

Latest Defeat: Arab Nationalism in the Crosshairs

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It's confirmed, in case you missed it. Arabs really are savages.

I wonder if other Arabs feel as I do: that the death of former Libyan leader Moammar Gaddafi is a triple blow.

As western powers and their Gulf Arab allies gloat over their victory in Libya, we simple Arab peoples endure a threefold defeat:

- a) we are deprived of one leader who accomplished much- for his people and for Africans and Arabs in general;
- b) any balanced view of this Arab country's modern history will be impossible now; and
- c) we lost whatever shreds of our dignity we still held when we glimpsed some of the barbarian character of the rebels who ended the battle.

Along with western media and historians of war and terror, the vain glorious heads of state doubtless have their day. We scroll through graphic footage to dispel any rumor that this African Arab leader is alive. There's ample proof that he was dispatched most dishonorably. His regime is truly gone, the nation wrecked and plundered, cleansed of anything that might suggest Libya had achieved something in modern times.

As for me personally, I am in mourning. I admit it. I suspect that millions of others are experiencing a similar sadness, even grief, these days. Because we are not only witness to a dirty end and swift retelling of Gaddafi's rule and his development of Libya, however imperfect, as a modern society. The record is there—the literacy rate, an enviable per capital income, coveted health and education benefits, even though all this is kicked deeper under the sand, sucked into the detritus of war.

Meanwhile a new western-created and disseminated legend emerges—one sodden with correctness, heroism, humanitarianism—all internationally sanctioned. It sparkles.

Not only will documentaries and news reports pass over us as we quietly grieve in the shadows. We ourselves must veil our loss. Otherwise we would suffer a double defeat: we'll be challenged to defend a man who 'killed his own', who uttered outlandish, laughable words, a capricious fellow whose idiosyncrasies are dizzying and whose policies seemed crude.

Anyone who might write truths and come to Gaddafi's defense is simply not credible now. We might even be charged as having been in his pay, beneficiaries of his regime at one stage or another. (Forget about America's payouts, its unmatched atrocities and plunder; Washington's policies are directed against 'others', not America's own people!)

I am not only in mourning for a defamed man and the death of his achievements in terms of Libyans' living standard and its support for nationalist struggles. I weep for the ignoble rebels who became dirty and at the same time heroic agents of the western agenda, deployed hand in glove with NATO to 'protect Libyan civilians'.

In their military adventure, perhaps throughout their battles across Libya ending in Sirte, those gung-ho anti-Gaddafi rebels emerged- for me- not as liberators but as savages: the grubby, highly conspicuous frontline of hidden NATO warriors and their clean, smart gunships. We have not been allowed to see what crimes these fellows committed as they marched behind the NATO strikes, and 'cleansed' house after house, settlement after settlement, city after city. Although we could view their noble wounded rushed into the care of field hospitals, interviewed while recovering, the martyred remembered by proud families.

In the final battle, with the made-for-TV capture of the leader, suddenly neither NATO nor any politician is at hand. Instead, victorious rebels were given license to operate as they pleased. Packs of wild dogs set upon a wounded animal, they indulge an ugly fantasy. The result is less a humiliated Gaddafi than a gang of savage Arabs. Vultures, animals, ripping into their prey.

This is the image that we are left with. A ruthless bunch of beasts, untamed, primitive, conveniently with camera in hand to document their pleasure. It's almost pornographic. (From the little we know, American troops have behaved similarly in Iraq and Afghanistan. Yet, not being Arabs, they are not savages, just a few boys gone wild. And who remembers those images?)

Do those rebels who assailed the last Libyan loyalists defending Sirte not realize how they are manipulated and used to defame our entire race? Their actions become a stain on all of us.

While a 'detached' human rights official calls for investigations, the observing, cool-headed world is handed this souvenir, a savage image of Arabs and Arab culture.

All of us carry the smudge. This is why I mourn today. All the pride and dignity won by revolutionary Tunisians and Egyptians these past months has been overturned by these unleashed Libyan brothers.

Another generation is handed the task of rebuilding; they are next to be sucked into the redeeming cycle of music concerts, seminars, fundraisers, testimonial city tours, children arriving for surgery at the hands of gracious western medics and, and, and.

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