

# **Are We Living Through the End of an Era in History, or the Beginning of a Prolonged Collapse?**

(Translated)

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Major historical transformations do not typically announce themselves in an official declaration, or a single pivotal moment. Instead, they often unfold through a series of crises that are managed instead of resolved, and contained instead of understood.

When inflationary pressures coincide with sovereign debt imbalances, and economic deficits are accompanied by political rigidity and social disintegration, what the world faces transcends the framework of normal economic cycles, and enters the realm of structural erosion of the international order itself.

The signals emanating from decision-making centers, markets, and geopolitical conflicts do not suggest a correction phase. Instead, they suggest a startling shift from an order that was — at least relatively — capable of maintaining balances, to a reality where crisis management takes precedence over planning, where rules are replaced by exceptions, and institutions by reactive measures. In such a context, talk of stability becomes a form of delusion, and collapse becomes a creeping possibility rather than a sudden event.

Hence, the question about the nature of the current period is not posed out of pessimism, but instead as a necessary political warning, with a vision of a new dawn worthy of humanity.

Is the world witnessing the end of a historical era that has exhausted its tools and legitimacy, or has it truly entered a long path of collapse, whose cost will be determined by the actors' ability to grasp its depth, not by their declared intentions? Ignoring this question doesn't postpone the answer. Instead, it allows it to be imposed later by harsher and less manageable realities.

What we are experiencing can be seen as the end of an era of history, not as a passing crisis in political or economic performance, but as an expression of the exhaustion of a model that has governed the world for decades.

Systems and orders do not fall only when they are militarily defeated, but also when they fail to explain the reality they have brought about, or to offer solutions to the crises that have become structurally part of their existence.

One of the most prominent indicators of the end of this era is the erosion of the legitimacy of the liberal international order that emerged after World War II. This order, based on institutions such as the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank, was supposed to provide fair mechanisms for managing conflict and development. However, recent decades have revealed its transformation from a framework for global governance, into a tool managed according to the balance of power, where rules are selectively applied upon the weak, but promptly suspended when they conflict with the interests of the major powers.

Wars waged without international authorization, and sanctions imposed outside of any legal consensus, suggest that the order no longer generates legitimacy. Instead, it consumes

what little remains of it. Politically, the end of this era is manifested in the crisis of the nation-state itself. The state, once presented as the guarantor of stability and social justice, has become incapable of protecting its citizens from domestic rot, the volatility of global markets, or even decisions made beyond its borders.

Major powers today find themselves hostage to global supply chains or financial markets capable of penalizing them, in a matter of days. This means that political sovereignty is no longer commensurate with social responsibility, a dangerous imbalance in the logic of governance.

At the level of major powers, the shift in conflict from controlled competition, to open confrontation over rules, constitutes a further sign of the end of this era.

The conflict between the United States and China, for example, is no longer solely about commercial or technological influence, but about the very definition of the rules: who sets them? And who has the right to violate them? This type of conflict does not belong to a stable order, but rather indicates a transitional phase in which the features of the new balance have not yet crystallized.

Added to this is the collapse of the illusion associated with long-term economic stability. The model based on debt, expanding monetary supply, and postponing crises through financial instruments has reached its limits.

Inflation today is not an exceptional event as it was in the past, but instead an undeclared political tool for shifting the cost of crises onto entire societies. When monetary policies become a means of managing social anger instead of achieving economic justice, this points to a historical, not a technical, predicament.

Even more alarming is that these transformations are occurring while political elites are unable to produce a convincing narrative for the future. In previous periods, of ascendancy, elites were able to promise growth, prosperity, or security. Today, however, most political discourse revolves around managing losses, appealing for patience, and warning of worse to come.

When elites fail to keep promises, and resort to scare tactics, they implicitly acknowledge that the era they represent is nearing its end.

Therefore, the perception of what we are experiencing as the end of an era of history is not based on pessimism. Instead, it is based on a political reading of a long process of structural erosion. We are facing an order that has become incapable of reproducing itself according to the same rules, and of containing its contradictions, without resorting to coercive or exceptional measures. This is precisely what characterizes the end of phases: not a single moment of resounding collapse, but a period of losing the ability to continue in the same way.

A prolonged collapse is the form these ends take, when the dominant power is unable to acknowledge them, or manage the transition from them. Collapses in the modern era do not occur as a single, comprehensive fall, but instead manifest as an extended process of gradual erosion, where structures continue to function formally while losing their actual capacity for production, control, and legitimacy.

This prolonged collapse has several characteristics, including:

**The first characteristic:**

Exceptions become the norm, and successive crises are managed, without any prospect of resolution. Inflation becomes the new reality, debt a necessity, and wars a matter of risk management.

In this context, imbalance is not viewed as a structural flaw to be corrected, but instead as a permanent dilemma to be endured. This is the most dangerous stage of collapse because it strips politics of its transformative function and reduces it to managing losses.

### **The second characteristic:**

The erosion of substantive political meaning. Democracy becomes a mere formality devoid of social substance, sovereignty a discourse without tools, and development reduced to statistics that fail to impact people's lives.

With the absence of meaning, popular anger escalates, not as an alternative project, but as a vague rejection of the existing order.

This is where populism grows, not as a solution, but as a side effect of the collapse of trust in elites and institutions.

### **The third characteristic:**

The militarization of the economy, and the politicization of markets. Wars today are not merely extensions of politics by other means. Instead, markets themselves have become arenas of conflict: sanctions, currency wars, politicized supply chains, and technology used as a weapon. This entanglement of economics and security indicates a stage in which the global order has lost its mechanisms of partition and control. Conflict has become comprehensive, but low-intensity and protracted rather than decisive.

However, history does not proceed along a path of open-ended collapse, without the possibility of interruption. Prolonged collapses always produce the need for a new ideology to reorganize relations, even if it is not necessarily more just. The question here is not: Will a new ideology emerge? Instead, the question is: What ideology? And at whose hands?

Here we have three possibilities:

### **The first possibility:**

The emergence of a robust multipolar order, based not on the hegemony of a single power, but instead on a balance of major regional powers. In this case, international relations are not governed by universal values, but by the logic of overlapping interests, and a minimum level of stability. This possibility might limit widespread chaos, but it carries the risk of entrenching multiple, rigid spheres of influence and conflicts, keeping the world in a state of perpetual tension, without a full-blown explosion.

### **The second possibility:**

The rise of the ideology of economic sovereignty, instead of unbridled globalization; that is, a return of nations to protecting their own production, food, and energy resources, and reducing their dependence on global markets. This possibility might restore domestic balance to nations, but at the same time, it would shatter the illusion of a unified global market, and open the door to fierce competition for resources, unless it is regulated by new cooperative frameworks.

In essence, the first two possibilities resemble the beginnings of the situation we are currently experiencing, and may represent a reproduction of capitalism in new forms.

### **The third possibility:**

The emergence of an alternative ideology for the constructive development of human beings, that reconnects the economy with humanity, not just with statistics.

The Islamic ideology is the only ideology capable of rising to the challenge of the collapse of prevailing models, but on one crucial condition: that Islam be fully embraced and

implemented as a way of life, ruling governance, and justice, not just as an identity slogan or a tool of conflict.

Here, one must address Islam specifically regarding the major failures of the current global system.

The Islamic ideology does not separate the economy from its fundamental viewpoint about life. Instead, Islam regulates the economy within the framework of Islamic Shariah Law, which considers humanity and the distribution of wealth, and does not leave wealth to the blind law of accumulation. Islam prohibits *riba* (interest), monopolies, and all the tools of capitalism that stifle peoples and societies today, and it works to reduce class disparities and eradicate poverty at its roots.

At its core political level, Islam does not establish a system of governance that accepts either dictatorship or populist chaos. Instead, it establishes a framework of the ruler's responsibility, the centrality of justice, and the priority of the public interest — qualities the world lacks today. Moreover, it is a divinely revealed order, fundamentally designed for the happiness of humanity by the Lord of all humanity, Allah (swt).

Therefore, the ideology of Islam offers the most profound solution to the crisis of the modern world.

Ultimately, the world is not experiencing a moment of final collapse, nor is it on the verge of a clear and imminent salvation. Instead, it is traversing a historical void, where collapse is progressing faster than the emergence of alternatives. In such moments, the crisis lies not in the absence of thoughts, but in the absence of those who possess the courage to transform thoughts into projects, values into institutions, and justice into a lived reality.

The Islamic ideology, with its rare balance on all levels, is not presented today only as a ready-made answer to the world's questions, but also as a deferred civilizational horizon, awaiting its historical conditions. However, the soundness of the theory is not enough. Justice does not impose itself spontaneously, unless it finds those that embody Islam in a practical model, that withstands the complexities of the age, and the pressures of power.

Here appears Hizb ut Tahrir, with its project and its structure capable of implementing the project. We call upon every Muslim amidst this disbelief (*kufr*) that controls the lands of Islam to hasten their march with this esteemed Hizb, which, with its enlightened vision and tireless work, has prepared everything for the establishment of the Islamic state. The Hizb takes the hand of the sons of the Ummah so that they make their cause — the resumption of the Islamic way of life — a vital issue, and take towards it a life-or-death course of action. Thus, they establish the Dar ul-Islam (Abode of Islam), unify the countries of the Muslims, and set forth carrying the concept of the one Ummah with one Khaleefah (Caliph), and repeating with sincere Iman, enlightenment, and awareness the saying of their Messenger (saw), **«يَا عَمَّ، وَاللَّهِ، لَوْ وَضَعُوا الشَّمْسَ فِي يَمِينِي، وَالْقَمَرَ فِي يَسَارِي عَلَى أَنْ أَتْرَكَ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ حَتَّى يُظْهِرَهُ اللَّهُ أَوْ أَهْلِكَ فِيهِ مَا تَرَكْتُهُ»** **“O uncle, by Allah, even if they placed the sun in my right hand, and the moon in my left, on the condition that I abandon this matter until Allah makes it dominant, or I perish in it, I would not abandon it”** [Seerah ibn Hisham].