

A
Dictionary for
Revolution in East Africa



Preface

East Africa is alive today because her people have power. But people across our lands forget this, and often forfeit their power to those who oppress them. This short dictionary of political terms is our contribution to retaining, reclaiming, and rediscovering our power. It is a contribution to growing political literacy in East Africa where those in power have deliberately prevented ordinary people from understanding social change, economic warfare, and political struggle.

This dictionary separates the good from the bad. It celebrates the forms of politics and values that aid people in their quests for freedom, purpose, and opportunity. It criticizes the forms of politics and values that help dictators, wealthy investors, and other evildoers protect their money and their rule.

This dictionary is for those who cannot yet differentiate between left-wing and right-wing politics. It is for those who thirst for a vision that those in power have failed to provide. This dictionary is for people of all genders and generations, all tribes and industries.

We welcome you to grab a pencil and write your own notes in the margins. We welcome you to read and discuss this dictionary with neighbors and family and friends – maybe even with enemies! Political literacy is something we can only build together, by reflecting together and taking action. Power is ours, if we know how to get it.

Yours in the revolution,

Acknowledgement

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Bad Things

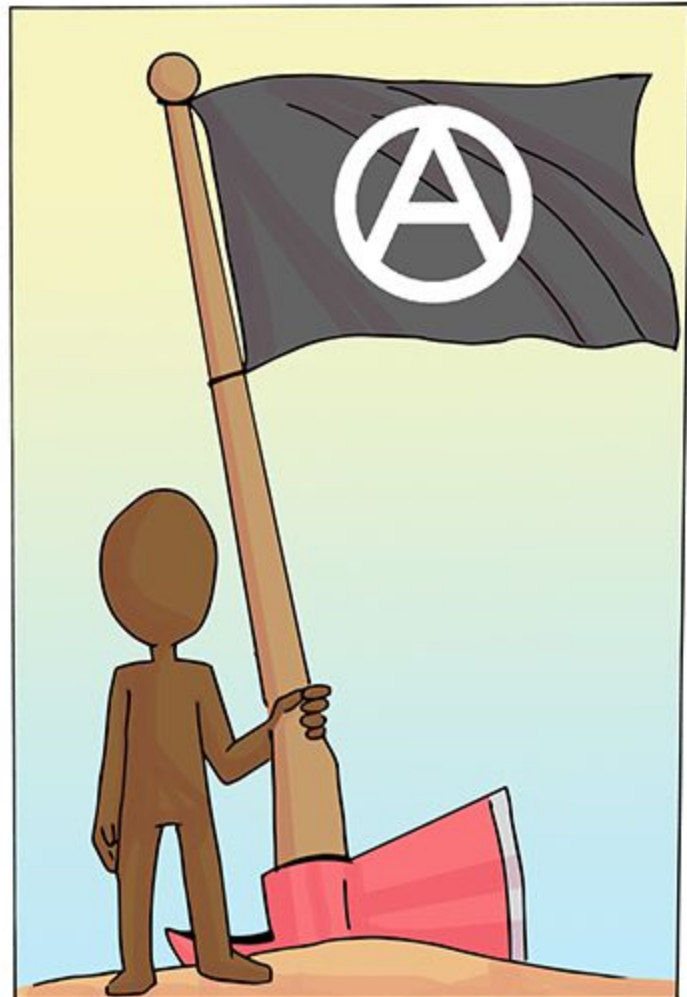
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Socialism



A society whose people (instead of the wealthiest 1%) own the economy, including the means of production, use, and exchange (e.g. land, machinery, markets, etc.).

Anarchism



The organisation of society on a voluntary and cooperative basis, and the abolition of state authority and government.

Decolonisation



Liberation from political, economic, ecological, and cultural colonisation; the subversion of systems, values, and beliefs that have created mental slavery.

Progressivism



A political ideology that advocates for the use of state systems to advance social justice and champion reforms that favor those who are most oppressed.

Queer



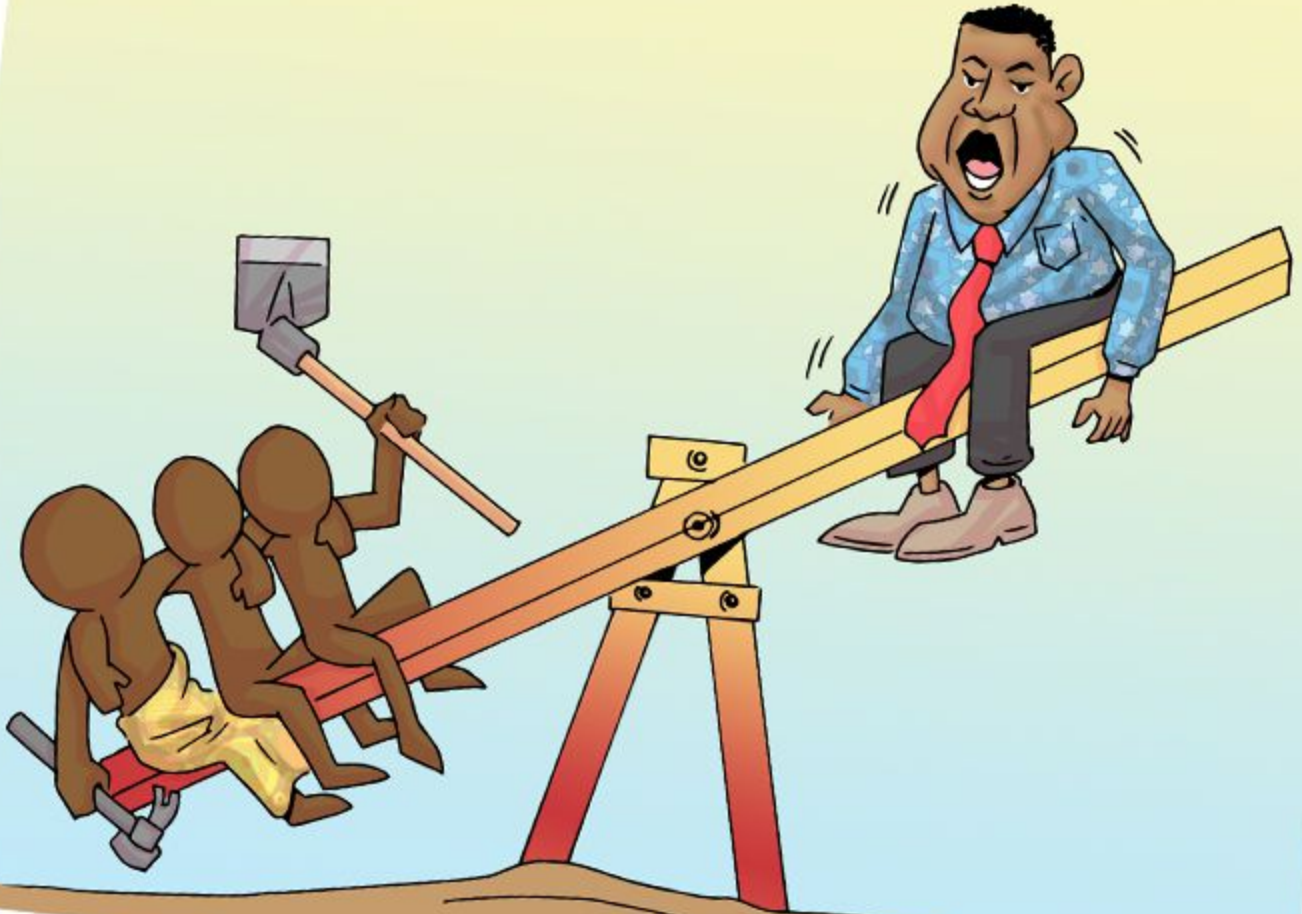
An identity built on gender and/or sexuality that lies beyond binary cisgender options (male and female) or heteronormativity.

Radicalism



The belief that society can only be changed through revolutionary means by destroying the existing system and building an entirely alternative system.

Unionism



The organising of workers into collectives that overthrow the economic control of capitalism and the rich.

Afrofeminism



Feminist ideologies that build their pursuits of liberation (from patriarchy, colonialism, and other oppressions) upon diverse African women and precolonial wisdom.

Gender Justice



The liberation of people of all genders from
oppressive social values and
practices.

Intersectionality



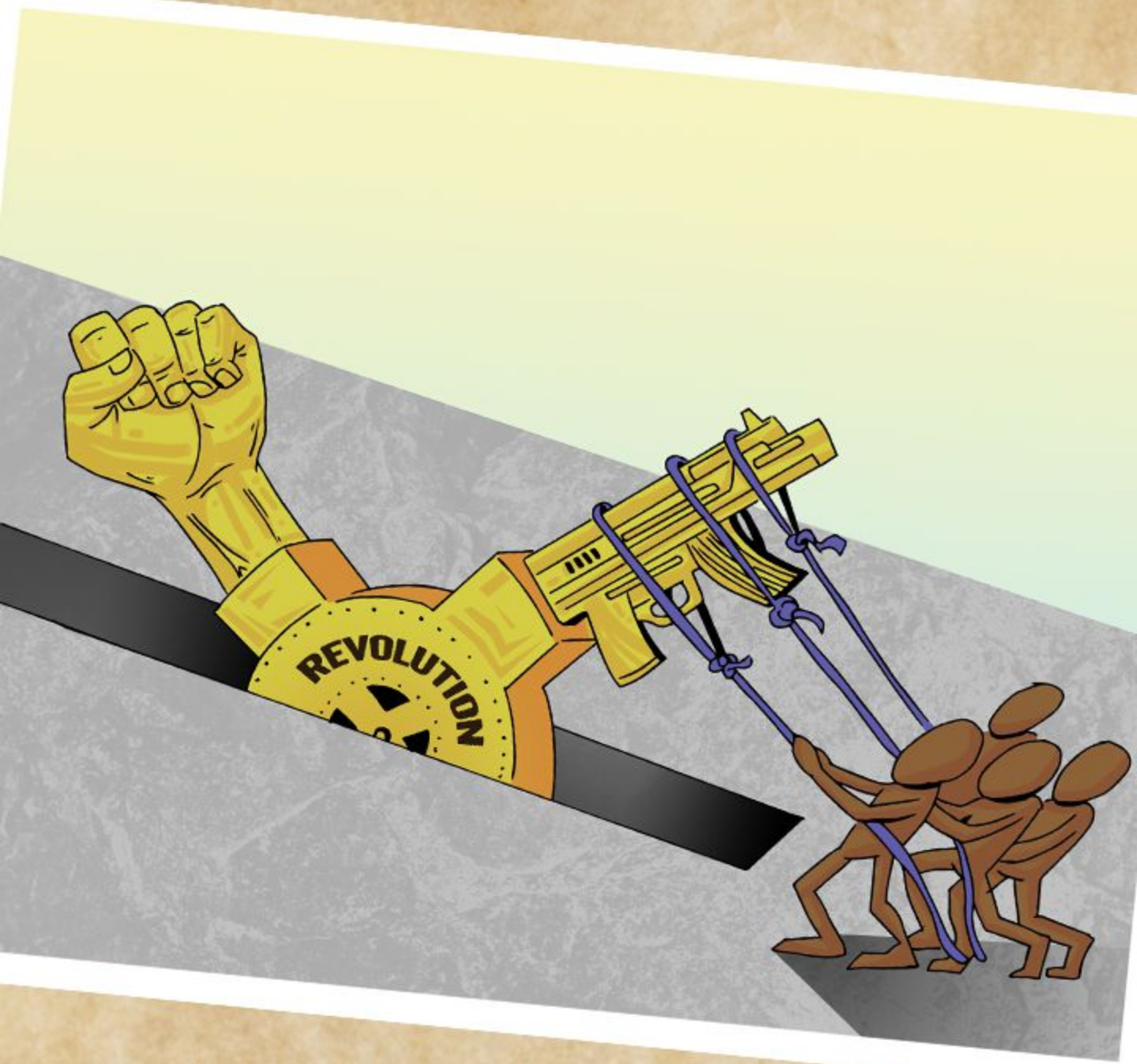
The interconnection of social categorizations (gender, age, class, race, tribe, ability, etc.) to form shared identity, values, or goals – or to harness collective power.

New Pan-Afrikanism



An ideology built by today's African youth that promotes African unity and solidarity, political freedom, economic freedom, identity and culture correction, Global South feminisms, ecological sovereignty, and decolonisation.

Revolution



The overthrow of a system and its leaders to establish a new system and leadership.



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**“Yay, we have
our first woman
president!”**



**“Oh crap, she just
sold the nation
to Total.”**



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Capitalism



Economic and political rule by the wealthy

Heteronormativity



A worldview that assumes heterosexuality is the normal sexual orientation and way of life, and that only two genders exist.

Patriarchy



Rule of men over women and nonbinary people.

Authoritarianism



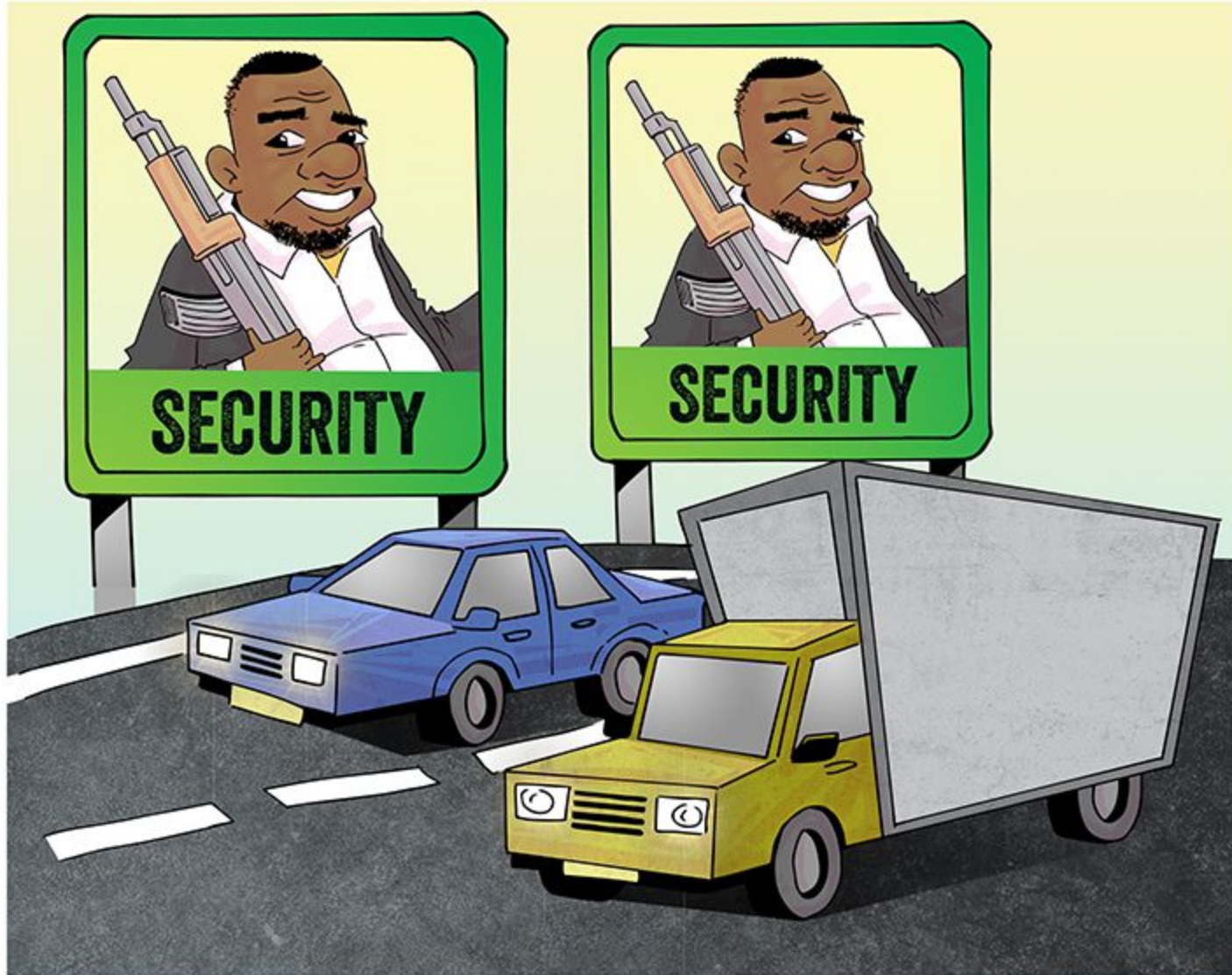
Total domination and control of society by an individual dictator or small group of people at the head of a government.

Conservatism



An ideology that promotes adherence to traditional values without critique or room for change.

Facism



A state of anti-democratic ultranationalism, characterized by forced allegiance to one's nation and the values espoused by its right-wing leaders.

Gerontocracy



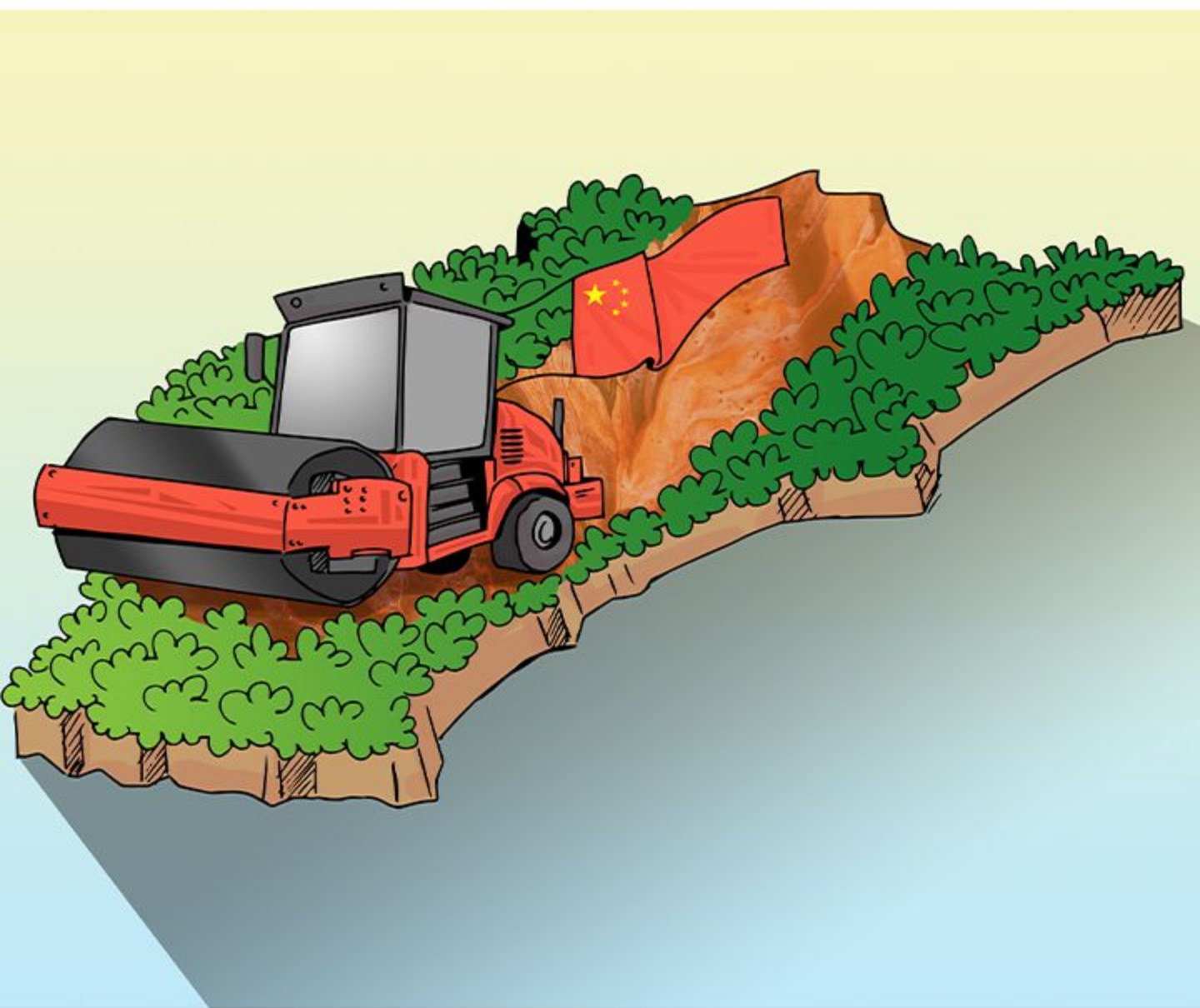
Rule of the old over the young.

High Heel Feminism



A classist and non-intersectional ideology that encourages women to compete with privileged men within the dominant system while excluding poor, rural, and other marginalized women.

Imperialism



Expansion or enrichment of a nation or civilization through colonisation, violence, slavery, predatory policies, or other coercive means.

Liberalism



The belief that systems of oppression, such as the state or capitalism, can adequately protect everyone's personal freedoms.

Neoliberalism



The deregulation and privatization of economies that enables the wealthy to steal more profits and avoid the repercussions of their crimes against people and planet.

White Supremacy



The systematic oppression of black people and other people of color and their communities by white culture, white economics, white governments and policies, colonialism, and other forms of oppression by white people.

