

Corruption in Leadership: The Final Stage in the Collapse of States, and the Decay and Disintegration of Civilizations: Trump's America as a Case Study

(Translated)

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There are established patterns governing the rise and fall of major powers and dominant civilizations. One such described pattern is a Western secular materialist analysis, whose most prominent theories include:

The theory of the British historian Arnold Toynbee, who argues that the fall of civilizations begins from within, resulting from the failure of the creative elite to confront challenges and their transformation into an oppressive authority. This leads the majority to abandon the elite, causing societal unity to disintegrate, and domestic divisions to increase, ultimately causing the civilization to collapse in the face of any foreign challenge.

Then there is the theory of Paul Kennedy, presented in his 1987 book "The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers." This is a purely capitalist perspective, arguing that economic power is the fundamental basis for building state power, supported by military and political strength. Kennedy contends that an imbalance between a great power's ambitions and its economic capabilities—meaning that a state expands militarily and strategically through excessive spending—burdens the economy and weakens the state. The influence of Paul Kennedy's theory on American policymakers has grown with each successive US administration, manifesting in successive policies aimed at restructuring the economy—from a goods-based economy to a services-based economy, then a financial economy, then a digital economy, and finally a technology and artificial intelligence economy—in an attempt to plug the economic black hole—astronomical debt and a chronic deficit—to prevent further decline and collapse. The economic factor has been the driving force behind all American policies under different administrations, Republican or Democratic; only the strategies, methods, and means have differed. However, the decline has continued, and the American situation has worsened, with America serving as a stark and shocking example of the entire crisis-ridden West.

The explanation for this deterioration and the acceleration of the collapse line and the dark tunnel into which the West has entered lies in the shortcomings of the two theories and their disregard for the real defect of the West and the first basis of the Western dilemma, which is the Western secular cultural system that is the seed of the systems of life, legislation, laws, and policies, and the reason for the failure of the solution and the exacerbation and intensification of the problem, which Toynbee and Kennedy both turned a blind eye to the fact of its failure and bankruptcy, given that they are sons of the Western secular capitalist system who are convinced of its usefulness culturally, civilizationally, and politically, knowing that cultural order are the kernel of civilization, the state, and society and its root, and overcoming their defects is disastrous.

The decline of Western civilization, the corruption of its policies, the crushing economic crises, the social distortion, and the death of values and morals are cultural in origin, not economic or political. The root cause lies in the Western secular cultural system's utter failure and complete bankruptcy in addressing the human predicament. It has utterly failed to achieve human happiness due to its corrupt and flawed approaches, and has instead produced the antithesis of its claims: a complete human tragedy.

This is the trajectory of the Western secular capitalist system, inevitably leading to its own demise. It was built on a shaky, unstable foundation, on the precipice of collapse, and on a false cultural claim steeped in delusion: that human intellect is more capable of solving the human problem than Allah (swt), the Creator of humankind!

The Western order began as a purely secular idea, then merged with capitalism, and ended in a savage, predatory, and suicidal capitalist excess. The Western order arose as a purely secular idea that challenged the Church's doctrines, priesthood, cultural theology, and political authority. Secular philosophers and thinkers were the theorists and creators of thought and culture, producing concepts of life, social systems, civilization, and state. Culture and politics were their creation and their commodity. The 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries were their era and the era of the dominance of their secular ideas. Secularism was able to wrest power from the Church and establish its state in the second half of the 18th century. The center of gravity of the Western secular order and its core were thus confined to its philosophers, thinkers, and the politicians and rulers influenced by them and committed to their philosophies.

Then came the transformation of the system in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, with the repercussions of the Industrial Revolution in Europe, the stronghold of secularism—the steam engine, the textile machine, and factories. A new class emerged in Western society. The industrial capitalist class, owners of factories and means of production, gained intellectual and political influence. With them began a fusion of industrial development and intellectual output, giving rise to capitalist ideas. Adam Smith's "The Wealth of Nations," published in 1776, is considered the foundational text of capitalist economics and the manifesto of capitalism, its freedom of private property, its free market, and its dominance over Western life. This capitalist hegemony gave rise to an anomalous fusion of money, thought, culture, and politics that shaped Western life and civilization.

With the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, a major transformation occurred at the level of the Western capitalist system. Large transnational banking institutions, financial holding companies, and transcontinental stock markets and exchanges—the London Stock Exchange and the New York Stock Exchange—emerged and developed. With them, the financial sector became dominant, and with it, financial capitalism grew and its influence and power over thought, culture, politics, and life became overwhelming. Then came the capitalist technological boom and its technologies and tools intensified capitalist standardization and the control of money. Capitalism's encroachment increased through virtual money and cloud wealth that technology provided to the new capitalist class, and complete control was achieved over thought, culture, and politics. Indeed, the sources of culture, thought, and politics were completely dried up. Money, and nothing but the power of money, is the absolute ruler in Western life. Thus, the Western dilemma became swollen, exacerbated, and worsened, along with the human tragedy created by the crisis-ridden Western system.

The intellectual flaws and shortcomings of the secular cultural order, along with its acute philosophical crises, were compounded by the toxic influence of capitalist money and the unnatural marriage between secularism and capitalism. Capitalist money distorted the realm of knowledge, warped perspectives, and diverted intellectual and cultural discourse from its fundamental and original focus on the pursuit of human happiness and the intellectual, cultural, and social systems capable of achieving it. Instead, the discourse became one of wealth and its accumulation, serving the ambitions and greed of the powerful capitalist class. Consequently, Western thought, culture, and the entire Western system became hostage to the ambitions of the capitalist class. With this shift, the center of gravity of the Western system shifted, and its core became the capitalist class comprised of owners of major banks and transnational corporations.

This abnormal and toxic union could only have continued with one side controlling the other. Capitalist money prevailed, ultimately leading to the capitalist class's control over

thought, culture, politics, and life itself. With this, the dominance of money came at the expense of culture and politics. Indeed, one of the conditions for the growth of capitalist money was the removal of any authority from culture and politics, in order to achieve the pure capitalist goal of net profit, free from the costs and constraints of culture and politics. The price paid for this was the drying up of the wellsprings of thought and culture and the death of politics.

The Western order today suffers from intellectual drought, cultural bankruptcy, and political decay, coupled with an unprecedented savagery and encroachment by the capitalist class. The Western order has devolved into a savage, predatory capitalism, unchallenged by thought, culture, or politics, devoid of all values and ethics. It is this system that creates pseudo-intellectuals, counterfeit intellectuals, pseudo-rulers, and cheap political mercenaries—all puppets manipulated by the capitalist hands of the owners of banks and transnational capitalist corporations. This abnormal and toxic capitalist system produces nothing but states held hostage by capitalism, rulers who are mere hired hands, slaves to the capitalists, and pseudo-intellectuals who act as mouthpieces for capitalist expansion, marketing and promoting this toxic and destructive propaganda as thought and culture. Today, rampant capitalism imposes total control and absolute domination over culture and politics, resulting in a despicable and base level of politicians and intellectuals, who are subservient and led by this hegemonic, predatory capitalism.

The Western question and its existential crisis are not merely political and economic issues; these are symptoms of the Western predicament. The essence of the Western predicament, which has scorched all of humanity and whose cause is the Western cultural order—that is, the secular capitalist ideology—has led to its complete and utter bankruptcy and failure, with disastrous consequences. One of the first indicators of the intellectual and cultural decline of the order was its successive crises, which intensified, compounded, and ultimately revealed its complete bankruptcy. With this, the features of Western civilization's disintegration and collapse began to unfold at the level of civilization, state, and society. Vertically, this was represented by the crisis of the Western nation-state, the sterility of politics as a solution to societal problems, the corruption of governance and systems of life, and the decay and stench of leadership. Horizontally, it manifested in the societal fragmentation, cultural disintegration, social dissolution, and the discord among its communities, splintering into warring factions poised for civil war.

The capitalist order today has reached an advanced stage of decay, and the stench of disintegration has risen and permeated its surface. The death of the West and the signs of its demise are the intractable dilemma that plagues Western circles, and all its symptoms have appeared. The system is eroding intellectually, and today it is experiencing a state akin to a stroke, with its intellectual output almost entirely a repetition of what came before. Former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger stated that the world is in chaos and the United States faces the problem of how to establish a global order. The economy, the cornerstone of the capitalist system, has eroded. The West and its leading nation are mired in a quagmire of debt, printing toxic currency, and the illusion of a virtual financial bubble. The 2008 financial crisis was a watershed moment, striking at the very top of the capitalist structure—the major banks—which are the engine of capitalist economic activity and the heart of the capitalist economy. Military power has also eroded. What happened in Afghanistan on a military level is a resounding scandal, not only for America but also for its NATO allies. Previously, the US had delegated Iraq and Afghanistan to peripheral states after the Baker-Hamilton Commission assessed the extent of American military weakness. Now, America finds itself in a devastating strategic military crisis with its war against Iran, and it is sinking into the dark, suffocating tunnel of its strategic predicament.

Then came that dangerous slide; that division that gnawed at the capitalist system from within, stemming from the conflicting interests of its capitalists, a division that reverberated at the societal and state levels. This capitalist division was one of the most telling indicators of

the severity of the crisis, and one of the most dangerous elements in the disintegration and collapse of the ailing capitalist system.

Then there is the moral and civilizational bankruptcy. The West has descended into civilizational deviance through its sexual and gender perversions, and an abnormal state of order and law for human society: the legalization of same-sex marriage, gender reassignment, sperm banks, the surrogacy market, and the legalization of adoption by homosexuals, culminating in the Epstein scandal. This unprecedented state of social decay and regression, and civilizational deviance, has further exacerbated societal disintegration, fragmentation, and collapse. Today, the capitalist system has entered its final stage of decay and disintegration, with the rot reaching the top and the leadership. This is the final, advanced stage of the death of civilization and the collapse of the state, after those with powerful, narrow, private interests have seized control of the levers of political life and decision-making. This has rendered the political system and the state hostage to their interests, paralyzed and completely incapable of confronting the major challenges that are battering the state and society. With this class of powerful private interests, corruption has become legalized and a tool of politics, exploiting loopholes in the system, deepening its legal cracks, and dismantling controls and restrictions. In the name of economic freedom, privatization, and investment promotion, the latest Western think tanks reports for 2024 and 2025 indicate that America is experiencing unprecedented corruption at the leadership and ruling elite levels. This deep-seated corruption has been termed “institutionalized corruption.” According to the Brookings Institution and Chatham House, corruption is no longer merely bribery of an official, but has become “state capture” through money and illicit finance, as described by Anne Applebaum of Chatham House. This illicit money, which has corrupted political life, political elites, and ruling elites, is used in election campaigns in exchange for political influence to achieve the narrow interests and gains of the corrupt capitalist class.

This corruption, in its takeover of the state and its transformation into a tool serving the capitalist class and its function of generating private benefit for the influential capitalist with money and power, has resulted in a corrupt political elite and leadership, a corrupt political life, a distortion of the corrupt reality, a sharp and toxic polarization, and political stagnation to maintain the corrupt status quo in service of a handful of financial tycoons who hold all the reins of power.

Furthermore, the corruption within the political elite and leadership has undermined accountability and the judiciary by politicizing appointments and promotions within oversight bodies, the judiciary, and the administration. The rot of corruption has eaten away at the structures of the state, its institutions, its administrations, and the very fabric of society.

This “leadership corruption” has led to unprecedented capitalist expansion, transforming the class of the wealthy and powerful into a capitalist oligarchy. This oligarchy maintains an iron grip on all aspects of the state, its institutions, and its apparatus, wielding absolute control over politics, the economy, security, the military, education, media, the judiciary, and administration. Laws and policies have been reduced to mere technical tools serving their interests, eroding the rule of law and the authority of the state. Poisonous money has become the law itself, and the political process has devolved into a monstrous financial market. According to the Pew Research Center in Washington, total spending on the 2024 US federal elections reached \$15.9 billion, a fivefold increase since 1990 when it was estimated at \$3 billion. Thus, political action has become tied to capital, rather than political competence and intellectual capacity. Furthermore, political influence became commensurate with the size of the murky money held by technology, oil, arms, pharmaceutical, and major banking corporations, as well as Wall Street markets.

Then, this capitalist oligarchy, after seizing control of the state, transformed it into its own private property under the guise of privatization. It transferred the state’s functions and roles to the private sector, thus turning them into services traded through its corporations. The state became an agent of these capitalist companies, profiting from them.

The privatization of the state was initiated by Ronald Reagan, the champion of neoliberalism, who was appointed President of the United States in the 1980s. He formed a presidential commission tasked with eliminating the boundaries between government and private sector jobs and removing restrictions. This privatization laid the foundation for a capitalist takeover of the state, a path followed by Bush, Clinton, and their successors. A study conducted in the late 1990s revealed a doubling of government jobs transferred to the private sector, estimating the number of individuals working in the private sector while also performing federal government duties at approximately 8.5 million.

This privatization of the state was not a sudden occurrence, but instead a premeditated policy to seize control of the state, a branch of the capitalist expansionism that came to be known in the 1980s as “neoliberalism.” The agents of this capitalism in its implementation were US President Ronald Reagan and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. Thus, all state services became for-profit, generating revenue for the capitalist oligarchy. The functions of the US state and government were transferred to consultants and offices of capitalist corporations. This even extended to the most critical state institutions—the security and military apparatus—transforming the army into mercenaries overseen by the capitalist oligarchy’s companies, such as Blackwater and DynCorp during the occupation of Iraq. As for domestic security, hired guards now outnumber police officers twice as many. Even the most sensitive security tasks related to American intelligence—translation, electronic surveillance, investigations, analyses, reports, and summaries—have become a source of profit, outsourced to private companies belonging to the capitalist oligarchy. This privatization has eroded the state apparatus and encompassed all agencies and sectors, as noted by the author of “Are We Rome?: The Fall of an Empire and the Fate of America,” Cullen Murphy. Administrations, borders, public utilities, ports, airports, highways, public hospitals, schools, government universities, and water and sewage systems have all been privatized. It is as if America is a country putting all its assets up for auction, as if it is a country selling itself!

Capitalism has reached its zenith of decay, with elite and leadership corruption culminating in the unleashing of its stench and the usurpation of power and the presidency. Its president, Trump, a product of Epstein’s regime, represents the logical culmination of this leadership corruption, the final stage in the decay of the ruling elite, and the advanced stage of the disease of state collapse and the demise of civilization. In the first phase of capitalism, the philosopher and the intellectual were crushed; in the second phase, politics and the politician were killed. Now, in this final phase, preceding suicide and annihilation, the hallmarks are the corruption of leaders, the decay of leadership, the capitalist oligarchy’s takeover of the state, and its destruction of society.

This advanced state of decay in the capitalist West, exemplified by America and its president Trump, is reminiscent of the Soviet Union and the corruption of its leadership before the collapse of the communist system and the fall of its state. Vladimir Medvedev exposes this reality in his book “The Man Behind the Back (Человек за спиной),” stating that the moral decline of Leonid Brezhnev in his old age, and the weakness of Mikhail Gorbachev’s character, were the decisive factors in the collapse. He also mentions the first infiltration of corruption into the Soviet security apparatus during Brezhnev’s era, particularly the KGB, and the emergence of privileges for the elite and the children of the rulers. This was clearly reflected in the lives of the children of members of the Politburo and the Central Committee of the Communist Party in Moscow and the other Soviet republics. Brezhnev’s children, Yuri and Galina, were the most blatant example of leadership corruption, as they seized the country’s wealth as if it were their private property. Galina Brezhneva was known to be the richest woman in the world in terms of her collection of fine diamonds and precious stones, and she wielded considerable power and influence over the heads of mines. The Russian diamond and jewelry factories in the Yakutia region are among the most famous diamond-producing areas in the world. Today, we see Trump’s America, where all the signs of corrupt leadership have been realized. For its president, Trump, governance has become

a gateway to his own wealth and the enrichment of his family. After assuming the presidency, he exploited his position, powers, and regulatory decisions, issuing his digital currency, the “Trump Dollar.” His office allowed him to reap unimaginable profits in just a few days, with its market value exceeding \$10 billion. He didn’t stop there; his wife followed suit, launching her own cryptocurrency, which reached a market value of nearly \$1 billion within two days. Then there were the privileges of deals and licenses for his projects and real estate investments in Saudi Arabia and the UAE, which his presidency was instrumental in securing. His children and relatives also benefited from his position as president. With Trump, America experienced the ultimate levels of leadership decay and corruption. The first months of his second term, marked by strategic blunders, were enough to create a fatal strategic predicament for the United States. With the sharp erosion of American economic and diplomatic influence, Trump recklessly resorted to America’s only remaining power: its military. He embroiled the nation and its military in a war against Iran, a regional middle power, in a gamble with unforeseen consequences. This exposed the weakness of America’s last remaining leverage in maintaining its hegemony, revealed the flaws in its military power, and laid bare the strategic blindness of the American leadership. Trump’s reckless and completely strategically disorganized reliance on American military might against Iran created his own suffocating predicament and America’s devastating strategic crisis, fully illustrating the dilemma of leadership corruption.

This catastrophic and tragic situation that the Western world, led by America, has reached is a severing of its lifelines. This rotten leadership under Trump is determined to transform its own destruction into total annihilation, and its own tragedy into a universal human tragedy. Trump’s war on Iran was a pivotal historical moment, reflecting the disastrous level of corruption and decay that is eating away at the leadership. In his first year of his second term, he created America’s historic strategic predicament and dealt a fatal blow to its hegemony and the international order. Trump, a graduate of Epstein’s regime, surrounded by corrupt and loyal failures and his crisis-ridden administration, is a blatant and shocking embodiment of the leadership crisis and the corruption of the leader. He builds nothing strategically, nor does he establish anything new. His Fox News puppet, obsessed with strip clubs and drunk debauchery, whom Trump made US Secretary of Defense, is a testament to his military achievements and the extent of the ruling elite’s decay. Trump is the ultimate, advanced stage of leadership corruption, and he is America’s tool for digging its own grave. The crucial question remains: Who possesses the means to deliver us from this ever-increasingly severe and deadly tragedy? The solution does not lie in the decay and demise of America, but instead in a civilizational and political alternative to liberate the world from the darkness of this blind ignorance into which the European and American West has led the world, bringing only misery and self-destruction. Certainly, this alternative will not be China, for it is a continuation of the West’s oppressive ignorance in its Chinese version, and, in truth, even more insidious and bitter. Instead, salvation lies in the Islam from the Lord of all creation, Allah (swt), in the unique civilizational project of Islam, and in its distinguished Khilafah Rashidah (خِلاَفَةُ رَاشِدَةٌ Rightly Guided Caliphate). So let the sons and daughters of Islam hasten their steps to dismantle disbelief in all its forms and manifestations, and establish for Islam its edifice and foundation: a Khilafah (Caliphate) on the Method of the Prophethood, spreading its justice and mercy to all people, led by the best of His creation.

﴿الرَّ كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ لِتُخْرِجَ النَّاسَ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ﴾

“Alif Lam Ra. This is a Book which We have revealed to you, O Muhammad, that you might bring mankind out of darkness into light by permission of their Lord - to the path of the Exalted in Might, the Praiseworthy.” [TMQ Surah Ibrahim: 1]