

# Animated politics essay examples

[Business](#), [Leadership](#)



Figure 1

Figure 2

In today's world, a lot of political issues have occurred between numerous parties for diverse reasons. Currently the majority of the world is seen to be controlled by the influential Western countries such as the USA; this issue inspires much of the the dismay in many Arab caricatures. One artist motivated by this is the very famous Syrian political cartoonist, Ali Ferzat. Ferzat is known for his courageous opposition to the current regime and illustrates his view of the matter in the form of emblematic satires. Ferzat portrays this issue in a uniquely fictional yet canny manner; he firmly displays how the West manipulates the Middle East.

What really attracts Ali Ferzat's audience is his focus on the little details that elaborate a big part of the story behind the art. Most of his work represents the major influence the West has on the Arab leaders. In Figure 1, he uses multiple symbolic elements to make his point, such as black and white colors and visible features that have a broader significance. First, the use of black and white animation in the cartoon might indicate that the Arab leaders have been controlled for so long as animations back then were not modernized and so Ferzat portrayed it in black and white so that the audience can see that this issue is not just happening in the present day but has been a major setback for many years. Also, the old telephones visible in the cartoon express how long ago this issue first took place, long before today's generation had heard of it. The steering wheel that is placed on the back of the head of the character in the cartoon is a symbol for the manipulation that is occurring. Ferzat uses the guy's overweight figure to personify the

generalization that all Arab leaders are living wealthy. Money and power are the tools that someone uses to control these puppets. Obviously the leaders are content; this puppet is shown to be satisfied with not knowing who pulls the strings, as long as he is fed with what he wants, he will continue being satisfied.

Figure 2 portrays a dual figure of an Arab leader who clearly lacks genuine levity. His grim expression seems to reflect his embarrassment that's marked by his closed eyes facing downwards. His outfit seems to represent the importance of status quo and the maintenance of it, in a world that fully relies on wealth and position. Ferzat emphasizes his detachment from the heart of society by drawing his face in the shape of a dysfunctional cylinder with an open top. The image is heavy with mockery and exaggeration, as viewers perceive the vacant circle above his head as an indication of the leader's empty-headedness. The ladder on his shoulder symbolizes those who strive for answers and fight against being intentionally disregarded by the system; nevertheless Ferzat portrays the tilt of the ladder and the typically rapid fall of the individual on it (Jones). The leader seems to possess hidden animal-like characteristics that come to the surface on the slightest air of being questioned or crossed. Also, viewers may assume that the leader is naturally unintelligent and futile, and outside powers develop an inhumanly, cruel monster within him, turning his vapid features to beast-like complexions.

After analyzing Ali Ferzat's art it becomes clear that his main focus is not the picture itself; it's about the creativity in portraying his detail, it's about understanding what it all says. His pictures somewhat reveal the obscurity

behind a lot of what is in the media regarding Western-Arab relations. His insight on how Arab leaders are manipulated and controlled by unknown sources simultaneously reflects the self-interests the outside sources have for themselves.

However, it should not be assumed that Ferzat's targets are necessarily the person in power at a certain point in time. While much of his artistic energy has gone to target the Assad regime that still has power in Syria, if you look at Figures 1 and 2, you can see that he lampoons the type rather than the specific individual. The ladder, as mentioned before, appears in many of his drawings and indicates the gap that always exists between those in power and the average citizens in Syria. To describe his own motivational process, Ferzat has said, " Sometimes my imagination is like a wild horse with no bit on it. It's a bit too much of a rebel – it even makes me suffer at times. Often when I sit down to draw, I don't know what I'll finish with. But no matter what's happening in my mind, it will always end up being about politics" (Halliburton).

The themes at work in Ferzat's art are not essentially different than that of any other satirist poking fun at the powers that be in government (Moubayed). When Jonathan Swift first penned " A Modest Proposal" to protest the British treatment of the Irish poor, his essay sarcastically suggested that the British wealthy should literally fatten themselves on the dead bodies of Irish babies, because that would be kinder than making them grow up in poverty. When George Orwell gives his final portrayal of the broken dissident Winston Smith, at the end of 1984, he describes a man all too happy to sit in a bar, dazed and confused, sipping on his Victory Gin, too

defeated even to think, let alone to think about protest. The most telling parts of Ferzat's art are the unseen strings that provide power, that give the tyrannical governments in the Arab world the power to force their own agendas on the people over whom they rule. Whether it is the Russians or the Chinese propping up the Syrians, or (as in the past) the French propping up the Iraqis, there is always more at work in the Arab world than meets the eye. One wonders, of course, what that part of the world would be like politically if it did not sit on top of valuable oil reserves.

The proper target for the dissident in modern times is the lack of transparency in power. Two hundred and fifty years ago, there were no democracies on the planet. Monarchy was the dominant form of government, even though (as in the case of England and other countries) constitutional reforms had been put into place to give some sort of legislative accompaniment to the executive. In an age of allegedly free elections, transparency should be more of a dominant motif in government, both in the West and throughout the rest of the world. With that transparency, citizens would know who held the steering wheel in the first cartoon, and who was filling up the figurehead in the second. Better yet, citizen-leaders would be in charge of those machines themselves. That sort of future is what inspires satirists like Ferzat.

## **Works Cited**

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