

The Absence of Ideology and Intellectual Discourse from the International Arena and the Rhetoric of Leaders is Paving the Way for What Comes Next

(Translated)

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Ideas, values, and ideological discourse have not merely been empty slogans used by states and leaders throughout history to present a respectable image to others. Instead they have served as the foundation for states and leaders to call upon humanity to embrace and rally around them. Once these ideas transform into convictions and public opinion, they empower these states and leaders to use force, if necessary, to impose them on the few who resist and refuse to submit or accept them.

For example, capitalism emerged after the era of feudalism and theocracy with ideas such as individual freedom to pursue personal interests without state intervention, free competition between institutions and individuals, the principle of self-interest, the balance and harmony between individual and societal interests, and state neutrality in economic activity, among others. It cultivated a global public opinion that it stood for freedoms and against the tyranny, class divisions, and feudalism that the people of Europe and America were suffering under. People embraced it and began to overthrow the old, dictatorial regimes, replacing them with elected governments with a degree of freedom and a system of ownership that many felt would bring them justice. Subsequently, these convictions transcended borders, and proponents of capitalist thought found a justification and a means to use force to impose their ideology and lead nations towards it.

Then socialism emerged, followed by communism, which brought ideas that appealed to the poor, the oppressed, and the weak, those whom capitalism had created and left resentful of their plight. Peoples and movements began to embrace the idea of communism, believing that it would provide them with justice against the capitalists and ruling elites who had exploited and oppressed them. Indeed, public opinion shifted in Eastern Europe, Russia, and the Middle East, and communist rulers began to gain acceptance among the people for using force to spread their ideas, which they promoted as a means of saving humanity.

However, the illusion quickly faded, and the flaws and corruption of socialism and communism became apparent. The West returned with capitalism in its new guise, democracy and civil liberties, to reframe the world with its ideology and establish international bodies and institutions to preserve and propagate these concepts. America led the Western bloc in its conflict with the Eastern bloc, which was led by Russia. America and the West prevailed, manufacturing for themselves the justification and global public opinion that allowed them to intervene in the affairs of states and peoples and to use force and sanctions to spread democracy and alleged freedoms. This brings us to the present day, the times we are currently examining and the changes we have witnessed.

The point is that Russia led the Eastern communist bloc, which competed with the Western bloc and almost defeated it at one point, or at least achieved parity with it, reached this position through its ideological discourse, values, and ideas, which it promoted as a means of saving humanity and its peoples. It would not have been able to rally nations and peoples around it without these ideas and concepts. Then, when

America assumed leadership of the West, it did so by carrying the banner of democracy, human rights, free market policies, and freedoms. It rallied Western nations and peoples around it to confront, and ultimately defeat the communist threat. It did not unite them through force or prestige, but through ideological discourse, values, and ideas.

In contrast, China, for example, has been unable to lead the world, or even a part of it, or even a regional bloc, towards its goals and aspirations, because it did not adopt and promote a distinct ideology. Instead, it revolved around Russia during the communist era, and then followed the West, forming a failed mixture of capitalism and communism, after the defeat of the Soviet Union. Therefore, China has been unable to lead the world, or even influential nations, despite its vast territory, huge population, wealth, and recent economic development.

The issue of leading the world, or a part of it, is a matter of the leader's and the nation's ability to rally others around them with ideas and a civilization, that others accept or embrace. Muslims once led the world, and the Islamic State remained the leading power for more than ten centuries, thanks to their ideas, civilization, and values, which preceded their swords, economy, and military strength.

Nations and peoples are not a flock of sheep to be driven with a stick. You may be able to subjugate some nations or countries, for a certain period or at a certain stage, but you will not be able to lead them, or keep them rallied around you for long, as matters will quickly spiral out of control, and others will find an opportunity to break free and escape the yoke and the stick.

Anyone observing the rhetoric of American and Western leaders these days, particularly US President Donald Trump and his White House team, will notice the absence of ideological and intellectual discourse with the world and its people. America no longer promotes itself as the champion and protector of freedom, democracy, and human rights in the world, as it claimed since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Instead, the discourse these days is one of power, arrogance, and self-interest. It promotes its decisions and projects based on the logic that it is the strongest and capable of imposing its will on others. Even America's historical allies, the European countries, have been attacked by Trump, who described them as weak and incapable of doing anything but talk. In an interview with Politico Magazine, Trump described European leaders as weak and lacking decisiveness, suggesting that their policies are characterized by excessive political correctness, rendering the continent incapable of managing vital issues such as immigration and regional conflicts. He said, "I think they're weak. But I also think that they want to be so politically correct. I think they don't know what to do. Europe doesn't know what to do."

While he expressed admiration for Turkish President Erdoğan, Syrian President Ahmad Al-Sharaa, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, and Russian President Vladimir Putin, on the grounds that they are strong leaders.

He affirmed his continued confidence in Syrian President Ahmad Al-Sharaa after the attack in Syria that killed American soldiers, describing him as a strong man. Similarly, in a conversation with Erdoğan before the Gaza summit in Egypt, Trump addressed Erdoğan's translator, saying, "You know how tough this man is? I like him. I like him," and has described him as a "tough cookie."

Even Russian President Putin, who is supposed to be a target of criticism and attacks from Trump and his administration, received Trump's admiration because of his strength. A former senior official in the American administration observed that Trump admires Putin because he is strong and has complete control over his country, adding that the American president tends to favor strong leaders over others. Likewise, Trump expressed

admiration for Mohammed bin Salman and the Emir of Qatar for their economic power and financial capabilities.

The focus of the American administration is on power, money, and the economy, something that Trump and his administrative team do not hide, and which dominates their speeches and actions. Even the ideology from which Trump and his new team emerged is that of MAGA (Make America Great Again), a slogan that embodies self-absorption, and leads first and foremost to the rejection of anyone who is not American, according to the standards of Trump and his supporters. This is reflected in events, most notably the campaigns of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Agency, a branch of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, which has become notorious worldwide, despite being a local government institution.

The entire world must constantly monitor and assess the position and leadership of the leading state. Today, America and its actions bear no resemblance to the values, principles, and ideological discourse that propelled it to the pinnacle of global power. This inevitably means that nations and peoples will distance themselves from America and its leadership, and begin to pursue alternative paths and orientations instead of aligning with the United States. This applies to America, and even more so to the countries of Europe and other major powers that have not even reached America's level of global leadership. They are weaker and in a worse position than America and its leaders.

The European countries, which are closest to the Western ideology championed by America, have gradually begun to pursue paths and plans independent of the United States, in defense policy, economics, and political stances on global issues. However, due to their weakness, they have not been able to distance themselves significantly so far, but it is only a matter of time. The same applies to the countries of Latin America, China, India, and the rest of the world, each according to its ability to break free and the availability of temporary alternatives, until a new global leadership emerges that will guide the world with values and ideas that unite peoples and attract nations.

Undoubtedly, the only candidate within the foreseeable and expected reality is the coming Islamic state. It is truly qualified to reclaim global leadership, and attract nations with its ideology and values, which the world desperately needs after generations have endured hardship and the oppression of capitalism and socialism. If the West, led by America, continues to abandon its ideological discourse and the language of principles and values, which is likely, it will accelerate its own downfall and decline in the face of the rise of Islam and the growing desire and will to restore it to power and leadership. What is happening in the world these days is laying the foundation for the future: the demise of the current leaderships, which have failed and have nothing left to offer their people and the world, and the emergence of a new leadership for the world, one that will lead it and around which the nations will rally. When we speak of Islam as a civilizational and leadership alternative for the world, we are speaking of a civilization and leadership with a history, a rich heritage, and a proven track record that humanity has witnessed before. The matter is now simply a matter of time. Allah (swt) says, ﴿وَتِلْكَ الْأَيَّامُ نُدَاوِلُهَا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ﴾ **“And these days of varying conditions, We alternate among the people.”** [TMQ Surah Aali Imran: 140] and He (swt) said, ﴿إِنَّ الْأَرْضَ لِلَّهِ يُورِثُهَا مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ﴾ **“Indeed, the earth belongs to Allah. He causes to inherit it whom He wills of His servants. And the best outcome is for the righteous.”** [TMQ Surah Al-A'raf: 128].