A Graphic Version of

The Political Origins of Inequality
Why a More Equal World Is Better for Us All

Simon Reid-Henry

See more about the book.

Words and concept by Simon Reid-Henry.

Illustrations by Esben Slaatrem Titland, whose work can be found at: http://esbentitland.no.
COME ON UP!

WOW, YOU'RE PRETTY LIGHT

AH, THIS IS SUCH A GREAT MOMENT TO BE ALIVE. SO MANY POSSIBILITIES!

A BILLION PEOPLE HAVE BEEN LIFTED OUT OF POVERTY IN JUST 20 YEARS.
AND NOW WE'RE GOING TO HELP YOU!

WHAT YOUR COUNTRY NEEDS, WE REALIZE, IS NOT YET MORE AID.

POVERTY IS COMING DOWN.

YOU WANT THE TOOLS TO SUCCEED, RIGHT? TECHNOLOGY, FUNCTIONING INSTITUTIONS, FOREIGN INVESTMENT...

UMM, CAN I SHOW YOU SOMETHING?

• LIBERALIZE!
• PRIVATIZE!
• INCENTIVIZE!
MY POINT WAS, WE NEED TO GET THE STATE AND THESE MEDDLING EXPERTS OUT OF THE WAY...

...FOSTER INNOVATIVE LEADERSHIP...

...CREATE FUNCTIONING MARKETS...

...AND HELP YOU OVERCOME YOUR RESOURCE CURSES.

YOU'RE STILL NOT SEEING IT.

AH! THE JWF, MY FAVOURITE!

LOOK HERE.

THE POLITICAL DYNAMICS OF INEQUALITY.
YOU SEE, SOME OF THE WEALTH YOU WANT TO SHARE WITH US WAS OURS IN THE FIRST PLACE...

...AND THE REST IS MOSTLY YOURS BECAUSE YOU HAVE A MUCH GREATER SAY IN THE WAY THAT FINANCE AND TRADE OPERATE.

SO AID ISN'T THE ISSUE. AND NOR IS TRADE THE SOLUTION.

IT'S THE RULES YOU MAKE US PLAY BY THAT REALLY HURT US.

WE NEVER GOT THAT CHOICE.

LOOK, THE WORLD ISN'T LIKE THAT ANYMORE.

NO, BECAUSE THAT'S JUST THE START.

LATEST!

INFLATION IS HOLDING US BACK. WE MUST RAISE INTEREST RATES TO CURB IT.

YOUR DEBT REPAYMENTS THIS MONTH!

PAUL VOLCKER

BANK OF MEXICO

THE LOST DECADE

WE GOT DEBT INSTEAD.
SERIOUSLY I’VE HAD ENOUGH.

I REALLY TRIED.

BUT EVERYTHING IS STACKED AGAINST US.

WE’RE ALL IN THE SAME BOAT.

GOING THIS WAY WE ARE.
This is never going to change...

Unless we change the reasons why.

The what?!

No, the "why"!

We need to change "the why."

Come on!
Look, lots of countries have managed this.

It's time we tried finding political solutions to international problems.

We used the state to invest in infrastructure and services, not cut them back:

That's why we're the Latin American choice for investments today.

In Porto Alegre we save people more control over local government spending, we've had social democrats in power throughout Brazil's great leap forward.

In Kerala we invested everything in social welfare and we have the greatest reduction in poverty of all Indian states.

You know, it's not all that different to what we were doing back in the 20s and 30s.

"Woman in work" universal social policy. We really do share this in common.

Class compromise. A state pension for all!

I still believe in the market, but I see that won't get us there alone.
AND IF THERE'S ONE THING I KNOW ABOUT THE MARKET, IT'S THAT WE'LL NEED TO BRING ABOUT THESE CHANGES INTERNATIONALLY:

IT WILL NEVER BE ENOUGH TO ENACT THEM DOMESTICALLY. YOU'D NEED SOME SORT OF BRETTON WOODS ALL OVER AGAIN.

MAKE IT AUTOMATIC, SO WE DON'T EVEN HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT AID ANY MORE.

EVEN A MARGINAL, PROGRESSIVE RATE OF TAX WOULD DO WONDERS TO BRING DOWN GLOBAL INEQUALITY.

YOU'D NEED TO FURTHER DEMOCRATIZE THE INSTITUTIONS YOU'D WANT TO RUN THIS SYSTEM TOO.

YOU COULD START BY BRINGING THIS UN CHAMBER BACK TO THE FRONT OF INTERNATIONAL POLITICS, IN PLACE OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL.

YES, BUT A MORE DEMOCRATIC ONE. AND THAT'S WHERE WE NEED SO MUCH MORE INNOVATION: POLITICAL INNOVATION.

YOU COULD START BY INTRODUCING SOME SORT OF GLOBAL TAX AND SPEND.

BEGIN REGIONALLY TO START WITH, BUT EXPAND THE ONE MODEL OF DISTRIBUTION THAT ALL STATES ACCEPT TO THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL.

BRING IT BACK TO LIFE YOU MEAN?! BUT THEN YOU'D BE ABLE TO DO SO MUCH MORE. YOU COULD START TO PRIORITIZE CONSTITUTIONAL LAW OVER INDIVIDUAL HUMAN RIGHTS, FOR EXAMPLE.

IF YOU GET THE FORMER RIGHT THEN THERE IS LESS NEED TO WORRY ABOUT RIGHTS INFRINGEMENTS IN THE FIRST PLACE.
You know, I told you I was always right.

And I too.

But we're agreed, aren't we, that the times are moving on again.

That's the one thing we've both been good at spotting.

So boiled down, it's about reinventing these 3 lessons for a global age.

THE POLITICS OF GRAND COMPROMISE.

MIGRANT ASSIST

WORK PASSES

DISTRIBUTIVE FAIRNESS.

DEMOCRATIC DEEPENING.

Global Public Tax

Global Public Welfare
Words and concept by Simon Reid-Henry. Illustrations by Esben Slaatrem Titland, whose work can be found at: http://esbentitland.no.