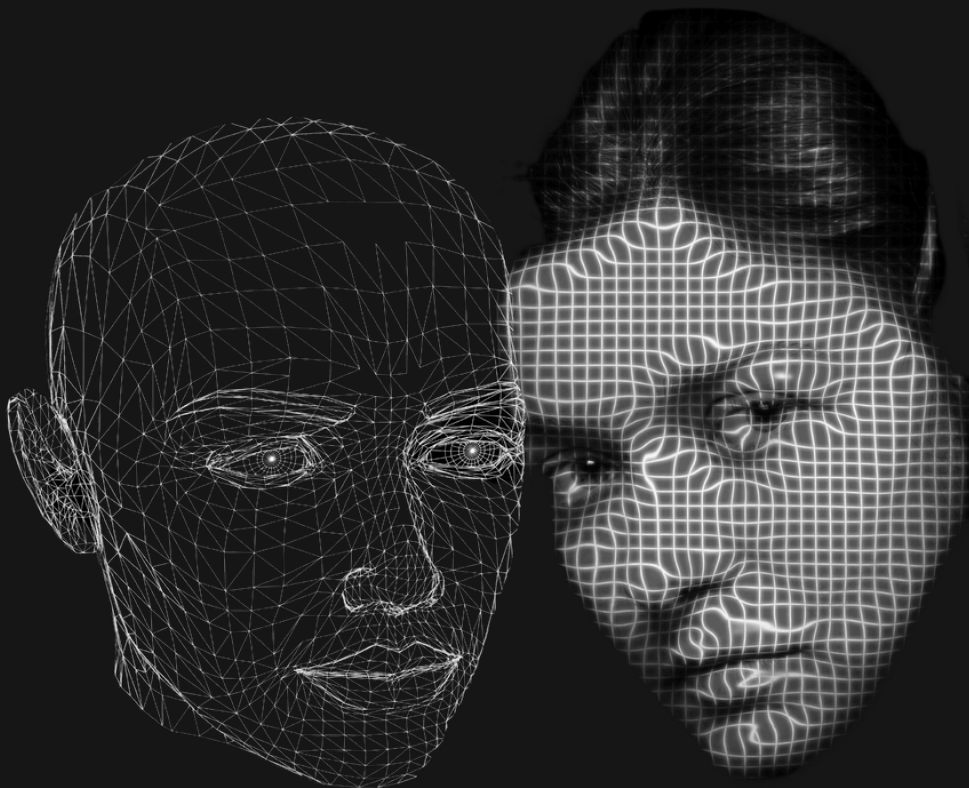


GLOBAL.

NEWSLETTER

OUR WORLD IS COMPLICATED. YOUR NEWS SHOUDL'NT BE.

Deception of reality comes in many forms.





Nº6.

This week on GLOBAL, we look at the masks of society. How nations like the British Empire and Saudi Arabia would utilize wording and carefully placed cultural and societal landmarks in order to mask for mischievous behaviors behind the veil. This issue also transcends to companies like Mercedes Benz, Theranos, and political parties like Angola's Communist party. Things that may have appeared as inherently "good" that became inherently "evil" and misguided.

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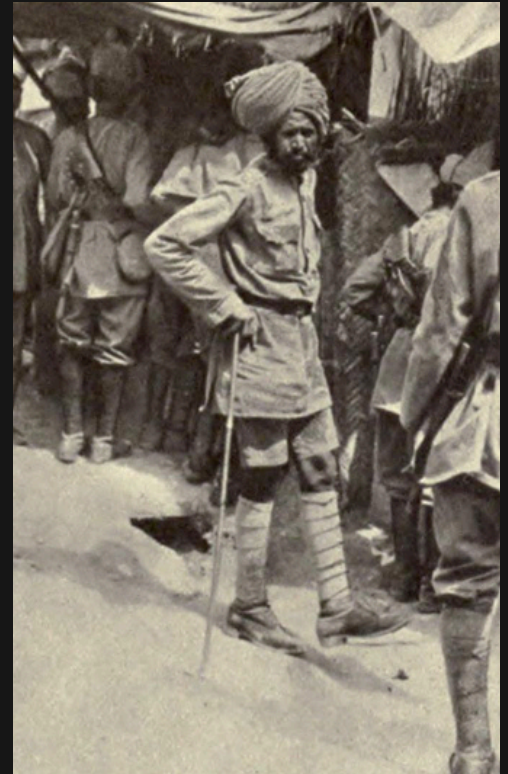


HISTORY.

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PAX BRITANNICA

GLOBAL HISTORY TEAM



The British Empire once ruled over a billion people at its height, from around 70 countries today. For a century of its global colonial rule, the British Empire would create a system of law, governance, and political alliances that would essentially set the world up for the modern era. English, Christianity, democracy, industrialism, and global trade were systems invented or pushed further by the British Empire. This hegemony of political and economic influence would propel Britain to be known as the largest Empire in history and by far the most powerful. However, it does not take long into its history before the realization that its pride in "Pax Britannica," a modern interpretation of the supposed "British Peace" of the 19th and early 20th century, is not entirely accurate and instead masks and hides the reality of the brutal and often devastating rule of the British Empire on every continent (Gough, 2023).

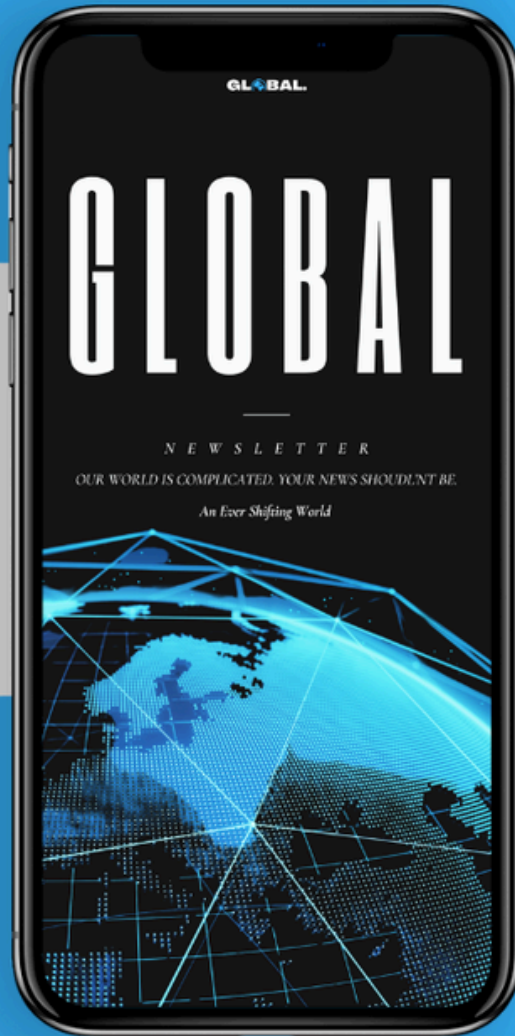
Pax Britannica is not a term utilized during the period it refers to; instead, it is a modern interpretation of a period of British geopolitical hegemony from 1814 to 1914, where the British Empire used its enormous economy and navy to stop piracy and the slave trade, punish the Belgians for human rights issues in the Congo, and defeat the deadly Dutch in Indonesia (Gough, 2023). However, while these moves appear to show power through peace, they were built off a massive greed from which Britain intended to control the world on its terms. Britain defeated Napoleon, devastated Russia, conquered China and India, colonized Africa, and formed enough economic trade routes to control over half of all the world's trade (McClam, 2016). All of these issues were deliberate British attempts at controlling the globe, and while they prevented further wars for decades, peace was formed out of war, not liberal altruism, as "Pax Britannica" might suggest. Across its many colonies, it had gotten through "... acquisitions by conquest. The empire was won by the sword and kept by the sword." and not through liberal peace as we might suggest today (Gough, 2023). Notably, British colonialism was one of the most violent in history, killing hundreds of millions through famines, wars, massacres, and forced environmental damage.



Due to this, "Pax Britannica" is not an accurate reread of British imperialism, but instead an elaborate Latin cover-up to a horrific period of history for the non-British. Except, even that reality is not entirely accurate. "The chapter suggests that Britain can be considered a case of singular hegemony, but of a distinctive type: it depended as much on British weaknesses as on its strengths. This was especially so in its inability to control the European balance and its increasingly exposed position in the Empire. Rather than rehearse the material dimensions of British economic power, the chapter turns to the followers and asks to what extent Britain was viewed as a model for emulation or encouraged a liberal order. These issues are explored in the contexts of free trade and the roles of sterling and the gold standard." (Clark, 2011). These British attributes of political power were also accurate, as was its violence. British imperial rule was made through violence, but it appears that there were genuine British attempts at modernization of human rights and the literal destruction of the Slave Trade. Britain was a founding member of the UN, League of Nations, Red Cross, and other humanitarian organizations. It encouraged democracy, had the most relatively peaceful decolonization, and even argued against French, Belgian, and German colonial practices. Britain's use of liberalism and violence has meant it is often looked at as the transitional superpower that combined violence with modern peace and security thought. While the British would commit awful crimes in India and Africa, they would also be one of the first to promote humanitarianism, causing a sort of hypocrisy in itself.

Whether or not the view of the British Empire should be entirely negative or at all positive, it is clear its rule was one of significant change, both in modern ideals that it founded and in cultural and political violence against the oppressed. The British Empire was the last of the old form of power. It was the last glimpse of the old ways of kingdom building and genuine empire construction on enormous scales. The Americans and Soviets would follow with new versions of the Empire that emerged from WW2. Britain would fade into a secondary category, and its enormous influence on history would also. However, for a moment, it was a nation that spread across 25% of the world, had a billion citizens, and controlled over half of the world's economy in a sort of "Pax Britannica." While its British peace may not be impartial, it certainly paints the picture of British power in the centuries prior. This super giant will always live the legacy of torment, curiosity, devastation, and cultural anglofication of Earth.

CONNECT. CHAT. CREATE.



GLOBAL. CONNECT.



TECH.

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THE TWO-SIDED SAUDI TRAINS

GLOBAL. TECH TEAM

The Middle East has rapidly changed since decolonization and the Second World War. Conflict, religion, human rights, and innovation have swayed back and forth for the past 100 years. In the oil-rich nations of the Arabian peninsula lie some of the most impressive technological projects that have occurred on Earth. From building high above the clouds, cities in line formation, sustainable mega-cities, and high-speed rail. Saudi Arabia is at the forefront of this technological innovation. One innovation is the "Dream of the Desert" bullet train.

Since early 2020, Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Tourism and essentially "fun" has been developing mass projects nationwide (Forbes, 2024). Think of the Jeddah Tower, the Line, and now there, Dream of the Desert. These luxury projects have become state symbols of Saudi Arabia's mission to be seen as an equal to the world's giants like the US, UK, France, China, and Russia. The train takes much of its inspiration from the historic luxury trains of Europe. Take France and Belgium's Orient Express mixed with the Japanese Shinkansen. This concept of scenic views and ridiculous speeds is the ambition of such a project. "Production has started on [Dream of the Desert](#), the first luxury [train](#) service in [Saudi Arabia](#), scheduled to cut a swathe across the kingdom's spectacular desert interior by the end of 2025. Made in Italy by hospitality company Arsenale Group and commissioned by Saudi Arabia Railways (SAR), the 40-cabin train will run on 800 miles of existing railway lines from the capital, [Riyadh](#), to Al Qurayyat in the northern province of Al Jawf, making stops along the way. The planned one- to two-day route takes in Al Qassim, Hail, and Al Jouf, on the edge of King Salman bin Abdulaziz Nature Reserve, before it terminates some 20 miles from the border with Jordan." (Condé Nast, 2024). These are highly ambitious claims, and the Italian partnership company Arsenale Group has already voiced several concerns.

A New Age

To begin is cost. Saudi Arabia estimates the cost to construct this mega project will be \$22 Billion just to start, with more required to construct routes inside metropolitan areas for the World Expo 2030 and the pilgrimages to Mecca (WSJ, 2024). This is an enormous undertaking, and already, Arsenale Group has had to get collaborative assistance from the Orient Express and La Dolce Vita train services (Condé Nast, 2024). The cost and design setbacks mean the train has been slowed, although the Saudi government is still confident of the 2025 opening date. The hope is to bring massive capital from an estimated 150 million new visitors to the country thanks to the train. "The update on Dream of the Desert is one of many as Saudi Arabia fast-tracks its ambitions to become a leading tourist destination, with plans to attract 150m visitors by the end of the decade." (Condé Nast, 2024).

Saudi Arabia is even using this new project to bring about a new view of the kingdom: "In January 2023, the first class of 32 women graduated from a one-year training program at the Saudi Railway Polytechnic, qualifying them with licenses to conduct high-speed trains on the Haramain network." (CNN, 2024). These women have not been operating trains yet, but Saudi Arabia states there seems to be no reason they could not in the future. This is an exciting proposal from a country notorious for its human rights issues (NYT, AI, 2024). Even stranger to this situation is how the Chinese government plans to assist in construction: "I came across the fact that a Chinese state-owned enterprise was involved in the first phase of building a high-speed railway between Medina and Mecca." (NYT, 2024). China is a nation now infamous for human rights abuses against Muslims, adding to the oddity of this multinational train project. Along with these issues comes the most prominent and most glaring image issue.

Saudi Arabia is being hit with massive accusations of human rights violations against labor workers, actively supporting violence in Yemen (one of the world's most significant humanitarian crises), a complete lack of women's rights, massive accusations of alleged assassinations of anti-Saudi officials, and now deliberate fraud to investors for project realities such as with The Line (NYT, AI, CNN, 2024). These accusations are attempting to be overshadowed by these grand projects to prevent the 2030 World Expo from being a complete sham. However, the reality is that Saudi Arabia has some serious international issues to delve into before it is seen as the developed international player it seeks to be seen as.



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ECONOMICS.

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JAPAN'S STRUGGLING ECONOMY

GLOBAL ECONOMICS TEAM
AND NICHOLAS SIMS



Modern Japan has always been a nation of technological advancement and quality craftsmanship. They demonstrated to the world how quickly an economy could flourish given the right mindset. Japan was devastated from WWII, and it was this hardship that bred an unwavering desire to advance. In fact, in the 1980s, Japanese society was viewed as a “economic miracle”– burgeoning technology, safe cities, and revolutionary transportation. Sadly, this bountiful economic growth did not continue. Japan’s economy has been stagnating for decades since the 1990s, ushering in a new era termed “The Lost Decades”. Japan’s economy has been still growing at a rate of around 1% but this is far below many other industrialized nations. There are countless factors that have contributed to this stagnation: demographic changes, over-speculation, and perhaps a saturation of the technology market. One thing is clear, however: this trend is continuing for the foreseeable future.



Germany has recently overtaken Japan in terms of nominal GDP, bumping Japan down to the world's fourth largest economy. While fourth is not a bad situation by any means, it is a far cry from being the world's second largest economy less than 15 years ago, only behind the United States. Germany now has a nominal GDP of \$4.5 trillion while Japan lags behind at \$4.2 trillion, and this gap will likely only widen. Germany has avoided economic stagnation through its generous immigration policy to make up for low birth rates. Great Britain's (Once the third largest economy in the world following WWII) economy has also stagnated, with a shrinking GDP at a rate of 0.3%.

Japan is an island nation with a rapidly aging population and few immigrants. Its automobile industry has seen increased competition with the onset of electric vehicles. Robotic automation has failed to provide the productivity boost it had once promised. Japan's future is uncertain, if not bleak. While still a developed nation and technologically advanced, declining birth rates, isolation, and a reluctance to outsource labor means that it will gradually exert less influence on the world in the coming decades.



TECH.

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MERCEDES TRIES TO MAKE ELECTRIC REVOLUTIONARY

GLOBAL, TECH TEAM

Mercedes Benz, a true pioneer in the automotive industry, has led the way in numerous innovations, from adaptive cruise to multi-stage airbags, electronic stability control, and other significant safety and technological advancements. This legacy of success, which saw Mercedes Benz at the forefront of global advancements, clients, and valuation for most of the 20th century, is a testament to the brand's pioneering spirit. However, in the 21st century, the brand's lead and success have faced challenges as other carmakers BMW and Audi inch closer to the three pointed star crown.

In order to counteract this growing threat to the Mercedes market and its supremacy, the automaker has pulled out all the stops to create the most efficient and advanced electric, hydrogen, and hybrid vehicles on sale. "Mercedes-Benz has engineered a new powertrain that aims to revolutionize vehicle efficiency. Developed to push the limits of production models, as previewed in the Vision EQXX concept car, the next-generation electric drive system raises the bar for the brand and automakers across the globe." (Newsweek, 2024). This new powertrain has one technological awards across the board and has already been announced to be used in all new electric models starting at some point in the coming years. Daimler (Mercedes-Benz) hopes this new project will turn the tide of the lessening Mercedes support back to its 20th-century control of the luxury car market.

This new project starts with the Mercedes EQXX, the world's most advanced and efficient electric vehicle ever built. For context, "The Vision EQXX made the 627.6-mile (1,010 km) trip from the Mercedes-Benz Center in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, to the Mercedes-Benz Brand Center in Dubai, UAE, in 14 hours and 42 minutes. Despite temperatures reaching 93 degrees Fahrenheit (34 degrees Celsius), the EV was more efficient than ever, using just 7.4 kWh of energy per 100 km (62 miles). That is less than the 8.3 kWh/100 km it used on its longest-ever drive, from Germany to England." (Carscoops, 2024). This vehicle still had around 192 miles of battery left off. It is an incredible advancement in engineering and gives a promising future to the electric car, which has been under major fire for its lack of usability on long distances and in variable temperatures. This car promises to shape the industry, and Mercedes has said it will loan the tech to other manufacturers (Mercedes-Benz, 2024).

This new electric platform will be put inside numerous new cars, starting with their all-new CLA class Mercedes Modular Architecture (Newsweek, 2024). Whether this new plan can fix the electric industry, dishevel Tesla's lead, and make the electric future plausible for people globally is unclear, but it's the best shot the luxury car market has had in years as the electric market shows worrying signs globally. With continents like Africa and South America still not open for major electric car distribution, these new long-range platforms for more affordable vehicles may be what the sustainability world has been waiting for.



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POLITICS.

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ANGOLA'S HIDDEN COMMUNISM

BY: AUSTIN WALLACE AND
GLOBAL POLITICS TEAM



Angola is a relatively new country in the context of the modern state. In its brief history since 1975, it has seen massacres, Communist civil wars, invasions, independence, economic struggles, and famines. Amidst these enormous geopolitical problems, Angola struggled to find its identity in a sea of ideological stimuli that had long plagued Africa. From Portuguese colonialism to Soviet Communism and American capitalism, the world descended on Angola and created an environment of danger and fear that would transcend into the communist period of Angola under the communist dictatorship of Jose Eduardo dos Santos.

From 1975 to 1992, the African state of Angola was ruled ruthlessly and was operated as a puppet of the Soviet Empire and as an ally to Cuba and another communist allies. "Africa's drive for independence came to a head by the 1960s, at the height of the Cold War. It was seen by the Soviet Union as an opportunity to spread socialism to developing countries, build a sphere of influence and create a bloc in opposition to the West. While Americans feared a communist takeover of the continent, the relationships the USSR forged in Africa did not last long. Hasty and careless evaluation of potential socialist states, emphasis on the military leading violent insurrections, and inadequate aid all prevented the Soviet Union from developing anything more than, at best, friendly associations with countries that would eventually align themselves with the West." (geohistory, 2011). This period of African communist expansion was built off the service many communist states had done to free many states from Portuguese rule. Across Africa, from Angola to Mozambique and all over the Sahel, Communism spread throughout the interworkings of African society. The massive anti-western sentiment after the independence conflicts would cause a considerable shift in geopolitical policy to win the continent. Notably, former British colonies who joined the Commonwealth were famously able to avoid this period, and the same goes for states that remained close to France.

This meant a period of African history for two decades of split and often violent communist rule on the continent. Unlike in other states where Communism had succeeded in becoming dominant, such as the Soviet Union or China, many states in Africa would never see stability under communist rule—experiencing consistent civil wars and government crackdowns. In order to understand more specifically why it failed in Angola, you have to look at a set of reasons for Communism's inability to catch on in the continent.

1. The Exploitation of the Angolan people - "Many governments not only nationalized European companies, ostensibly to prevent "foreign exploitation," but also vented their rage against the natives. In many other countries, the natives were squeezed out of industry, trade, and commerce, and the state emerged as the domineering, if not the only, player. Indigenous operators were not tolerated. Indeed, there was a time when the director of the Club du Sahel, Anne de Lattre, would begin her meetings with the frightening remark, "Well, there is one thing we all agree on that private traders should be shot" (Ayittey, 2019). Life under communist Angola was one plagued by oppression and violence on a nationwide scale. There were no property rights, freedoms, and the right to buy and sell. You were at the mercy of the regime, which was once again set up by a nation that you had no connection to other than supposed ideology. Across Angola, farmers and merchants were treated as nothing by the regime and eventually arrested or killed for operating their businesses. "Eventually, the peasantry rebelled. Farmers decided that they would no longer produce surpluses for the state to expropriate. Beginning in the 1980s, production of food and cash crops began to decline across Africa." (Ayittey, 2019).





2. Administrative failure and corruption - "More perniciously, the ruling elites discovered that they could use state controls to enrich themselves and punish the political rivals. For example, they would deny import licenses to import newsprint to newspapers that were critical of them." (Ayttey, 2019). The elite of the ruling class would dine on European cuisine with luxury products and cars, all while the people had to live off of state-owned products only. It was another ruling vs. ruling in a country that had felt this way for over a century under Portugal. This, coupled with massive government failings like an inability to set up health systems under one admin or a complete lack of metropolitical transportation or electricity, meant that Angola was years behind when it came out of Communism in 1992.

3. Misplaced ideological colonialism - One of the most critical factors to its downfall was the lack of connection to the populace. "In traditional Africa, one does not have to line up before a chief's palace to seek permission to engage in trade or some occupation. Before the colonialists arrived, there were free markets, free enterprise, and free trade in Africa. Perhaps, this was the most singular reason why socialism failed miserably in Africa because it is an alien ideology." (Ayttey, 2019). Much like the colonial tendencies of the Portuguese, Communism became a colonial ideology in nations like Angola. It oppressed, put down, and removed the traditional liberties and religions of the nation. It took the essence of the country out of it and replaced it with an ideology that no one on the continent could grip well with.

Angola's nearly 26-year civil war would end in 2002, with much of the fight ending in 1992. It would kill 800,000 people and displace over 4 million (UMASS, 2005). It was a deviating period of rule and violence. In 1992, Angola transitioned to a multi-party democratic capitalist system that it still retains somewhat today. Angola never got to recover from the horrors of colonialism, and it never recovered from the damage of Communism. Today, Angola is a democratic nation that is relatively peaceful and stable despite some consistent conflict in the north. Its people enjoy civil liberties and freedoms and have remained a nation of formidable determination to succeed. Its past with the Soviets will never be forgotten, but its future is bright, and as Africa grows more powerful, Angola could see itself at the center of a new continent of peace and prosperity.

ETHERANOS'S LIE.

A GLOBAL COMMITMENT,

HYDROGEN WORKS?, CUBA'S

COMMUNISM, OTTOMAN'S

STAINED LEGACY.

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