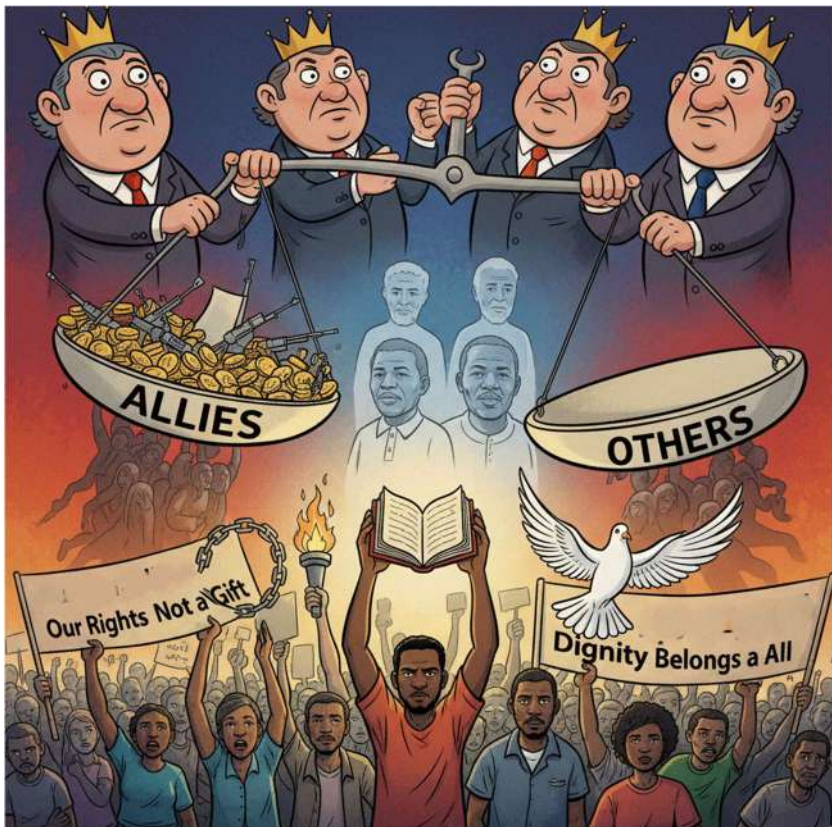
In conclusion, the path to a just future does not pass through importing authoritarian blueprints from abroad, but through forging a truly Egyptian model that respects rights and freedoms and believes that the citizen is a partner, not a subordinate. Human rights are not an elite luxury, but a necessary condition for building a just and stable state.



The Western Double Standard Does Not Justify Abandoning Human Rights

Our Rights Are Not a Gift from the West, But Our Inherent Entitlement

In the midst of escalating discussions about human rights violations and the use of these rights as a political tool by some Western nations, a counter-discourse has emerged in the Arab world and other Global South countries. This narrative questions the credibility of these values entirely, considering them "Western values" that are not binding on our societies.



While this argument may seem understandable in light of the glaring double standards in the West's handling of issues like Palestine or the war in Yemen, it carries a significant danger: justifying internal oppression and emptying the struggles of the people of one of their most important driving forces—human rights. To begin with, double standards are an undeniable fact. It is easy to observe examples of contradiction in the positions of some Western governments:

- Supporting allied autocratic regimes and ignoring their crimes while launching fierce campaigns against geopolitical rivals under the banner of human rights.
- Western silence on Israeli crimes in Gaza versus the swift condemnation of less severe violations in other countries.
- Double standards in receiving refugees, where those from European or Christian backgrounds are often preferred over those coming from Africa or the Islamic world.

However, this criticism, despite its fairness, cannot be used as a pretext to undermine the legitimacy of demanding freedom, justice, equality, and human dignity.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE: HUMAN RIGHTS ARE NOT "WESTERN," THEY ARE HUMAN

Human rights are not the property of the West, nor are they an exclusive product of a European experience. Rather, they are a moral and legal framework that developed through comprehensive human struggles and to which numerous cultures have contributed, from the thought of Ibn Rushd (Averroes) and Ibn Khaldun to the struggles of Martin Luther King Jr. and Mandela. Human dignity, and the right to life, liberty, freedom from torture, and a fair trial are rights not restricted to a geographical location or cultural affiliation. We demand these rights not because the West wants us to, but because they are *our* rights, which we deserve simply for being human.

We must all realize that emptying the human rights discourse serves the interests of oppressive regimes.

When the discourse of human rights is demonized and portrayed as a colonial tool, the peaceful means of resistance against tyranny are drained from the people. Freedom becomes a luxury, justice a conspiracy, and accountability slander. This situation allows authoritarian regimes to redefine "dignity" in their own way: obedience becomes a virtue, and opposition becomes treason.

WE MUST MOVE TOWARDS AN INDEPENDENT VISION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

What we need today is to adopt an independent and self-derived vision for human rights that stems from our reality and aligns with the aspirations of our people—one that neither follows the Western discourse blindly nor completely rejects it.

We need a human rights movement that acknowledges the West's duality but does not justify the East's oppression. A movement that



sees human rights as a liberation project for the peoples of the South, not merely a pressure card in the hand of the North.

The mature moral position does not require us to accept new colonialism in the name of democracy, but it also does not allow us to justify oppression under the guise of cultural exceptionalism. Human rights are not a selective choice; they are the cornerstone of any just society.

Let our battle, then, be against double standards everywhere, not against the principles themselves. And let us hold onto our rights, not because they are "Western values," but because they are our legitimate entitlement as people who dream, love, and live.

The Beginning

After traveling with me through the pages of this book, you have seen the faces of victims in the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America.

You have heard the cries of indigenous peoples, reflected on the West's hypocrisy, the East's dominance, and our own loss in between.

All of this is not scattered fragments of images, but threads in a single tapestry: a world order staggering, gasping, dying.

BUT THIS TIME, LET ME SAY IT WITHOUT QUESTIONS, WITHOUT SHARED

THINKING:

The world will not end.

FROM THE WOMB OF EVERY DYING WORLD ORDER, A NEW ONE IS BORN.

Yes, we are standing before a global order in decay, eroding from within, swaying between military might and double standards. But in some distant corner of the stage, another order is being born. Its outlines are not yet clear, but it rests on a hybrid philosophy—learning from the failure of raw power, and the impotence of false cooperation.

This book was not written to propose magical solutions.

It was written to tell me, and you, the victims of this system:

If we do not see the birth of the new order, if we do not recognize its features and move with it, then we will remain fuel and victims, just as we were fuel and victims of the order now in its death throes.

This is not the end.

This is the beginning.

I should have put down my pen and celebrated what I had written.

Instead, I lay on my back, trying to rest—

but a hundred thoughts surged through me.

I imagined the shape of the coming world order—
one I will not live long enough to see fully unfold.
And so I returned to writing, to share with you my illusions and
imaginings.

The new order looming on the horizon is not a copy of the past.
It is something altogether different— a hybrid philosophy, carrying
both terror and hope.

Its foundation is fear.

Its philosophy: dread of losing control.

Fear of climate collapse threatening the planet itself.

Fear of artificial intelligence slipping out of human hands.

Fear of digital infrastructure crumbling—the same infrastructure
that now carries everything, from money to medicine.

These are not distant possibilities.

They are scenarios being written now.

AND THE NEW ACTORS?

Nations no longer hold the stage alone. We now see:

- Great powers: the United States, China, Russia, India, Europe.
- Rising regional blocs: East Asia, Africa, Latin America.
- Giant corporations—Google, Amazon, Tesla, Tencent—controlling data and technology more than governments.
- Transnational organizations: environmental, human rights, and perhaps ideological.

And the coming tools of control will be:

- Artificial intelligence—for surveillance, analysis, and decision-making.
- Cyberwarfare—paralyzing an entire state with a keystroke.
- The digital economy—currencies and transactions dominated by great blocs.
- Data—a new weapon, shaping human behavior.

- Military technology—drones, robots, and “tactical nuclear” arms.

Just as nuclear bombs and world wars were the scarecrow that guaranteed the survival of the current order,

THE NEW ORDER WILL LIVE UNDER EVEN GREATER SCARECROWS:

Climate collapse = the end of the planet.

AI rebellion = the end of human civilization.

Or perhaps both, together.

FUTURE WARS MAY NOT BE NUCLEAR.

They may be:

- Cyber wars that shut down electricity and water.
- Resource wars over water, clean energy.
- Proxy wars fought with robots and smart weapons.

My friend, the purpose of this book was never to offer “solutions.” I, you, and all the victims of this world are too small to redraw its map.

MY AIM WAS ONLY TO REMIND MYSELF, AND YOU:

If we do not see the new order as it is born,
we will remain fuel and victims, just as we were of the dying order.
But if we recognize its birth, we may one day become partners in
shaping it—

not mere shadows at its margins.

And so I bring you back to the beginning:

To the human being treated as second-class.

To the victims whose voices I wanted present.

To the story for which this book was written.

My friend—

THE END IS NOTHING BUT A NEW
BEGINNING.
AND THE BEGINNING IS ALWAYS HUMAN.



THE WITNESS TO A DYING ORDER

This book is not a straight line from first page to last.

It is a circle.

Its journey begins with the human being—
and ends... again with the human being.

At the start, you see the oppressed, the crushed.

At the end, you glimpse a new human being born from the womb of dying systems.

Each essay here is but a thread woven into a larger fabric:

the tale of a world searching for meaning, reinventing itself amid the ruins.

The reader who reaches the conclusion will find themselves back where they started:

from human... to human.

But it is a different return:

one carrying heavier awareness, deeper memory, and perhaps wider hope.

About The Writer

Mohamed Sobhy is an Egyptian writer and politician, and a human rights lawyer who worked for years defending public liberties and fundamental rights. He participated in initiatives and research related to criminal justice, and focused his career on human issues in confrontation with authority, believing that the value of life and dignity is the basis for any just system. He sees writing as an act of resistance, and documentation as an indispensable testimony in a time of collapse and manipulation of facts.

