

Glimpse

Into the Syrian civil society

Memory saving

There is always a way to succeed

Overlooked battle



Kesh Malek

Glimpse aims to shed the light on the Syrian Civil Society which was revived after the Syrian revolution in 2011, showing the civil initiatives and sharing inspiring stories led by grass-roots and civil society movement inside and outside Syria. Glimpse is envisioned to be a reliable resource for readers interested in knowing more about Syria, the history, the society, and the thousands-year-old civilization.

As a youth workgroup Coinciding with the beginning of the Syrian revolution in Aleppo Northern Syria "Kesh Malek" was formed. Its first activities were sharing and taking part in the peaceful movement, demonstrating and spreading demonstrators' demands of "Freedom, Justice, and Dignity." The paigns driven by the group's long term vision to reach a better future for Syria. As "an Independent Democratic Pluralism state, respects human rights and devotes citizenship and justice values."



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Education in NW Syria

After the overthrow of the Islamic State of Iraq and Sham in 2017, the city's young population was struggling to recover the educational system and losses of education due to the prevention of education to girls and teaching an amended curriculum that serves ISIS ideology.

During ISIS's rule in the region, a great portion of the local population preferred to keep their children indoors off school, fearing exposure of their children to be a brainwashing radical ideology. This had resulted in a steep decline in the school attendance figures and school drop off. Despite maintaining a home-based education style by some families to keep their children on track, the majority of children suffered from a learning gap that needed to be recovered.

Since its liberation, the local administration and civil society have been working to amend the educational system and recover the child population to be back on the school desk. Aimed overcoming the educational rift. Groups of civil society organizations began working to provide children with different programs to encourage them and their families to return to school.

Takaful Sham organization re-launched recently in Ezaz, the third version of their educational program which has been successfully running for three years. Ahmad Al Al-Khaten,

program manager in the NGO explains that the renewal is being held at five schools, three on the outskirts camps of Ezzaz city and two inside the city.

The programs make good use of the free spaces in those schools to hold acceleration education sessions to the local children who have left school and are working, staying at home.

The program beneficiaries children figure is 1500 children, which is considered low in comparison with the number of dropped off children. The programs' schedule aims to prepare children aged between eight and fifteen, with refreshing curriculums that cover Math, Arabic, and English, let alone free transportation between their homes and school.

In addition to the standard classes that reproduce education to children Takaful's program utilizes entertainment sessions aimed to improve children's skills and boost interaction learning and personal communications with one another inside and outside the classroom.



“The centers had brought the local community to band together and made it a home for everyone in the city to spark new revolutionary ideas and activities

“The project upholds moral and future values of education to the recipient children who dropped off affected by various reasons. It improves their confidence and alleviates their fears of going to failure and learning years of absence, so by the end of the program they reintegrate with the regular schools.”

On the same page through mending the damage education had suffered from in another post-ISIS city of Mare in northern-east Aleppo countryside. Kesh Malek organization has also been undertaking for the third year in a row a similar program where it aims to minimize the scale drooping off widespread in the city.

A comprehensive mixture of acceleration and social programs that target a scale of 442 children for four months. The program includes in addition to parental awareness sessions that illustrate the importance and role of helping their children resume their education to help their children build a better future.

A fundamental division of the project encompasses a program

called “A-Deal” that encompasses a social-physio support program which is a preparatory course before they take before rejoining normal schooling.

Al Kasma explains that the program equips children in a basic mind map on how to overcome their problems and how to imagine and think of the future that they want to pursue. The sessions encompass children [aged between 8-14 years-old] and teach them various social and communication skills and other related concepts,” Kesh Malek Program facilitator in Mare.

“The organization vision is to enhance children’s communication abilities concerning how to overcome fears, define their identity, interact with their peers, and how to deal with emotions,” he added

“Throughout education, NGOs are endeavoring to render children’s identity more attached to themselves to make confidence and restore their belief in the value of life, trust in abilities and hope for future growth and success.”

Memory saving

Substantial element to address Syrian' suffering in their pursuit of redress and accountability.

At the onset of any political or conflict resolution initiative concerns, and challenges arise to the peacebuilding process through cessation of hostilities and further avoiding recurrence of the mass killings of the past war-crimes. Implicit in this concept "none-recurrence" is the idea that in order to build and assure democratic and nonviolent future, it is necessary to create the conditions that will deter political state violence, so that it will "never again" be repeated by future regimes, arguably. One major recent methodology that has been developed and utilized in both conflict or post-conflict societies is saving the memory of the past and ongoing atrocities.

During a state of conflict and mass killing, notably in regimes repression against civil right movement and rebels is to remember the widespread violence so that accountability could be achieved, and implementing transitional justice in the following stage. But when the violence and heinous crimes are beyond measures how remembering is plausible and what is to be held accountability

Recalling the political violence, state repression, human suffering, the social and political conditions that allowed the violent conflict to emerge is part of what we have a duty to remember.



At the time of transition in the 1980s in South America after the long internal conflict, memorialization of the political violence and the atrocities committed by the state. The creation of this memory was justified in terms of the contribution of memory to the construction of the emerging democratic regimes consolidating transitional justice. It was conceived of this documentation of these memories of past violence as the foundations of democratic citizenship in the future.

At that time, there was an intrinsic relationship between the activation of memories of the repressive past and the process of democratic institutionalization. The belief was that only through remembering and creating an accountability system, through an active policy related to the past, so just and democracy, redress for victims could be constructed and transformations toward the future envisaged.

“ We filmed and documented the martyrs and wounded in every attack site that our volunteers go to as part our daily rescue mission, not as a primary role of our work, however, we realized the importance of these documents in saving Syrian memories and war crimes of the regime to which can be used as evidence in international courts

Civil society embankment in documentation

In Syria, in an ongoing political dillama and the continuum of the mass violence, documentation of the mass genocides and suffering of the people have become vital to archive documentation and uphold in the future the state violence into accountability.

The documentation is being undertaken through a wide range of independent journalists on the ground and civil society organizations. In addition to their fundamental role saving lives, the White Helmet (Syria Civil Defence) for instance has been creating one of the biggest archives of the war-crimes of the Syrian regime and its allies since its establishment in 2013. Abdul-Rahman Al Mawas the official spokesman of the White Helmets illustrated that their work has not mainly been directed to document war-crimes. The White Helmets' volunteers responded to the aerial mortar bombardment of the civilian population areas that killed the overwhelming civilian population.

“We filmed and documented the martyrs and wounded in every attack site that our volunteers go to as part our daily rescue mission, not as a primary role of our work, however, we realized the importance of these documents in saving Syrian memories and war crimes of the regime to which can be used as evidence in international courts.” Al Mawas said

The White Helmets kept a policy of documenting and securing those evidence, so they are not lost and kept safe for the coming generation. The civil society organization, the spokesman explained, further offers and opens its materials for any international organization that seeks to bring to justice the war criminal and perpetrators to bring justice and redress for the Syrian people whose suffering and death is still ongoing.

However, in the international realm, various challenges arise for justice firms in their pursuit to try the Ba'ath war criminals. The immense amount of material by civil society actors and journalists must Haid Haid, a fellow at the Chatham House in London explains that actors involved in the documentation process “should document cases according to international standards to ensure that their data can be used as admissible evidence. Then it can also work with international organizations such as the International Impartial and Independent Mechanism (IIIM) to establish linkage evidence to tie perpetrators, whether individuals, structures or institutions, to specific crimes. This requires establishing administrative proof such as records of orders, command structure, etc.” Haid said

“Towards that end, actors working on this issue should collect and preserve evidence in a clear formation that can be accessed easily even decades in the future.”



A memory saving role in social transformation is to address these issues and struggles the nation has suffered from its regime. Memory relates to institutional processes at the level of the state, symbolic and cultural processes affecting broader society, and related initiatives in education and memory transmission. The act of producing effective justice tools of redress, saving memory in the international criteria that neither civil society actors nor individuals have been adequately trained in order to produce international admissible pieces of evidence.

"The main goal is to keep a record of what happened in Syria so people, either now or in the future, can access that information. And know what happened. This task is especially important as many propaganda campaigns have been launched over the past years in order to misrepresent what happened and continue happening in Syria."

Disruption of the victim's memories and denial of criminality.

According to Haid, Many Syrian and international organizations are archiving what's happening for when the right time comes to hold perpetrators accountable. The ability to challenge the accuracy of archived evidence depends mainly on how it was collected and stored. Unlike media campaigns, which can spread misinformation without evidence through spreading doubts, pieces of evidence are harder to manipulate in legal proceedings especially when they are collected and stored according to international standards. Therefore, it is important for those who are documenting evidence to know how to do it. Likewise, it is important to work with credible international organizations that can assist in doing it the right way and ensure that the evidence is properly secured for when the right time comes.

The regime or state violence has not only been increasing yet denies to acknowledge its crimes and further endeavoring to undermine the irrefutable materials journalists and civil society actors on the grounds are streaming daily on social media. "The Assad regime accompanied with his allies have been systemically trying to distort the global attention with baseless fabricated news about our work. "Al-Awas said

Inconsistency media campaigns have been trying to swiftly grab global attention from the real crimes. Re-

newable media guerrilla campaigns led by Russian-Syrian trolls constantly accusing the White Helmets in particular.

The campaign designers are attempting to tamper and weaken the materials that we share with the international media. Furthermore, knowing that these pieces of evidence are a cornerstone in the future accountability process in Syria and spread distorted news and information and consequently make our archive not taken seriously by the international actors in the future.

“ The main goal is to keep a record of what happened in Syria so people, either now or in the future, can access that information. And know what happened

Haid explains that, although much of the documentation data may not be admissible as evidence in judicial proceedings, it can play an important role in supporting broader justice processes in the future such as truth-finding, reparations, and restoration programs. Likewise, mapping the violations in Syria, coupled



with information about the political and humanitarian context in which the violations were committed, can guide future investigators that may be relevant for truth-telling and reconciliation.

Memory Saving and transitional justice binary

Nonetheless, the white helmets have been tireless, rescuing and documenting according to the international criteria of war-evidence of the ongoing mass genocides across northern Syria in order to guarantee admissibility of the gathered materials. "We continue our work hoping that justice can be one day achieved, and perpetrators can be brought to court upholding the redress principle to millions of Syrians in their pathway towards transitional justice." The Spokesman explains.

Gathering enough evidence and raising awareness about the atrocities committed can help mobilize local communities to pressure authorities to establish a transitional justice process in the future. It can also

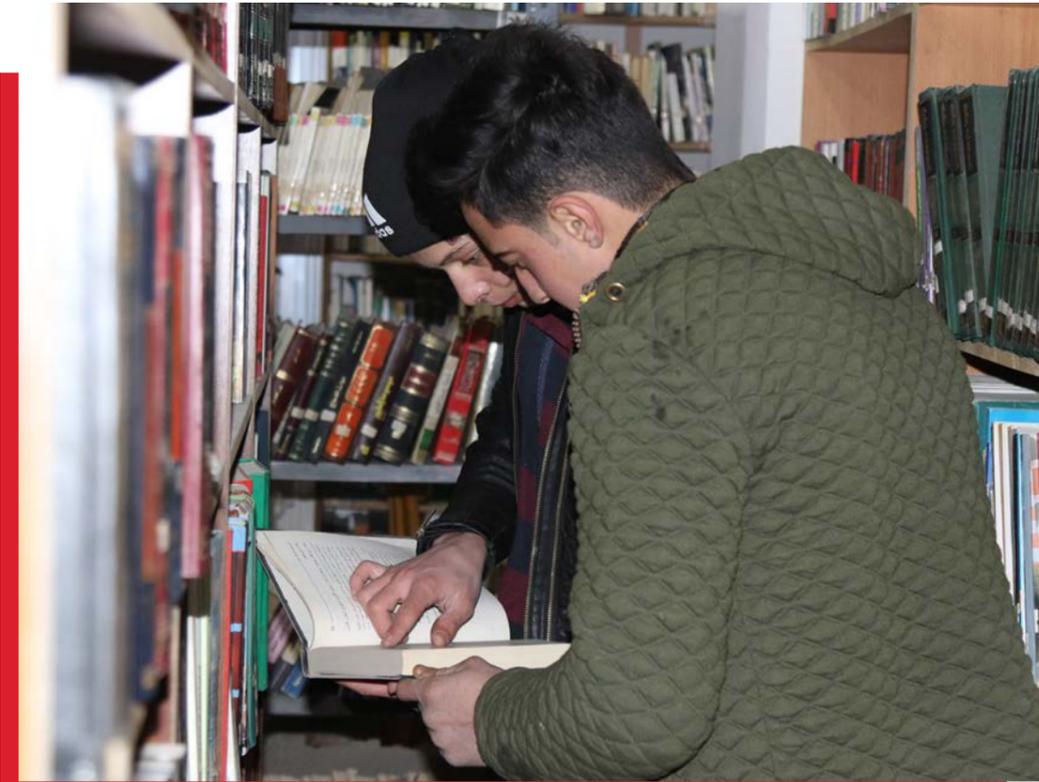
use that community pressure to hold those in charge accountable and prevent a political deal at the expense of serving justice.

These types of documentation can serve to recognize survivors of conflict, raise awareness of the in-country situation and contribute to future memorialization and truth-seeking processes.

Victims need to tell the truth about what happened in order to know that their suffering has not been ignored or neglected. Likewise, documenting what happened can help design reparations and restoration programs.

In Syria, where the conflict has resulted in the widespread destruction of public and personal assets, reconciliation cannot take place without tackling the issue of restoring property and compensation as part of the transitional justice process. Thus, evidence collection can also help the state in the future to identify priorities, which will be especially pressing as the state resources for reparations will likely be limited.

Overlooked battle



“ The civil society needs to uphold the significance of reading contribution to society holistically

The Battles that have not been fought stands on the books' shelves

In the city of Ezaz, a renewing library initiative has reopened the city's main library after being closed for over six years due to negligence. The city's nearly half-million residents will be able to visit the library, read, hold social reading activities and reading circles.

According to the initiative's activist and head of the campaign and Ezaz's youth's team, the new campaign of its kind in the city targets to run maintenance not only the library

facility but also the books in the library include which reaches nearly up to 30 thousand books. The library book collection includes a large spectrum of social science and art books. The commission-free library will open daily to the public reader and encourage them to re-embrace reading habits.

The enterprise is undertaken by a group of 10 youth volunteers who are working on the restoration process from clearing the library to fixing old used books and publicize amongst all Syrian to visit the library and explore the books and free space that they can use for peaceful reading.

“We aim throughout the awareness campaign across the city to boost people to bring back reading as a daily habit.”

“Reading is an integral tool for fighting ignorance, radicalism and the evil ideology that is based use people's basic knowledge to brainwash their brain. This would not have occurred if reading public education was in place.”

Neglected battle

Mohammad Al- Saayd, social and physiological specialist based in Turkey unravels one of the grassroots problems that the Ba'ath regime, civil society organizations have failed to properly address. He explains that Assad the son and father's policy have always aimed to indoctrinate Syrian brains with the one-sided book's theme that incorporates explicitly Ba'ath ideology.

“Reading improves and expands people's knowledge. The regime's policy in Syria, even the school-

ing system, worked to make youth do not enhance reading habits by the curriculums. that made young people hate reading and tearing apart books when they finish. This can give us a glimpse of how Assad wanted Syrian, notably youth to develop an attitude towards learning and personal education, let alone the public school.

The importance of libraries, reading shall become one of our essential battles that goes hand in hand with the military battle against the Assad regime. “The civil society needs to uphold the significance of reading contribution to society holistically.”

Throughout books enrichment of people's thinking regarding various public sciences, national and international affairs, namely the one that had been banned before the Syrian uprising. Reading makes people think and expand their knowledge about different concepts related to their rights.

“Reading is the bread of the uprisings. It is the seed of free-thinking and free nations.” He said,

What has negatively affected Syria over the past years was ignorance. The ignorant movement by the Baath has been used by, not only Assad but also with radical groups who brainwashed people. If Syrian were on a higher level of knowledge, their immunity would have prevented many crises that occurred over the past years. Therefore, if civil society craves a social change in the long term in Syria, they must revive reading habits in every Syrian district.

Unexplored initiatives

Al-Saayed has co-founded Dobamen initiates in Hatay, Turkey where he runs amongst Syrian girls reading challenges. The groups meet to decide the book, read it, then come back and discuss their thoughts after summarizing the books' ideas.

The concept of this whole imitative is to provide the new generation with space where they can share their thoughts and ideas freely with no boundaries. It brings different learning and thinking methodology where they can be critical and unhesitant, afraid of what their thoughts are.

“Schools many times give people ignorant instead of knowledge, hence libraries and self-motivated reading is the only means to learn which where civil society shall invest if their aim is long term change,” Al-Saayd explain

The civil society could help to invest in small endeavors that assist not only libraries reopening but also thinking about how we can use technology to serve this cause. Everyone today has access to the internet which can be taken advantage of by providing new content that encourages reading.

“We can produce video materials that give people suggestions for books to read of different sciences and arts.” Al Sayyid said,

“This accumulation of knowledge building and exposure to a variety of knowledge will render an imperative advancement towards an intellectual generation that will build better Syria,”





There is always a way to *Succeed*

In one of the remote towns of Idlib western countryside, a story of a center that started small in Al Janodeya town where Najlaa Nasef was born and raised before she moved to Aleppo to study law graduating at the first year of the Syrian upheaval. Nasef's passion, however, was driven by her love to teach. She started by running at her household a school where the town's children come to acquire basic knowledge and literacy.

The development scale fluctuation that the 32 years-old community

leader was attributed to the constant violence and military insurgency by the Assad-Russian coalition. However, while the school children were absent unable to come to study, Nasef had effortlessly worked to improve her working skills and personal capacity.

Limited means and big dreams

"My bigger dream was participating in the change-making of my society. The change that I have always

wanted to achieve has been through helping the young generation," she said,

Through the self-learning process, Nasef gained more experience about various subjects that capacitated her to do few organizations, however, her passion to support local youth and the absence of NGOs enterprises in social capacity enhancement, namely women have encouraged her to establish a small scale center.

The community leader believes that women are now more capable to

carry out independent enterprises to be active citizens and enhance their societies, "the society nowadays enjoys more tolerance to support women-led initiatives.

Aspired by its mission to spread knowledge amongst locals Nasef named the Al-Nawah center hoping that her effort alleviating women's dependency on men and mobilizing marginalized groups in the society to be self-dependent through the center's courses.

“ There is a big scale of ignorance in the society, especially among women. I did not have the chance to learn or go to school

The community leader explains that the center provides computer skills, resumé preparations, interviewing skills courses aimed at equipping women with, even might sound basic, yet pivotal criterions women lack. "The provision of these courses would boost their abilities and employment likelihood. one the one hand".

Derived by the need to survive and earn a living due to the economic difficulties and poverty proliferation, Nasef undertook other courses such as hairdressing to support women with tools that could help them financially.

Jamila Al Kalthoum, one of the center's trainees, amplified the need

for the efforts and similar endeavors that the Al-Nawah's center. She stressed that "There is a big scale of ignorance in the society, especially among women. I did not have the chance to learn or go to school,"

The 25 years old beneficiary asserted that she and a large segment of the female were thrilled and engaged actively in the courses that the center is offering. "We want to come to the center always and take more courses, we want to learn new

roles.

While local women struggle from a clear absence of the understanding of law between women and especially the laws that entitle their rights, Nasef believes that the civil society has done very little supporting enterprises like hers, at least in her town.

Eliminating ignorance proliferation about these subjects is one of the top priorities of the center. Despite the resource's limitation, Nasef vows



things," she noted,

New initiative

Taking advantage of her legal background, Nasef began running basic law sessions for the town's women which were held in collaboration with other NGOs. The session taught the participants who aged between 20-60 years old about women's rights and broadly explained legal subjects that intersect with women's

that she will continue to work within her own capacity. "I will carry on until obliterating the illiteracy scale, amplify both women abilities, capacity and increase their awareness," she said

"Women are willing to learn, they just need the means that aid them to achieve their rights of self-empowerment, independent to engage positively in the social change movement."

The possible or impossible upheaval

The Syrian Revolution through the eyes of the youth

On the 18th of March 2011, the Syrian revolution began. Influenced by the popular movements and was part of the widespread revolutionary (Arab Spring) across the Middle East in Tunisia followed by Egypt, Libya, Yemen, and later expanded to Lebanon, Iraq, and others, albeit at varying rates.

Syrian's frustration was a mixture of immense political oppression, economic, social deficit structures. The ruling totalitarian regimes have based on enormous natural resources to squash their opponents and increase their people's suffering, poverty, and deprivation of liberties and basic human rights.

The Syrian revolution's remarkable landscape was not down to its widespread among the Syrian population only, but the incredible youth participation and resistance of the state violence and repression which is seen now.

Due to their revolutionary activism and security threats by security intelligence, many had to drop off their education and become involved in the civil movement. As the Syrian regime grips on power turned into extreme violence, arbitrary arrest and indiscriminate bombing of civilized inhabited areas, people raised more devotion from their normal lifestyle to the greater future of the country and the ultimate aim of dignity, freedom, democracy.

The ninth anniversary of the Syrian uprising comes at the time of great frustration and anguish Syrian people are enduring everywhere. While the relentless brutality, mass state violence, war-crimes is dominating the media coverage, however, it overlooks how people's beliefs of the essence of the uprising are symbolizing in their very peak refusing to reconcile with the criminal and live in destitution rather than giving up on their values of freedom and oath of overthrowing this barbaric dictatorship regime.

In fact, it boosted people to carry on resistance endeavoring to uphold their aspiration of democratic authority that upholds human rights. According to Sarot Al-Omar a 26 years old man who is originally from Aleppo and lives now in the camps of northern Syria,

"We are now free, capable of making our voice heard, demand our rights and standing with the right against oppression." Said Sarot. Sarot undoubtedly believes throughout the society he lives in, that Syrians have become more persistent in continuing their mission to uphold for the liberty and rights they once protested for. "Despite the bitter circumstances, bombs, displace-

ment Syrian are going through, people's dreams and beliefs in their principles of free Syria is fueling their motivations to continue grappling with their daily struggle until they get freedom."

Syrian's struggles, torment, death will not drive them to drop-down their to the hegemonic powers whose power and impact are exacerbating. This suffering, however, made people grasp their values and optimistic to carry on the battle for freedom and justice.

"Preparatorsustice is going to be held to justice. Those who have been killing Syrians for more than nine years. Like any Syrian here, I am getting stronger and determine to work on the principles of future of accountability," Al Omar said,

“ This legacy has gone with the wind and Assad despite his winning illusion, will never restore anything from Syrian but resentment and actions to bring him and his circle of criminals to justice in the future

Possibility or impossibility

"The revolution seemed impossible before 2011, and it happened and the same with justice and accountability and freedom, we have to harness our efforts and reorganize more our deeds as Syrian to make this come true." This is Sanaa's first response in her interview with Glimpse when asked about how she saw the Syrian uprising on its ninth anniversary.

Sana'a Al Ali, a 30 years old mother from Ghouta echoes Sarot positivism aspired by the initial notion of revolution on its very beginning back in March 2011. She recalls the past nine years as of her being reborn again.

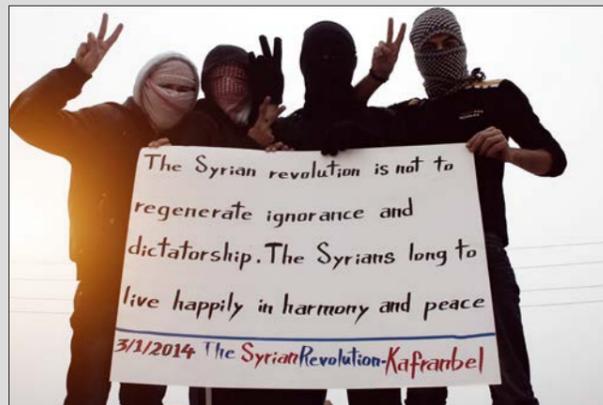
"After a lifetime of having to chirp praise for "the eternal Leader," this was the point Syrians went out and said [NO]. It was the first time we had heard our own voice, and we will never abandon or give up no matter what," She said.





Sana says that after the uprising Syrian's devotion and attachment to the country have filled in the space and made us deeply in love with this country. "Despite the overarching horror and grievances, we learned and earned freedom, it made us grow a sense of attachment to Syria through the revolution that made people wake up and fear no more," She said

“ In order to earn our freedom and free Syria from the Baath regime, we need to live the moment and rethink of what our contribution is as individuals



Before 2011, the single ruling party, state surveillance and pervasive covert informants made Syrians' families raise children on the notion that "Whisper, the walls have ears." The revolution crumbled the Baath legacy of the fear kingdom.

Sana expresses that "This legacy has gone with the wind and Assad despite his winning illusion, will never restore anything from Syrian but resentment and actions to bring him and his circle of criminals to justice in the future."

Sana and Sarot resonate that everyone has a vital role in the fundamental contribution he can make in the future change and fight for free equality and equity for Syrian in the present and the future. "If doctors, teachers, journalist, activists and civil society work for the collective benefits, we will live through this challenging time," Sarot said,

While Sana makes it clear that "In order to earn our freedom and free Syria from the Baath regime, we need to live the moment and rethink of what our contribution is as individuals,"

"We need to understand and restate that the essence of Assad battles against Syrians is a battle against an idea, the idea of freedom that we need to contribute to be spread, Sana said,

"The revolt is an idea, and ideas do not die."

Nonviolent communication

Awareness Campaigns

The Syrian Civil Defence in cooperation with Shafak and the child protection committee in Idlib city, conduct awareness raising sessions target children and mothers in the accommodation centres in the city aimed to focus on non-violent communication between the families and children.



Historical Glimpse on Syrian civil society

Part 3: Al-Assad Rule

The 8th March and the myth of so called "Revolution"

Derived from the Baath military coup succession in Iraq In Syrian Baath branch conspired and orchestrated on the 8th of March 1963's taking over the state power from the civic legitimate president Nazim Al-Qudsy and Khaled Al Azeem's elected government. The military announced a state of emergency and nullified the parliamentary election that was to be held in June. The new leaders implemented a new policy that jeopardized civic bars and associations whose structure and organizations were recovering from the dismantling they suffered from during the previous coups. The continuous interference by the new state leadership endured since then a single party leadership. This policy rendered Al Baath's grip on power solidified their rule in the Syrian constitution to be "the single ruling leading party of the state and society".

The party capacitated his members as well as akin organizations with a range of leverages that scaled up their status to dominate the state and control the society at large. However, this was included and excluded within the party itself by some members over one another causing eventually inner conflicts. Between 1963-1970 military coups occurred between the Ba'ath members themselves. The last one was led by Hafiz Assad in 1970 which was named the Glorious Corrective Movement (Al-Harakah Al-Taṣḥīḥiyaha).

The plot leader, however, did not hold the state presidency immediately after overthrowing his party companion Salah Jadedd. One of the notable aspects of this coup is the absence of militarization. No army or tanks were moving across the capital's streets as per usual. The coup had, rather, a quick turnover after disagreements within the party. The disagreement led to another collapse in the party's unity. In October 1970, Hafiz ordered the army to seize the Party's offices across Syrian and arrested those whose faith or disagreement with Hafiz and his ally back then Refat Tlaas was questioned.

The Rise of Hafiz

While his predecessors' coups leaders appointed themselves right after overthrowing the previous authorities, Assad did not follow suit. He appointed Ahmad AlKhatib as the temporary president who was from a civic background, however, this decisive move from Hafiz was part of his plan to further bolster the Ba'ath rule within the state associations, local and government apparatuses to eventually secure and prop up Assad rule grip across Syria.

Afterward, Assad laid out the establishment of the transitional regional leadership of Al Ba'ath party whose members appointed the parliament members, instead of organizing elections. Throughout the parliament, Hafiz made it to Syria's presidency. In February 1970, the parliament who was utterly included Baath loyalists nominated Hafiz to hold the presidency of the state and hold a national, nominal, referendum which later in March 1971, brought Hafiz Al Assad to the presidency bar.

Under the state of emergency, the Ba'ath continued to run the country. The parliament was commanded to write a new Syrian constitution. In addition, the National



Hafez Al Assad and Salah Jded

Progressive Front (NPF) who was, ostensibly a front to show the pluralism of the new Assad era, however, it was akin or a shadow of the state single party encompassing the socialist and communist parties, Naseri and the Nationalist Syrian party who were on the same page with Ba'ath and under his censorship.

A prolonged history of abolishing of civil and political rights

Al Assad, following his coup in 1970 pledged to expand liberties and minimized the military and security power. However, they constantly oppressed any potential civil rights movement claiming that it undermines that "revolution's movement gains". These steps erupted in scattered protests, however in low volume and continued to disappear due to the large scale of the arrest. Notwithstanding April 1964, when mass protests took off to the Syrian' cities streets, however, it was cracked down by the army and "labor militant" who were unorganized groups founded by Al-Ba'ath party to suppress the widespread movement. In January 1965, mass strikes kicked off due to a series of nationalization decrees. The same militant attacked the public's store breaking and forced opening the shops to end the mass strike.

Hafez' authoritarian rule

After winning the referendum of the country in 1971. The new face of the Ba'ath leader facilitated overwhelming turbulence expanded to outside Syria's borders. From the Liberation October war with Israel



Ameen Alhafez - Syrian president who gave the order for Hama's first massacre 1964

to the interference that Assad endeavored throughout creating and allying with certain parties in Lebanon to which increased Syrians' anger. In parallel with wide range external deeds the domestic economic statue to drastically collapse. While the government established in its strife to save and improve economic planning and situation at large, however, the embedded corruption by Assad circles had depleted the economy and accelerated its breakdown. The overall lack of accountability and maintaining emergency status in the country had protected the military personals in the state to overstep and challenged the law order, hence the local economic and social struggle turned to a rock bottom misery.



Alassad family

Refat led a group of the special forces to Tadmor prison where Hafiz jailed the majority of the political and military opponents to his rule. The operation recorded 500 execution cases, without trial

In the following years and due to the wide repression and imprisonment and mistreatment of prisoners in Syria a prominent opposition figure Marwan Hadid was reported dead. Hadid's death marked further wide furious repercussions by his followers who succeeded to kill many of the Assad regime's well-known figures at the time. Nonetheless, the bloody ramifications were considered foreseeable occurrences due to the overarching Assad dictatorship regime. The lack of political pluralism or any platform for expression of political discourse, journalism, and civil activities across the country disappeared in Syria throughout the first decades of the Al-Assad family.

At the onset of 1980, a new age of higher level of oppression Syrian was about to face. Summoned by Hafiz, the Ba'ath Nationalist leadership gathered where Hafiz promoted the military solution to eliminate any move-

ment that can pose a threat to the party's power. Calling for the "Revolutionary Violence" movement against any act that undermines the "Corrective Movement" gains. Consequently, in March 1980, the army marched to siege the city of Jisr Al Shughour as well as Aleppo's defense Brigade where Assad loyal troops killed and arrested much military personnel.

One last endeavor of civil right movement prospect

In the midst of Assad's military campaign against his potential opponents an old-new civil action rise. On the 31st of March 1980, joint protest by the medical, engineering law and pharmacy associations began a mass strike due to the steep decline of human rights and the steep surge of state repression across the country. What originated the movement, however, was Assad calls for "revolutionary violence" which was deemed as declaration zero-freedoms policy in the country. This strike, however, led to a complete shutdown to all profession bars or labor associations and arresting the leaders of the strike. Furthermore, this wave encompassed the leaders of communist party leader Reyad Al Turk as well as the cross-border assassination attempts of Assad's oppositions such as Salah Al-Bitar in Paris in 1980.

In mid-1980, and after a failed attempt to assassinate Assad himself, widespread reprisal attacks by the army kicked off in different aspects. According to Kamaal



Assad After 1970 Coup

Deeb's book "Syria's contemporary history", that one day after the failed attempt, Assad's brother, Refat led a group of the special forces to Tadmor prison where Hafiz jailed the majority of the political and military opponents to his rule. The operation recorded 500 execution cases, without trial. The violence wave carried on and rather transferred to a larger scale causing massive civilian casualties at Hama in 1982's well-known massacre which attracted a lot of global attention and criticism to Assad at that time.

Patrik Seal's book Assad-the Struggle over the middle east, note that the total casualties of the massacre reached nearly 10.000 deaths and over than 15.000 enforced disappearance, as well as 100.000, were displaced civilians due to the mass bombardment of civilian neighborhoods.

After the unprecedented mass violence, Syrian suffered from the Hama massacre. A new chapter of fear and extreme degradation of human rights had begun. Syrians were deprived of any aspect of liberties, freedoms, while the civil society struggled from supreme prosecution as Assad tightened his grip on power and did not tolerate or endorse any speech that would criticize his rule.

The government facilities, resources, and economy were not devoted not to enhance the living standards of the Syrian people, but to exclusively indulge his small circle of beneficiaries and keep him in power until his death in 2000. Shortly after his death, his son, Bashar, took over by the well-known one-minute constitution amendment session at the Parlement of the required president age to suit Bashar Al Assad at the time. On the 17th of June 2000, the eye doctor oathed to rule the country according to the constitution. The constitution that his father kept his father in power and does until the very moment.

This mural was made by Kesh Malek on 14 February to shed light on the displaced children dying because of extremely cold weather in Idlib

Our Revolution flower
will bloom one day ..
we will keep trying



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