

Does Social Media Sell Us a Rope to Hang Capitalism?

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Theme: [History](#)

While some people are campaigning to get friends off Facebook due to [its authoritarian censorship](#), I would also like to note that my Facebook network has been a great tool in learning about the hidden mechanisms of our time—often in high resolution, close-up details.

Through Facebook posts I have learned who [Muammar Gaddafi](#) really was, what he meant for the Libyan people, and why the West was determined to destroy Libya. I have learned [how the Western governments tried to destroy Syria](#). I have learned [the century old history of the Western project to destroy Russia](#). I have learned how the corporate political party duopoly sells us projects of exploitation and subjugation through their good cop/bad cop marketing scheme. I have learned how sociopolitical, economic and cultural institutions perpetuate a capitalist hierarchy according to the interests of the ruling class.

Many of us are learning the structural mechanism of how the global capitalist hierarchy places people under the rule of corporatism, colonialism and militarism, while shelling out schemes after schemes to blind us, divide us, exploit us and subjugate us. One of my FB friends, the historian Luciana Bohne described what Facebook does with the old saying which is often ascribed to Lenin: “the capitalists will sell us the rope with which we will hang them.”

We reside within the imperial framework. There are a myriad ways that we are connected to the structural mechanisms of inhumanity. The fact that we are a part of the system is a given condition. It is a challenge to recognize the overall effectiveness of our actions in serving the purpose of bringing about a structural change to forward the interests of the people in harmony with our environment, while we are also a part of the structure.

Obviously, it is a difficult task, balancing ourselves to firmly stand, when we realize that we stand on colonized ground. How do we bring about a new world as we are born into the imperial cage, never fully seeing a world truly based on sharing, mutual respect and harmony with each other and with our environment?

One thing that’s clear is that we need each other to stand straight in raising awareness of the dire necessity of systemic change. The very act of connecting to one another spreads the critical awareness we need to build, the momentum to push away the decaying order of inhumanity.

Here, again, we must weigh a delicate balance. I certainly do not suggest that we ignore blatant imperialism in forwarding short term gain. We must be able to point out false ideas even when they are presented by well known, respected figures. However, we also do not want to become ideological terrorists, who engage in character assassinations among us with guilt by association, false accusations and fabrications. Those social media suicide

bombers do not see the victims as human beings. They would call names in the most hideous manner and they would baselessly accuse the targets of being government agents. They also often claim to be “socialists”. I would certainly do not wish to live in a “socialist” world filled with such unhinged people. Those people effectively divide us while giving the impression of socialism being authoritarian, undemocratic and totalitarian just as it’s advertised by the western establishment. We must not let those people colonize the ideas of socialism that directly challenge the capitalist domination. I am sure some of them are supported by the government agencies.

See how such people can cultivate doubts and suspicions among us? The marginalization and alienation imposed by the capitalist pressure, infiltrations, and direct attacks against dissidents create unhealthy mental conditions of paranoia, delusion and aggression among us. This is a force of destruction which can break us apart. The western authorities have known it, have known how to cultivate it for generations. We must be aware of it.

How Much is Your Story?

The capitalist system places different values to different ideas, stories, and things according to how well they fit within the interests of the ruling class. It is not just the people who are put in a hierarchical order according to their usefulness. For example, the media, schools, academic fields and society in general systematically value stories that reinforce the official narratives, while diminishing, or outright attacking obstacles that may hinder the integrity of the system. Isolated incidences, personal anecdotes, or systematic tendencies within certain contexts can be amplified or attenuated to give us an illusion of “reality” to manipulate our perception.

From this perspective, we should note that the mainstream media has been very keen on advertising the sinister aspect of Facebook for some time. The establishment always attempts to manipulate major forces in our society by such interventions. With the case of Facebook, however, we also know that it closely [resembles a terminated government funded social media program](#), and that Facebook officials have been willingly [working with the imperial establishment](#) in implementing policies. We certainly must have a realistic expectation toward it as well.

One of the most appropriate examples of the manipulation today would be how Russia has been portrayed in our society. The western establishment has been going all the way back to 1917 to demonize the trajectory of Russia as something that can be simply described as “evil”. Our school programs, entertainment, literature, music, movies, you name it, every layer of our society is embedded with some sort of bits and pieces indicating that “Stalin was a brutal dictator”, “communism never worked”, “socialism is undemocratic”, “evil is evil” and so on and so forth. The Western governments have certainly put enormous efforts in setting the trajectory of anti-USSR/Russia as a hegemonic agenda to break Russia apart in extracting its resources while incorporating its people in the western capitalist order. The demonization has been a necessary step for the imperial assault.

For example, in one of our Facebook exchanges on the topic, author John Stepling provided me with [an article](#) in which a Soviet history expert Professor Grover Carr Furr of Montclair State University says:

“The professor pointed out that historian Robert Conquest (the author of “The Great Terror: Stalin’s Purges of the 1930s” who passed away on August 3,

2015) had been working for the British Information Research Department (IRD) since its establishment and up to 1956. The IRD, originally called the Communist Information Bureau, was founded in 1947, when the Cold War era began.

“[The IRD’s] main task was to combat Communist influence throughout the world by planting stories among politicians, journalists and others in a position to influence public opinion,” Professor Furr explained.

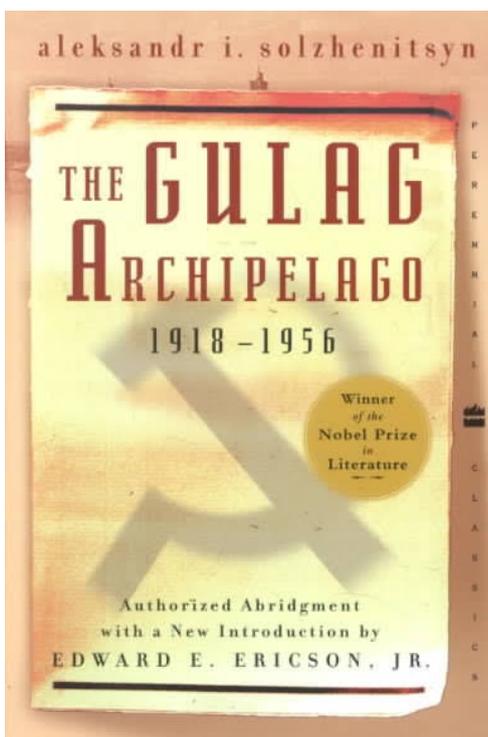
Conquest’s work was to contribute to the so-called “black history” of the Soviet Union, the professor noted, “in other words, fake stories put out as fact and distributed among journalists and others able to influence public opinion.”

“His book *The Great Terror*, a basic anti-communist text on the subject of the power struggle that took place in the Soviet Union in 1937, was in fact a recompilation of text he had written when working for the secret services. The book was finished and published with the help of the IRD. A third of the publication run was bought by the Praeger Press, normally associated with the publication of literature originating from CIA sources,” Professor Furr pointed out.

The professor remarked that to our days Conquest remains one of the most important sources of material on the Soviet Union for anti-communist and Russophobic historians.

The propagandist activity, masquerading as scholarship, was aimed against the USSR and coordinated by US/British intelligence.

Furr noted that Conquest periodically met with heavy criticism from prominent Western scholars, which blasted him for “consciously falsifying information” about the Soviet Union. In fact Conquest just used any source that was hostile to Stalin and the USSR, turning a blind eye to the fact whether it was reliable or not.”



Another example involves the case of celebrated Soviet defector and author Alexander Solzhenitsyn. His book “*The Gulag Archipelago*”—detailing atrocious stories of the Soviet

prison system—became a huge hit in the West, while Solzhenitsyn himself was subsequently awarded a Nobel Prize. However, beneath the official approval by the establishment, his reputation is quite questionable to say the least. Renowned American intellectual Gore Vidal even describes him thus: “He is a bad novelist and a fool. The combination usually makes for great popularity in the US.” Furthermore, according to [this article](#) (which also quoted Vidal):

“Solzhenitsyn defected to the West and settled in Vermont for a time. He was a staunch supporter of U.S. imperialism, urging at one point for the U.S. to return to Vietnam and finish the job on the commies there. In time, Solzhenitsyn began to pine away for the glory days of the Tsar and his anti-Semitism became increasingly apparent to the point where even his previous imperialist backers had to abandon him. The only people who seem to invoke his name these days are nutbags from the far right like Alex Jones.”

Here is [another article](#) on him.

The atmosphere concocted by the establishment to define certain countries as unconditionally evil gives a special meaning to stories from those countries. Those stories, whether they are true or false, fundamentally differ in their meaning within the imperial framework compared to, for example, someone from Africa talking about the French colonial atrocities of massacres and mutilations, a black youth talking about police shootings in the US, a Palestinian child talking about losing his or her entire family by Israeli bombing and so on.

The imperial theater gives special roles to stories from the imperial targets. You might remember [a sobbing young girl describing how Iraqi soldiers took babies out of incubators](#), which, of course, turned out to be a completely fabricated story. However, it firmly served in reinforcing the western colonial war momentum against Iraq, which ended up killing millions.

Such a dynamic has played a crucial role in building the momentum for propping up a Western puppet government in Ukraine, which has killed over 10,000 eastern Ukrainian people so far, where the [majority speak Russian](#).

Moreover, in the 1990s, the US backed destruction of USSR by Boris Yeltsin, who was openly described by US government officials as a US agent, brought about tremendous hardship for the people of Russia while turning sufferings into profits for Wall Street and “Russian Oligarchs”.

According to [Luciana Bohne](#):

“Between 1992 and 2000, there were between five and six million “surplus deaths,” 170,000 people were murdered, the GDP fell by 50% (more than during German occupation in WW II), 70 million fell into poverty, death rates increased by 60%, like countries at war, life expectancy decreased in males to 57, abortions increased spectacularly, birth rates fell , , , suicides, tuberculosis, measles, diphtheria (eradicated in the 1930s) . . . In short (and this was supposed to be a short post) Russia, under “shock-therapy” “reforms” became the site of an economic genocide.”

More recently, the demonization of Russia has become legal ground for a legislative action. Diana Johnstone points out the utter absurdity of the richest man in Russia Mikhail Khodorkovsky—who was jailed in Russia for engaging in criminal financial schemes to acquire public assets while giving financial opportunities to his western allies—blatantly influencing US politics by being a part of the momentum in enacting the Magnisky Act. All this has been going on without an objection from any US officials, meanwhile, the US government is accusing Russians of “political interventions”. She concludes in [her article](#):

“U.S. policy-makers practice interference every day. And they are perfectly willing to allow Russians to interfere in American politics – so long as those Russians like Khodorkovsky, who aspire to precisely the same unipolar world sought by the State Department. Indeed, the American empire depends on such interference from Iraqis, Libyans, Iranians, Russians, Cubans – all those who come to Washington to try to get U.S. power to settle old scores or overthrow the government in the country they came from and put themselves in power. All those are perfectly welcome to lobby for a world ruled by America.”

Indeed, discussing about [undeniable evidence of falsification of facts by the western governments](#) would most certainly attract people with personal anecdotes stating the hardships of their Cuban family members, Russian grand parents or North Korean relatives. I don't wish to minimize anyone's sufferings. However, what is the point of reinforcing the imperial aggression directed against their own country peoples when it is obvious that those stories are being spoken in the context of revealing blatant lies and deceptions concocted by western governments?

I certainly do understand the sentiment for the personal stories, and some of those people are certainly concerned about the situations they describe. However, we must also point out that in the capitalist order, our experiences, facts, myths, propaganda, counter propaganda, ideologies, religions and the rest of the elements, which construct our psychological-scapes, are not rooted to the actual communities and their peoples. The elements are removed from the people and places—their material facts, beliefs, values, norms and their environment, replaced in the commodified environment, and they act as currencies within the hierarchical power structure. The process often distorts the meanings and facts over time. Here is Luciana Bohne telling such a story on [her Facebook wall](#):

Capitalist hierarchy surrounds us with structural violence, inflicts active targeted assaults, and induces divisions and conflicts among us. It is imperative that we are aware of the dynamics in our struggles for a better tomorrow.

Now, having said all this, I would like all of you to ponder upon the fundamental trait of social media like Facebook. While we drag around our national identities, narratives told by regional authorities, our personal circumstances and our personal interests, we are facing each other as people in a virtual space. We instantly communicate regardless of time, space and borders. This has not happened in the history of mankind. This might be a tiny glitch in the neo-feudal era of capitalism. But this is an image of our species having a perspective of our own—regardless of our places in the global capitalist hierarchy. Could it inspire us to have real momentum for a future beyond the capitalist order? Could I suggest that when we argue with our fellow humans in this space, we take a moment and remind ourselves that we are in the special place in the special time for our species. I will certainly do so myself, and I hope you do too.

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