

Main Text:

In the modern world, politics is no longer merely about survival—it is evolving into a battlefield of cognition.

Traditional politics, especially in developing or transitional societies, tends to revolve around basic needs: income, jobs, security, taxes. In such a system, people vote based on "Who can bring me more immediate benefits?"—this is **survival politics**.

But in highly developed societies, where citizens are no longer trapped in basic existential struggles, people begin to ask: "Which leader shares my worldview?" "Which party represents my values?" This gives birth to **cognitive politics**—a system where **ideas, identity,** and **worldview** become the primary currency of political action.

Yet this transformation is neither automatic nor uniform.

Even in developed countries, such as the United States or parts of Europe, cognitive politics coexists with survival politics. A working-class voter might support a candidate based on healthcare policies, while another might vote out of allegiance to cultural or religious identity. Politics becomes **a mixed decision-making model**, blending cognition and survival in different proportions for each individual.

This model can be observed in places like South Korea. The older generation tends to vote based on tangible benefits: pensions, subsidies, housing prices. In contrast, the younger generation—raised in a relatively stable economic environment—leans toward cognitive engagement: climate change, human rights, systemic reform. This **intergenerational political divergence** is not ideological conflict per se, but a reflection of shifting survival priorities and expanding cognitive space.

It is important to emphasize that **politics is not like a scientific model**. It does not follow strict rules. It is **fluid, chaotic, and deeply human**. That's why labeling a society as purely "interest-driven" or "cognition-driven" is simplistic. Most societies are a **hybrid**, where each citizen carries their own blend of needs and beliefs, often contradictory.

To understand politics, then, is to understand **people's internal structures**:

- Their fears
- Their desires
- Their identity
- Their memory of history
- And their hope for the future

Politics is not just about managing power—it's about mapping the collective consciousness of a population.

Thus, as societies evolve, politics will not become simpler. It will become **more sophisticated and more personalized**. Voter behavior will be less predictable, political boundaries more blurred. And in such a world, new systems may emerge—systems not based on centralized control, but on **distributed cognition, consensus protocols**, or even **AI-assisted participatory governance**.

But before we imagine the politics of tomorrow, we must first understand that **politics today is not broken—it is merely incomplete**. It is still evolving, like the people it seeks to represent.

