

## The Arab mind and the western Mind

The western mind in general tends to believe in the ideas and ideals associated with the concepts of freedom, democracy, justice and capitalism. But since these concepts are themselves products of the industrial age and its scientific and technological developments and sociocultural transformations, this mind understands that societal transformation is a process that does not stop changing; as a result, he understand that goals are moving targets that never stay in the same place for long. So, to take advantage of opportunities that keep appearing and disappearing, the western mind has trained itself to be flexible and practical; it adopted an attitude based on two pillars:

*The maximization of gains when winning is possible; and*

*The minimization of losses when losing is inevitable.*

Due to this philosophy, most businessmen and politicians particularly the American ones, tend to disregard business ethics and the public interest as they seek to maximize their gains; they also do not think much of the damage their actions could cause to others; the ends to them justify the means. Most western businessmen and politicians, therefore, are willing to go as far as it takes to enrich themselves regardless of the interests of their fellow citizens and nations, the fortunes of foreign states, and the life quality of the world's poor.

On the other hand, when losing is inevitable, the same people tend to do whatever it takes to minimize their losses, even if that requires lying, cheating, abandoning all principles and ethics, and even degrading themselves. However, the adoption of this attitude has enabled the western man in general to do better in good times and contain damage in bad ones.

In contrast, the Arab mind in general is more attached to moral principles and belief systems that tend to be inflexible. As a consequence, Arab politicians and traditional intellectuals continue to struggle to reinterpret traditional ideals and values to suit the times they live in. A typical Arab is more likely to forgo short-term gains, and overlook an opportunity to minimize losses in favor of being true to his principles and long term

objectives. It is, therefore, hard for Arabs to seek short-term solutions to minimize losses and work to maximize long-term gains. Individuals and nations that fail to take advantage of small opportunities to make some gains, and make small sacrifices to minimize short term losses are more likely to undermine their own capacities to protect principles they believe in and achieve goals they wish to accomplish.

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