

THE QUIET REVOLUTION: HOW GLOBAL SOUTH IS REWRITING THE MODERNITY

INTRODUCTION

The western liberal order has been self-emptied to be the protector of modern civilisation based on principles of democracy, capitalism and human rights, over decades. However, behind this pretence of universality is a great paradox: these same values were developed in a system of colonial obedience, supported by oppression and forced into other nations by violence. The twenty-first century is a high point where the Global South, especially such a country as India, has already started to rewrite its own liberal order.

The Bretton Woods institutions like IMF and World Bank, NATO alliances, and the global structure of the UN led to the emergence of the Western liberal framework following World War II. It delivered good fortune by opening the market to free trade and providing steady rule by democratic rule. Nevertheless, such asymmetries were under an illusion of neutrality in the system. According to political theorist Achille Mbemba, liberalism made the experience of some people universal and human freedom. The decolonial turn attempts to bring out this hypocrisy.

THE CRISIS OF WESTERN LIBERALISM.

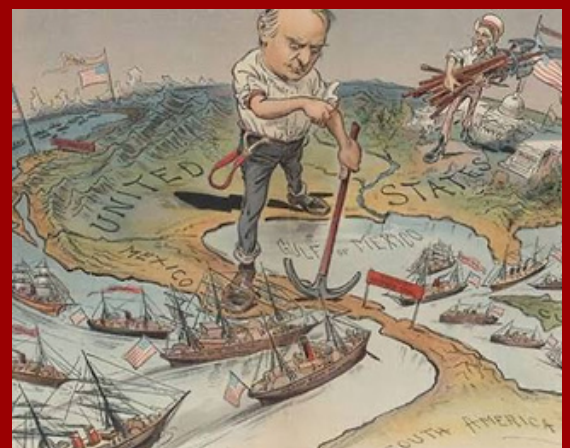
Western liberalism has lost credibility in the past few years. The U.S.-led war on terror, the NATO interventionism and the global financial crisis of 2008 all indicated the bias in the moral compass

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of liberalism. As The Economist Intelligence Unit (2024) reports, the confidence in Western democracies reduced by almost 30 percent between 2016 and 2023. Concurrently, economies of the global south such as India, Indonesia and Brazil had better citizen confidence with the governance and public institutions in spite of their contrasting democracies.

This morality perversion is a reminder of a worldwide finding: liberalism is not identical with progress. This division was heightened by the post-pandemic world in which Western countries hoarded vaccines when the South was struggling to access them, exposing how universal humanitarianism still exists in the world, controlled by profit and power.



INDIA'S DECOLONIAL MOMENT

The modern political and cultural trends in India are the symptoms of the further decolonial awakening. Since the renaming of colonial era names and symbols, the repositioning of the indigenous knowledge systems within the educational system, the country is starting to consciously write its own history. One such policy which illustrates an attempt to Indianize education is the New Education Policy (2020) which aims to incorporate local languages and traditional subjects such as philosophy, arts and environmental studies into modern sciences, as an apparent refutation of the Macaulayan legacy to the superiority of Western epistemology.

Digital Decolonization concept has a reflection in the movement toward data sovereignty in India as well. A NITI Aayog report (2023) indicates that the indigenous digital infrastructures (Aadhaar, UPI, CoWIN, DigiLocker) in India empowered millions of individuals but threatened the monopoly of Western technologies that currently dominate data capitalism. In that regard, India is not shunning modernity - it is reinventing it to its own morality and cultural standards.

Even Indian feminism which was previously bound to the Western theories is facing a decolonial change. The Western prism according to which women of the Third World appear as needless victims has been a subject of criticism of such scholars as Nivedita Menon and Gayatri Spivak. The new form of intersectional and Dalit feminisms opposes this story, basing itself on the local facts instead of Eurocentric concept of liberation.

THE SCHISMS OF A LIBERAL WEAKNESS IN THE WEST.

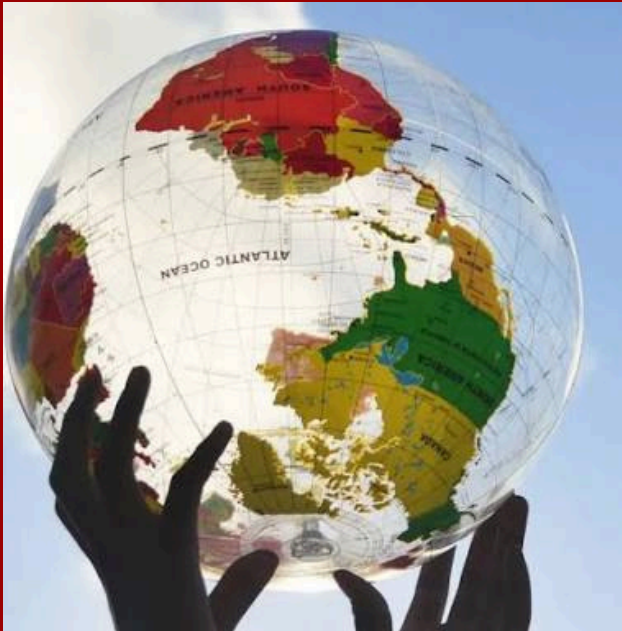
The west has crises of identity as the Global south claims to be independent. The antiquated liberal order has shown its moral weakness due to the emergence of populism, increased inequality, and the corrosion of democratic values. According to Edelman Trust Barometer (2024), the level of trust in democratic institutions in the U.S. and Europe has declined to its lowest point in 20 years, but the citizens in such nations as India and Indonesia express more positive views of their governments and social mobility.

This disillusionment is a result of the inability of liberalism to make the compromise between economic freedom and social justice. The neoliberal capitalism has brought increased inequalities in wealth and dependency instead of empowerment, which is generally sold across countries as a universal good. Oxfam (2023) claims in their Global Inequality Report that the top 1% of the wealth of the global population took 63 per cent of the total new wealth generated in the world since 2020, of which a sizable portion is located in the west. Decoloniality reveals this as not only economic imbalance but follows through on colonial extraction through financial systems of the world.

In addition, the West foreign policy is even more opposite to its principles. The advantages of humanitarianism applied selectively in the events of conflict.

Israel and Palestine, the war in Ukraine, and the global migration crisis highlights the fact that the liberal freedom is not unequivocal. Decolonial scholars such as Walter Dignolo and Boaventura de Sousa Santos like to point out that these kinds of double standards unveil the depletion of a world order which can not assert moral universality anymore.

THE GLOBAL SOUTH AND SOLIDARITY AND THE EMERGENCE OF MULTIPOLARITY.



The Western hegemony is becoming less dominant as the multipolar global order is becoming more common. The growth of BRICS, the Belt and Road Initiative of China and South-South cooperation structures are the combined effort by the Global South to define themselves. The relationships that India has developed with other parts of the world, such as Africa and Southeast Asia, in which nations focus on their mutual development as opposed to The United States of America, which operates under

Western models, demonstrates how global relations may appear.

UNCTAD World Investment Report (2024) points out that today, South trade makes up 38% of the total world trade flows, which is an astonishing figure considering that in 1995 it constituted only 17%. The economy of interdependence of developing countries is a challenge to the monopoly of the West, which is based on the markets, stories, and morality as well.

This decoloniality is not anti-Westernism but post-Westernism - the step further to no longer think in terms of progress having a Western mask. It redefines sovereignty as interdependence, based on equality.

RESISTANCE TO CULTURE AND THE WAR OF NARRATIVES.

The supremacy of the West did not exist on the basis of armies or capital but on stories on the superiority, civility and rationality. The decolonial project, as such, is a struggle of narratives too. The rebirth of cinema and literature in India, the Afrobeat music as well as Latin American political art are all forms of epistemic rebellion.

As noted in the 2023 report issued by the UNESCO Global Culture, global South cultural exports now constitute over half of the creative economy in the world. The decentralization of content creation in digital space is also present in digital platforms such as YouTube and regional OTT networks where non-Western voices have an opportunity to be heard by people across the world.

As an Indian web show challenges caste and a South African poet devises a new definition of identity, they all work together to erode the epistemic empire that the West established. The liberal order that was previously fueled by the ability to shape meaning is currently under fire on all fronts.

TOWARDS A DECOLONIAL FUTURE

The world should go beyond token inclusion in order to shift towards actual decoloniality. It necessitates an underlying change in our understanding about power, knowledge and justice. Decoloniality insists that democracy cannot exist without focusing on cultural settings, that capitalism can not exist without ecological equilibrium, and that freedom can not exist without epistemic equality.

The Western liberal order is not collapsing but is being remedied. The new world order will not be eastern and western, but equal versus hierarchical, diverse versus homogenous and co-operative versus dictatorial.

This transformation is significantly determined by the role of India. Being a multi-thousand-year-old civilized country with the pluralistic traditions, it will be able to provide the world with the alternative vision of progress, the one not based on domination but on Dharma, coexistence and balance. But decolonized states must also watch out against decolonized smeared egos becoming nationalistic vanity. The approach is also not to substitute one order with another but a polycentric world in which no civilization has any form of moral monopoly.

According to Kenyan author Ngugi wa Thiong'o, it is said that decolonization is not about reversing the past but rather it is about dragging the future outside of the empire's shadow. The Global South and its intellectual epicenter India is finally doing precisely that, reforming modernity to become a mosaic of many truths, not a monologue of a single truth.

