

The Long View

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United We Stand Co-opted We Fall

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Sunni Tradition

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The Schizophrenic Muslim

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How Race-Riot
Britain Became
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In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

The revival of sectarian narratives has been a salient if unedifying feature of the Ummah's response to the genocide in Gaza. In time honoured fashion, as the House of Islam is assailed from all sides, many of its inhabitants are more preoccupied with attacking their co-religionists than joining hands to defend the building. Instead of finding motivation in the impulse to self-defence, compassion and ending suffering, they hasten to rake up and accentuate historical mutual rivalries as if this is the immediate Ummatic priority.

Sadly, the noise comes across as criticism of people resisting Israel's ongoing slaughter on the basis of their assumed confessional status. Mischievous and/or misguided Sunni movers and shakers take aim at the huge sacrifices made by the Shi'a of Iran, Lebanon, Yemen and Iraq, belittling or negating them on account of doctrinal differences and historical grievances. They rekindle divisive polemics either to deflect from their own inexcusable betrayal of Palestine or because they are simply incapable of thinking outside the sectarian box.

The result is that where shared beliefs and priorities should lead towards convergence, they tend towards conflict. This in unfortunate and unnecessary, according to **Sayyid Amjad Shah**, and is exemplified by the changing Sunni attitude towards the commemoration of the martyrdom of the blessed Prophet's grandson, Hussein in the massacre of Karbala. In the first essay in this issue, Shah argues that the original Sunni reverence for Hussein has given way to a misplaced identitarian suspicion.

"The strange thing is not that some Muslims remember Karbala. It is that others have learned to forget it. For most of Islamic history, remembrance of al-Husayn (ra) was simply part of the Sunni landscape — and not a quiet one," says Shah. In the Ottoman lands, in Mughal and pre-Mughal India, across North Africa and throughout the Sufi orders, the tenth of Muharram brought sermons, elegies, and gatherings of grief that no one mistook for Shi'ism.... this was the texture of Sunni piety for centuries, and the Sufi orders treated Karbala as a standing lesson in sacrifice, justice, and the refusal of tyranny."

The abandonment of Karbala as a moral, let alone political, paradigm is reflected in another modern malaise, the "schizophrenic Muslim" as **Sahib Mustaqim Bleher** puts it. He reflects on the reluctance of Muslims in the West who refuse to engage with Islam as a way of life, seeing it as a convenient bolt-on to certain aspects of their life. Where it is unintrusive it is welcome but where it involves discomfort and sacrifices it is ignored.

Bleher identifies two forces driving the "schizophrenic Muslim". The first and lesser one is pure sectarianism. This however, is less worrying and blameworthy than the second one: cowardice. Western Muslims avoid resisting oppression and injustice because they are afraid of the consequences it might have on the comfortable lives they have built

for themselves. While they're acutely aware of what Allah demands of them in these situations, they would rather take the path of least resistance if it safeguards their financial or personal interests. This behavioural dissonance, "being different things to different people", is the essence of the "schizophrenic Muslim".

"Islam becomes both a refuge and a status symbol whilst most of daily life is governed by the rules of the surrounding society. The problems arise when the two worlds collide, when the non-Muslim society is forced to confront an Islamic reality and the schizophrenic Muslim is forced to take sides openly," explains Bleher. "More often than not he will choose to defend the "values" of the society he supports and distance himself from the values of Islam, perceived as outlandish or extreme. Islam only serves his purpose where it is of direct benefit, not when it gives rise to conflict."

The third essay in this issue, by **Dedan Kimaathi**, argues that the British state has made the process of resisting even harder by successfully co-opting or defanging genuine anti-colonial resistance, something that has accelerated the advance of the far right in the current political milieu. For Kimaathi, racism is part of the DNA of western colonialism and the current strategy of anti-racist networks to work within a colonial framework, accounting for the inertia characterising contemporary anti-racist discourse and activism. The anti-racism movement is failing to confront the march of fascism in Britain not only because it is inhibited by repressive legislative and law enforcement but also because it has become assimilated by the prevailing colonial class.

"What is unique culturally and politically today is that racist violence meets no resistance but the other cheek. The culture of anti-racism has ceased to exist," says Kimaathi. "Delusion is the perfect state for the oppressed —, it delivers for the colonialist the superficial elements that something seems to be on offer to the colonised, only for that carrot to not actually exist and then in comes the proverbial stick."

Granted, the ground for resistance in Western societies is becoming ever more hazardous but that doesn't absolve the Muslim of his/her duty to challenge wrongs. In our final piece, **Faisal Bodi**, analyses the latest piece of legislation in the UK seeking to restrict people's right to protest governmental abuse of power, in particular its support of the genocide and the illegal US/Israeli war on Iran.

Since October 2023 pro-Israeli western governments have engaged in unprecedented crackdowns on civil liberties in order to provide cover to the Zionist state. The newly introduced National Security (State Threats) Act is another insidious piece of legislation that further blurs the line between activism and terrorism.

As the space for critical thinking is shrunk by those in power, let's use the spaces we have to continue speaking truth, and discussing futures free of abuse. May these words be a humble contribution. Please join us in spreading the conversation.

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Karbala and the Sunni Tradition

Sayyid Amjad Hussain discusses why Ahl al-Sunnah Remember al-Husayn (ra) — how the memory faded, and what it is for.

Few wounds in the memory of this Ummah run as deep as Karbala. More than thirteen centuries have passed since al-Imam al-Husayn ibn ‘Ali (ra) was killed on that plain, and still the believing heart tightens at the mention of it. He is remembered with love, with reverence, and with a grief that time has never quite healed.

And yet, across much of the Sunni world today, that memory has grown quiet. In some places Karbala is barely mentioned; in others, open sorrow for al-Husayn (ra) is met with raised eyebrows, as though grief itself were suspect. A single anxiety sits beneath much of this silence: the fear of being mistaken for a “Rafidi,” of drifting toward Shi’ism simply by feeling too much. Add to that centuries of political and theological dispute — and, more recently, a reformist suspicion of anything that resembles Shi’i practice — and many Sunnis have quietly surrendered a part of their own inheritance.

This essay makes one argument, and it rests on a chain no believer disputes:

1. To love the Messenger of Allah (saw) is an obligation upon every believer.
2. Part of loving him is loving those whom he loved.
3. The Messenger (saw) loved al-Husayn (ra) openly and deeply, in front of his Companions — and the books of authentic hadith record it in detail.
4. Therefore, grieving for al-Husayn (ra) and honouring his memory is not a sectarian borrowing. It is a branch of loving the Prophet (saw) himself.

What follows is the evidence for each link in that chain — drawn from the Qur’an, from the rigorously authenticated Sunnah, and from the words of the very Sunni scholars whose names are most often invoked to keep this subject closed. Along the way it asks two further questions: why a memory once so widespread faded so recently, and what — beyond tears — it was ever meant to teach.

The Place of the Ahl al-Bayt in Sunni Islam

The first thing to clear away is a modern misconception: that devotion to the Ahl al-Bayt is a Shi’i trait which Sunnis merely tolerate. This couldn’t be further from the truth. Love for the Prophet’s (saw) household is woven into the Qur’an, repeated across the Sunnah, and honoured in the writings of nearly every major Sunni authority.

Allah Most High says:

“Allah only intends to remove all impurity from you, O People of the Household, and to purify you completely.” (al-Ahzab 33:33)

This is not a verse Sunnis read from a distance. In Sahih Muslim, ‘Aishah (ra) describes how the Prophet (saw) gathered al-Hasan, al-Husayn, ‘Ali and Fatimah (ra) beneath his cloak and then recited these very words — the famous Hadith of the Cloak (Sahih Muslim 2424). By the Prophet’s (saw) own act, the “People of the Household” in the verse included the two boys of Karbala. To call love for them foreign to Sunni Islam is to say it of a scene preserved in Sunni Islam’s most authentic book.

And the Prophet (saw) did not leave the duty to inference. In the narration of Zayd

ibn Arqam (ra) in Sahih Muslim, near the end of his time in this world, he raised his family three times in a single breath: “I remind you of Allah regarding the people of my household; I remind you of Allah regarding the people of my household; I remind you of Allah regarding the people of my household” (Sahih Muslim 2408).

The threefold repetition is striking. It reads almost like a man who foresaw that later generations would let politics and partisanship crowd out a duty he wanted fixed firmly in their hearts.

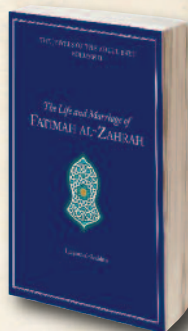
None of this makes the Ahl al-Bayt infallible, nor licenses exaggeration about them. The Sunni position has always been the balanced one: love without worship, reverence without excess, honour given as a right rather than as a slogan.

Al-Husayn (ra) Was No Ordinary Man

When Karbala is discussed only as a political episode — a failed bid for leadership, a quarrel over the caliphate — something essential is lost. The man on that plain was not merely the son of ‘Ali (ra), nor only the son of Fatimah al-Zahra (ra). He was the beloved grandson of the Messenger of Allah (saw).

Consider what the authentic Sunnah records of that love. The Prophet (saw) carried him on his shoulders and called him and his brother “my two sweet basils of this world” (Sahih al-Bukhari 3753). He prolonged a prostration in prayer because the child had climbed onto his back, refusing to rise until the boy had climbed down. He said of the two of them, in a report graded authentic, “al-Hasan and al-Husayn are the two leaders of the youth of Paradise” (Sunan al-Tirmidhi 3768). And he tied their honour to

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his own: "Whoever loves them loves me, and whoever hates them hates me" (Sunan Ibn Majah 143).

He went further still. In a narration graded sound, he said something that bound his very being to the boy: "Husayn is from me, and I am from Husayn" (Sunan al-Tirmidhi, graded hasan; also, al-Bukhari's al-Adab al-Mufrad 364). The first half is expected — Husayn was his grandson. The second half is arresting: the Prophet (saw) declaring that he is from Husayn. The people of spiritual insight have long read it as a quiet prophecy — that what Husayn (ra) would one day stand and be martyred for was nothing other than what his grandfather (saw) had been sent to bring.

Hold those narrations in mind, and the horror of Karbala sharpens into focus. The throat that thirsted on that plain belonged to the child the Prophet (saw) had lifted onto his shoulder. The body left in the dust was one his grandfather had embraced before the Companions.

There is a narration in the Sahih of al-Bukhari about what was done to his severed head. When it was brought before 'Ubayd Allah ibn Ziyad, the governor began to strike the mouth with his cane. An aged Companion who was present — one who had grown up in the sight of the Messenger (saw)— could not bear it and protested that this was the very mouth he had seen the Prophet (saw) kiss (Sahih al-Bukhari 3748). The lips a tyrant defiled with a stick were the lips the Prophet (saw) had pressed his own against.

This is why the believing heart has never been able to file Karbala away as ancient history.

"But Isn't This a Shi'i Practice?" — The Honest Objection

Here the sincere Sunni reader will raise the question that sits behind all the unease: if I grieve for al-Husayn (ra), am I not drifting toward Shi'ism? Am I not opening a door to innovation?

The objection deserves a straight answer,

not a brush-off. And the answer turns on a distinction the silence has blurred — the difference between remembrance and ritual.

What this essay calls for — love for al-Husayn (ra), sorrow at his murder, reflection on what he stood for — is the property of no sect. It is the plain implication of the verses and hadith already cited. What Ahl al-Sunnah has historically declined are ritual forms: self-harm, the cursing of Companions, the reshaping of grief into a creed of grievance. A believer can refuse every one of those and still weep for the grandson of the Prophet (saw). Rejecting another group's rituals is no reason to surrender a sentiment the Prophet (saw) himself planted.

Nor is quiet grief the forbidden "wailing" (niyaha). The Sunnah draws the line clearly. When his own infant son Ibrahim died, the Prophet (saw) wept and said, "The eye sheds tears and the heart grieves, yet we say only what pleases our Lord" (Sahih al-Bukhari 1303). Tears are sunnah; what the Sharia forbids is screaming against the decree, tearing garments, and striking the face. Sorrow that stays within the bounds the Prophet (saw) himself observed cannot be the very thing he prohibited.

Examined honestly, then, the "Rafidi" anxiety dissolves. A Sunni who mourns al-Husayn (ra) borrows from no one. He is doing exactly what Ibn Kathir, al-Dhahabi, and Ibn al-Jawzi did — Sunni scholars to the bone, who grieved this loss in their own books without ever ceasing to be Sunni.

Ashura Before Karbala, and After

Some try to redirect the day entirely: Ashura, they note, was sacred long before Karbala. And so it was. The Prophet (saw) fasted on the tenth of Muharram and taught that it marked the deliverance of Musa (as) and his people from Pharaoh. No Sunni disputes this, and the fast remains a beloved sunnah.

But that earlier sanctity does not erase what came later. On the same day, decades on, the Prophet's (saw) grandson was killed

with his family and companions around him. History layers meaning; it does not overwrite it. To fast Ashura as the Sunnah teaches and to remember al-Husayn (ra) with sorrow are not rivals. They sit together without the faintest contradiction.

Jerusalem is the natural comparison. Its holiness did not fade each time a later prophet walked its ground; every sacred event deepened it. Ashura is the same. It was blessed before Karbala, and after Karbala it carries an added weight for anyone whose heart is bound to the Messenger (saw).

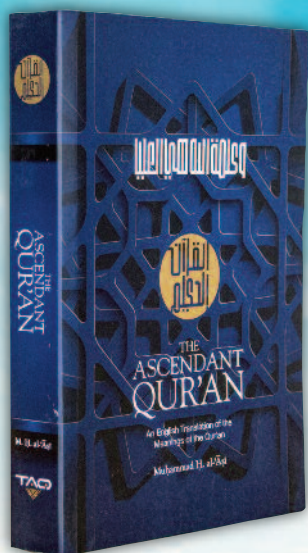
The Witness of the Sunni Scholars

The claim that remembering Karbala is alien to Sunnism does not survive contact with the Sunni library itself.

Ibn al-Jawzi, the great Hanbali preacher and historian, wrote of the tragedy with open grief and rebuked those who tried to twist Ashura into a day of festivity. Ibn Kathir, in al-Bidaya wa'l-Nihaya, narrates the events with evident sorrow and repeatedly asks Allah's mercy upon al-Husayn (ra). Al-Dhahabi, the master of hadith criticism, names him in his Siyar A'lam al-Nubala "the noble Imam, the martyr" — and in al-Dhahabi's vocabulary there is scarcely a higher register of respect.

The most telling witness is the one most often summoned to shut the subject down. Ibn Taymiyyah is regularly cited by those who would have Sunnis say less about Karbala. Yet his own words leave no room for doubt. In Majmu' al-Fatawa he states that there is no doubt al-Husayn (ra) and a group of his family were killed unjustly, that his murder was among the greatest of catastrophes, and that his killers are the worst of creation before Allah (Majmu' al-Fatawa 3:411). Elsewhere in the same collection he calls down the curse of Allah upon those who killed him or were pleased with the deed (4:487).

It is worth being precise, because precision persuades. Ibn Taymiyyah did not endorse mourning gatherings, and he warned against ritualising grief. But on the two



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points that matter here he could not be clearer: the enormity of the crime, and the nobility of al-Husayn (ra). That is the pattern across Sunni scholarship. The scholars differed over how Karbala should be remembered. They never differed over the magnitude of what was done, or over the rank of the one to whom it was done.

The Forgetting Is the Novelty

Step back, and the strange thing is not that some Muslims remember Karbala. It is that others have learned to forget it. For most of Islamic history, remembrance of al-Husayn (ra) was simply part of the Sunni landscape — and not a quiet one. In the Ottoman lands, in Mughal and pre-Mughal India, across North Africa and throughout the Sufi orders, the tenth of Muharram brought sermons, elegies, and gatherings of grief that no one mistook for Shi'ism. Sunni poets composed laments for the Prophet's (saw) grandson; Sunni preachers retold Karbala from the pulpit; ordinary Sunni families marked the day. In the Indian subcontinent especially, this was the texture of Sunni piety for centuries, and the Sufi orders treated Karbala as a standing lesson in sacrifice, justice, and the refusal of tyranny.

So what changed? Largely the twentieth century. As reformist Salafi currents spread — through schools and seminaries, inexpensive print, satellite television, and well-funded networks of patronage — many inherited Muharram customs were reclassified. What had been ordinary Sunni remembrance was now suspected as bid'a, innovation, or dismissed as imitation of the Shi'a. Communities that had marked Karbala for generations were urged to let the practice lapse. The reformers did not, for the most part, deny that Karbala was a tragedy; they argued they were stripping away accretions and restoring a purer Sunnism — one that honoured al-Husayn (ra) without ritual excess, and without letting a single episode dominate the whole of Islamic history.

Onto this theological shift was grafted a political one. After 1979, the rivalry between

Saudi Arabia and revolutionary Iran drove the sectarian temperature sharply upward, and Karbala — long a symbol of resistance to unjust power — became entangled in it. To grieve too visibly for al-Husayn (ra) could now be made to feel like taking the other side. Religious institutions in some quarters promoted readings that quietly shrank Karbala's importance and frowned on devotion to the Ahl al-Bayt. Historians and observers of the region have noted the pattern and noted too what it conveniently achieved: less attention to the suffering of the Prophet's (saw) household, less scrutiny of the rulers who caused it, and a weaker hold of the Karbala story on the Sunni imagination.

Much of the reformist impulse was a genuine fear of excess, a genuine wish to keep worship within the Sunnah. And there is a real point buried inside it — Karbala should not become the single lens through which a believer reads the whole of Islamic history. But there is a wide gulf between pruning excess and uprooting memory, and in many places it is memory itself that has been lost. The proof is in the testimony of the old: across Pakistan, India, Iraq, Egypt, and parts of Syria, elderly Sunnis describe a Muharram far richer than the one their grandchildren know. What an entire living tradition once carried, a verbal "we respect Husayn (ra)" is now left to carry alone.

And so the irony completes itself. In straining not to resemble one group, some Sunnis abandoned an inheritance that was wholly their own. The discomfort is the recent thing; the remembrance is the old thing. Whatever else may be said, the forgetting is the novelty — and of all the lessons a community might afford to mislay, the one Karbala exists to teach is the last it should choose to lose.

The Voice of the Saints and the Poets

The scholars supplied the proof; but through the long centuries it was the lovers of Allah who kept Karbala's soul alive, carrying it in verse into every Sunni land the re-

formers had not yet reached. This register is not that of isnad and grading; it is the language of the heart, and it should be read as such. Yet across centuries and continents, the awliya and poets of this Ummah have returned to al-Husayn (ra) repeatedly.

Jalal al-Din Rumi asks where the world might find a grief to equal the grief of Husayn, or a soul to match his soul — and reads Karbala not as a defeat but as the victory of the spirit over raw power. Farid al-Din 'Attar places upon al-Husayn's (ra) tongue the willingness to be cut down by swords if the pure religion of Muhammad (saw) could survive no other way. (The couplet is devotional poetry, not a historical quotation — but it captures how Muslims have understood the sacrifice: not a reach for power, but the surrender of everything to guard the Prophet's (saw) teaching.) 'Abd al-Rahman Jami marvels that, where kings cling to their crowns by sacrificing others, al-Husayn (ra) gave his own head and won a crown that does not tarnish.

Closer to our own age, the Indian scholar and devoted lover of the Ahl al-Bayt, Ahmad Raza Khan, wrote repeatedly that attachment to al-Husayn (ra) is inseparable from attachment to the Messenger (saw). And the early ascetics understood, as al-Ghazali did, that remembering the sacrifices of the righteous softens a hard heart and wakes it — and few sacrifices in all of Islamic history stand higher than this one.

Nowhere did this devotion burn brighter than in the subcontinent the reformers would later cool. The most famous lines of all are the quatrain long sung in the Chishti order and ascribed to Khwaja Moin al-Din Chishti, the Hanafi Sunni saint of Ajmer whose shrine still draws Sunni pilgrims by the hundred thousand:

*Husayn is the king, Husayn is the emperor;
Husayn is the faith, and Husayn is the shelter of the faith.
He gave his head — but not his hand — into
the hand of Yazid;
truly, Husayn is the very foundation of
There is no god but God.'*

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Like much in the devotional diwans, the verses are traditionally ascribed rather than firmly documented — but they have shaped how generations of Sunnis in the subcontinent understood Karbala, and they say something tears alone never could. The saint does not mourn a defeat; he crowns a victory. He calls al-Husayn (ra) the shelter of the faith — din-panah — and the very foundation of the testimony of tawhid. With that, the whole meaning of Karbala turns over, and we arrive at the question this essay has been circling toward.

More Than Mourning

We have defended the tears, and they deserve defending. But tears are a doorway, not a destination — and the deepest voices in this tradition have always insisted that to stop at grief is to miss what Karbala was for. Love for al-Husayn (ra), they say, is proved less by weeping than by becoming a little more like him: steadfast, truthful, courageous, and content with the decree of Allah.

Begin with what al-Husayn (ra) actually set out to do. He did not ride toward Karbala in search of death. He rode in search of the pleasure of Allah. He would not lend his hand — the hand of the Prophet's (saw) grandson — to legitimise a corrupt and tyrannical rule, and when obedience to Allah collided with his own safety, he chose obedience and entrusted the outcome to his Lord. That is not the conduct of a man chasing a throne, nor of a man courting martyrdom. It is the conduct of a man who has decided that some things are worth more than survival.

And here is the point most often missed. Karbala was not a battle al-Husayn (ra) lost for want of right or courage. Had Allah willed him an earthly victory, the wells would not have run dry, no sword would have reached him, and the House of the Prophet (saw) would have been spared. Victory was never beyond the power of the One he served. That it was withheld is pre-

cisely what tells us where the meaning lies. The triumph of Karbala was never going to be measured in territory, or in who held the field at dusk. Its triumph was the stand itself — and what the stand preserved.

This is why the people of spiritual realisation — the 'arifun — read Karbala not as a man overtaken by events but as a servant who embraced them with open eyes. They do not deny the suffering or soften the injustice; they insist the oppression was monstrous. But in al-Husayn's (ra) patience, his certainty, and his contentment with the decree they see the highest form of servitude to Allah — a soul so surrendered that even the loss of everything could not move it from its Lord. For this reason, many of the 'arifun warned against any mourning that curdles into objection to the divine decree, or that exhausts itself in sorrow and goes no further. Grieve the wrong that was done, they taught; but venerate the station to which Allah raised him and rejoice in the victory granted through him.

For the stand did protect something — and not only in its own hour. By refusing to bless tyranny with the authority of the Prophet's (saw) blood, al-Husayn (ra) guarded the conscience of the Ummah for every generation that followed. He fixed a permanent example into the memory of his people: that legitimacy cannot be coerced, that truth is not decided by the strong, and that a believer can stand all but alone and still stand with Allah. Every later age has met its own Yazid — its own moment when comfort, safety, or the crowd pull one way and conscience pulls the other. Karbala is the answer the Ummah keeps in reserve for those moments. Numbers do not make a thing right; survival is not the highest good; and dignity is not decided by who holds the field at the end of the day.

That is why his name outlived the men who killed him. The thrones fell, the dynasties ended, the rulers blurred into footnotes — and the grandson of the Prophet (saw) is remembered still, because he stands for everything that cannot be bought. The crowd

looks at Karbala and asks how much was taken from al-Husayn (ra). The people of nearness look at the same plain and ask how much was given to him. Both are gazing at the same blood in the same sand. Only one of them has understood it.

Conclusion

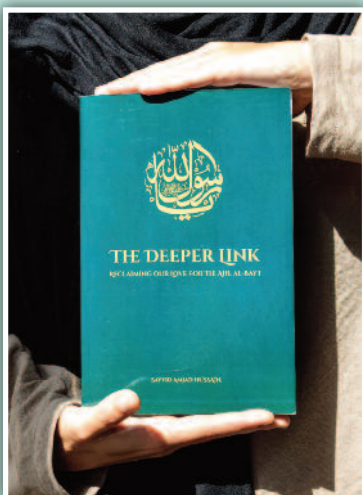
The tragedy of Karbala is not the private property of one sect or one land. It is an Islamic grief, held in common by the whole Ummah. To remember it is not to leave Sunni principles behind; it is to live out some of their deepest commitments — and to remember it rightly is not to drown in sorrow but to be summoned by it.

The greatest Sunni scholars, hadith masters, jurists, saints, and poets never felt a contradiction between holding firmly to Sunni belief and loving al-Husayn (ra) without reserve. They mourned him, wrote of him, praised him, and passed his memory on. They knew you cannot truly love the Messenger of Allah (saw) while turning away from the pain of those he loved most.

In the end the argument is as simple as it is unanswerable. If the Prophet (saw) loved al-Husayn, the believer loves him too. If the Prophet (saw) said "Husayn is from me," then what Husayn (ra) stood for is nothing the believer can stand apart from. And if the murder of al-Husayn (ra) broke the hearts of the righteous for thirteen hundred years, while his refusal to bow to tyranny steadied their backs for just as long, then to remember Karbala is no mark of division and no mere indulgence of grief. It is a sign that the heart is still beating — and that the spine, when the hour demands it, can still stand.

Sayyid Amjad Hussain

is a lifelong student of Islam, devoted to the love of the Prophet Muhammad (saw), the Ahl al-Bayt, and the spiritual heritage of Sunni Islam. His writing calls for a return to sincerity, humility, adab, and love as the foundations of nearness to Allah. More of his writings may be found at muhasabah.org.



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of love for the Prophet's ﷺ household, from Sayyidah Fatimah and Sayyiduna Ali to al-Hasan, al-Husayn, and the generations who carried their light. Reverence for the Ahl al-Bayt, it shows, is neither borrowed nor sectarian, but the Sunni inheritance itself, a sign of sincere devotion to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

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Sitting on the Fence: The Schizophrenic Muslim

As war and genocide continue in West Asia, **Sahib Mustaqim Bleher** challenges Muslims in the west: where exactly is their moral compass? Dissecting the muted responses of Muslim led groups and movements, Bleher unpacks the psychology of individuals and groups whose adherence to Islam, however vocal and apparent, is increasingly secular.

The one question the war on Iran should have put into sharp focus is: Which side are you on? For Muslims the answer should be obvious and without reservations, however, sadly this is not the case. Here, I am not talking about the hypocritical governments installed in Muslim lands by former colonial powers, whose subservience to their non-Muslim protectors goes as far as, in a most recent example, having Israeli military personnel operate an Iron Dome battery inside the UAE – needless to say it didn't last long.

Surah an-Nisa' (4), ayah 139: *"Those who take the rejecters (of the truth) as protecting friends instead of the believers; do they seek strength from them, when all strength belongs to Allah?"*

My focus in this article is on ordinary individuals like you and I, both in the East (now increasingly referred to as the global South) and the West (with many from the East longing to move to the West, whatever the cost).

In my introduction to *"Conceptual Islam"* I posited that *"Most textbooks on Islam tell us that Islam is a way of life. The briefest of reality checks will tell us that Muslims' way of life is today shaped by a plethora of other influences with Islam as an add-on. This apparent discrepancy has relegated the notion of true Islam into either the past as a praised, but lost historic example from the days of the prophet and his companions or into the future as a utopian dream of a return to the*

golden age "when the Mahdi comes". Neither offers much solace or hope for the Muslim struggling with the here and now."

First there is the sectarian type, like those who cheered on the "Glorious Revolution" in Syria, apparently oblivious to the fact that it resulted in the Israeli occupation of a large slice of the country's territory and cut off the supply line to the resistance in Lebanon, described by the English writer and poet John Heywood in 1546 as *"Who is so deafe or blynde as is hee that wilfully will nother heare nor see"* (none is as deaf or blind as the one who refuses to hear or see). They will remain unmoved by the suffering of Muslims in Iran or Lebanon because they are of the wrong sect anyway. With their hostile aggression against other Muslims they compensate for the lack of courage to change their own mundane lives in which they aim to climb higher on the materialistic ladder of perceived success. Whilst slowly more and more Muslims are waking up to the fact I have been stating for decades, that al-Qaeda and Isis are subversion agents for the Zionist American empire, there remain large numbers of naïve followers who buy into their twisted ideology simply because it provides them with a measure of certainty and importance in a world where they are otherwise lost and insignificant. As the saying has it: Fanaticism is a sign of repressed doubt.

More worrying, however, is the ordinary Muslim who sympathises in principle with the cause of the resistance but is fearful of los-

ing the limited affluence he/she has managed to achieve. For those, the rising cost of living driven by the rising cost of fuel is more worrying than whether America is being downsized through a war strategy which includes economic pressure. The war, be it in Gaza, Lebanon or Iran, remains a side show. They wish "them" well, but are primarily concerned with trying to maintain their own standard of living, banishing any idea of sacrificing for a greater good. It is those whom I label the "schizophrenic Muslim".

Schizophrenia is a chronic, severe mental disorder characterised by disruptions in thought, perception, and behaviour, often involving hallucinations and delusions. Amongst its symptoms are confused thinking, incoherent speech, and bizarre behaviour, reduced emotional expression, lack of motivation, social withdrawal, and diminished energy, trouble focusing, memory issues, and difficulty in processing information.

The common layman's understanding of schizophrenia is what today is termed "Dissociative Identity Disorder, formerly split personality disorder, a complex mental health condition where the identity of a person fragments into two or more distinct alternating personalities. It is said to be primarily caused by early childhood trauma.

In Muslims socialised in Western societies, being different things to different people and in different situations is an early learned behaviour: the Muslim girl who re-

MUSLIM UNITY

With struggles for liberation still ongoing around the world, the late **Imam Cassiem** provides some context for Islamic activism within all of them.



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moves her headscarf upon entering the school gate, the Muslim boy who speaks polite Urdu at home and excels in swearing in English at school etc. These later develop into the adult who is a Rajah at home and a slave at the workplace. Islam becomes both a refuge and a status symbol whilst most of daily life is governed by the rules of the surrounding society. The problems arise when the two worlds collide, when the non-Muslim society is forced to confront an Islamic reality and the schizophrenic Muslim is forced to take sides openly. More often than not he will choose to defend the "values" of the society he supports and distance himself from the values of Islam, perceived as outlandish or extreme. Islam only serves his purpose where it is of direct benefit, not when it gives rise to conflict.

Surah al-Hajj (22), ay t 11-13: *"And amongst people is he who serves Allah borderline, so if good befalls him, he is content with it, and if a trial befalls him, he turns away; he has lost the world and the hereafter - that is the clear loss. He calls besides Allah on what does neither harm nor benefit him - that is the extensive error. He calls on whose harm is more likely than his benefit - a bad protector and a bad friend."*

The ay t neatly sum up the state of a large portion of Muslims today, explaining their apparent lack of effectiveness and inability to act. Unlike hypocrisy, which is a disease of the heart, the current state of Muslims is characterised by a confusion of the mind. Having lived in the West all their lives, or aspiring to live there, Muslim minds have been colonised by the West. Without a prior decolonisation of the mind liberation is improbable.

Amongst the Muslims socialised in the West some later embrace secularism completely, others continue to practice Islam to a greater or lesser degree. These soon learn to make excuses for why they do not permit the social and political demands of their faith to spur them to action: We have to work through the political process, we have to act from a position of strength, we can only make a difference when we have obtained a

position within society, there is nothing the powerless can do but pray. The list goes on. At each stage, there is another hurdle to be overcome before conscience catches up. The time, it seems, is never quite right. In fact, events which mandate action are inconvenient. Why did they have to provoke war when there were other avenues open to them?

Resistance means to oppose oppression, to stand up against injustice...resistance is an obligation on Muslims. Those who do not resist falsehood are amongst its enablers.

Surah an-Nisa' (4), ayah 75: *"And what is the matter with you that you do not fight in the way of Allah and for the weak amongst the men and women and children who say: our Lord, take us out from this town of wrongdoing people and assign us a protector from You and assign us a helper from You?"*

Of course, there are valid excuses. Ay t 98 and 99 of the same Surah state: *"Except those who are weak amongst men, women and children and cannot do anything nor find a way. Those Allah may let off; and Allah is lenient, forgiving."* And Surah a-Taubah (9) ayah 91: *"There is no blame on the weak nor the ill nor those who do not find anything to spend if they are sincere to Allah and His messenger. There is no way against those who do good, and Allah is forgiving and merciful."*

However, it puts us to shame collectively when a feeble female pensioner has more courage than a strong young Muslim man by risking arrest in order to protest the proscription of Palestine Action, a direct action group, again, more often than not supported

by other than Muslims.

Hijrah is to move away from corrupting evil to a place where faith can flourish. The alternative is jihad by deed or word. It can never be acquiescence.

According to Hadith, the best form of jihad is to speak a word of truth in front of an oppressive ruler. Speaking truth to power, not trying to attain power before speaking the truth.

In recent years the term Resistance has gained widespread currency. Resistance means to oppose oppression, to stand up against injustice, to refuse the status quo, to refuse to normalise what is an affront to the human conscience. In the absence of a "state of Islam", Islamic rule, a society guided and run by Islamic values, resistance is an obligation on Muslims. Those who do not resist falsehood are amongst its enablers. Not challenging a false narrative means silently promoting it.

As I noted in Conceptual Islam: *"Like Moses, we have grown up in the dazzling world of Pharaoh's magicians. Like Moses, we are suspicious of its pronouncements. But unlike Moses, we are unable to challenge their magic since we try to compete with them or beat them at their own game rather than expose and diminish the falsehood of their imposing achievement. Modern-day magic is not conjured by sticks and ropes, it is conveyed through words and images. Words are powerful, be they those of revelation or those of deception. Yet the two are not equal - one swallows up the other. Beating the swindler at his own game, therefore, is impossible and merely turns us all into pretenders."*

As our beloved prophet Muhammad, peace be with him, taught us: *"Whoever of you sees a wrong, let him change it with his hand, and if he cannot do so, with his tongue, and if he cannot do so, with his heart - and that is the weakest of faith."* (Sahih Muslim, narrated by Abu Sa'ïd al-Khudri)

Looking around it appears that most Muslims today struggle to even hold on that weakest form of faith, where their hearts have grown so accustomed to the trappings of this world that they struggle to genuinely

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wish for change or even resent that change due to the sacrifices demanded of them in the process.

On the other end of the scale there is direct action: changing the status quo by our own hands. Only a few have risen to that level of commitment. However, all of us should have the courage to speak up and demand justice.

The disease plaguing the Muslim Ummah is not incurable. For the Ummah to heal, its constituents, individual Muslims, must heal and attune their hearts to the truth, purify their intentions and long for the truth to be established, cherishing the company, if only spiritually, of those who fight in Allah's cause. There should be no hesitation of any kind when asked which side we are on in the current battle between freedom and oppression.

Collectively, the Ummah has lost its moral compass as a result of generational colonial conditioning. Three years of Gaza genocide broadcast live have not solicited a collective response. Nor has the suffering of Muslims in Sudan, Burma, Syria and countless other places. The suffering of Muslims around the world was not mentioned in a single word in the [Khutbah at Arafat](#) during this year's Hajj, the one day when the gates for granting prayers are open (the crown prince got a mention, of course). Our situation today is akin to that when the crusaders occupied Palestine before Salahuddin al-Ayubi took charge. We may long for another strong leader or even the Mahdi, but the reality is that a competent leader also needs competent followers, which brings us back to the individual else we are in the same category as the Israelites who stubbornly defied Musa, peace be upon him:

Surah al-Ma'idah (25), aya 24: *"They said, oh Musa (Moses), we will never enter it while they are in it, so go you and your Lord and fight, we will stay here."*

Part of the problem is how Islam is taught today as a set of rituals, rules and regulations without first inculcating in the believers the guiding principles of their faith: the balance or equilibrium we are tasked to

establish and maintain in our society and environment, the guardianship we were given which urges us to act responsibly, the justice which gives the law its purpose and cause.

Another stumbling block is the resurgence of tribalism in the guise of nation states with artificial borders drawn by former colonisers. These nations now compete with and even fight each other, dispensing with

The qualitative superiority of the believer stems from the fact that (s)he stands up for what is right and stands in the way of wrongdoing thereby benefiting others and mankind at large.

the sense of belonging to a single Ummah which, in the words of the prophet Muhammad, peace be with him:

"The likeness of the believers in their affection, mercy, and compassion for each other is that of a body. When any limb aches, the whole body reacts with sleeplessness and fever." (related by al-Nu'man ibn Bashir in Bukhari and Muslim).

Of course, belonging to a family, a clan, a tribe, forms part of our identity, as the Qur'an states in Surah al-Hujurat (49), aya 13: *"Oh mankind, We have created you from male and female and made you into clans and tribes so that you know each other. The most honoured amongst you before Allah is the most aware (of Him) amongst you, for Allah is knowing and informed."*

However, often we find the same tribe divided by an arbitrary national border and being indoctrinated to cherish their national identity above their natural belonging.

And then there is the internet which allows us to clear our conscience by leaving a comment here and there without ever having to get involved in the real-world battles between truth and falsehood whilst fooling ourselves that we are actively making a difference. Virtual Islam is probably the greatest impediment to the Ummah making progress and throwing off the shackles of control preventing it from advancing towards the destiny Allah has decreed for us:

Surah al-Imran (3), aya 10: *"You are the best community brought forth for mankind: you command good conduct and forbid wrongdoing and believe in Allah..."*

The qualitative superiority of the believer stems from the fact that (s)he stands up for what is right and stands in the way of wrongdoing thereby benefiting others and mankind at large. The healing process, therefore, begins with reflection and introspection: whom do we actually benefit, what side are we on, what can and can't we do, what prevents us from doing what we could have done.

Focused individuals produce dynamic communities which work together to build a more equitable society. Throughout history, Palestine has been a barometer of whether Allah is pleased with His people. May Allah revive the Ummah and return Palestine to it, expelling the cancer that has spread within it. Palestinians have sacrificed and suffered so that the Ummah may heal. When we join the resistance, we do not help Palestine, we finally heed the call of Palestine to free ourselves.

Sahib Mustaqim Bleher

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How Race-Riot Britain Became Normalised

After another summer of race-riots, and documented spike in racist violence, **Dedan Kimaathi** argues that the politics of British colonial settler violence rebounds to the centre from the periphery.

The Delusion Industry Attempts Cover-Up of Continuous Brit Lynch-Mobs

Britain's recent historic societal and cultural transformations

Recently in central London a young man with an Argentina football team top was removed by police from amidst an aggressive mob of English nationalists. The English nationalists were all of Asian and African heritage. This particular kind of incident was the first of its kind in the starkness of its expressions of toxic British nationalism internalised by non-whites. This made the news headlines and went viral on social media, but its significance lies in the historic and major cultural shifts which see manifestations like these as the victories of British colonial nationalism in the formalities of Brexit (taking back 'their' country).

What are some of the main currents and contexts that have produced this reality of a resurgent and, despite the manipulations, an increasingly ethnically exclusive - white supremacy with British characteristics - British nationalism? It might be interesting to explore as to why this colonial nationalist offensive is seeing little to no resistance from non-white people. How can those who believe in a humanity beyond and against colonialism understand the social balance of forces of where we are in this historic moment and what this means for oppressed peoples' lived experience and culture? Why aren't the oppressed acting according to the increasingly violent emergency of the situation? What elements distort and attempt to take us away from this focus, and for whose interests?

Brexit has delivered a veritable *Empire 2.0* which like any other political project cannot be successful unless it is led and delivered by culture. Culture is a contested ground in which the state (due to its vast human, bureaucratic and violent aspects), always has the upper hand, especially in states where the oppressed cannot build their own relative autonomous resistance communities.

Most popular culture is generated by the oppressed as some form and expression of resistance and, as in-line with the

reality of colonial-capitalism, it is appropriated and turned into a tool for the refinement and promotion of the colonial system and powers. Oppressed peoples' counter-cultures against racism and colonialism have declined and have no real social significance in terms of the collective behaviours of the oppressed. Culture is not currently an arena whereby the oppressed are mobilising and moving forward - actually culture is pushing them into being further oppressed. In line with the rise of more violent social trends of British racism, the oppressed are not constructing culture, or in the process of 'mental production', as Marx explains it 1845 (see problems of Marx's own colonial limitations and loyalties [here](#)):

*"The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e. the class which is the ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it. The ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships, the dominant material relationships grasped as ideas; hence of the relationships which make the one class the ruling one, therefore, the ideas of its dominance. (Karl Marx, *The German Ideology, Critique of Modern German Philosophy*, written in 1845, published in 1932)*

Culture is also a reflection of the balance of social forces that exist in a world system of colonialist white supremacy: social forces arrayed against each other in two basic camps of the global colonial settler class ('whites') and then the colonised. But also a third important class for the functioning and regeneration (and degeneration at the same time) of the system of a third social grouping which is the sell-out or collaborator class (aka 'coconuts').

The British colonial system understands the 'coconut' class to be so important that it played with the political term's

criminalisation in recent years. This speaks back to the colonised mind and actions of those who chose to don a colonial-crusader's uniform (England tops) and chase the Argentina fan through central London as if Thatcher's war for colonialism in Las Malvinas never ended. We are going through massive cultural shifts of this new version of the old Blairite 'new Britannia cool' but this time even uglier, if that's possible.

Brexit Britain's generation of a culturally dominant collaborator class

Colonised people lack ability to think and act independently

The *consciousness* of the non-white collaborator class, which is the dominant cultural expression of non-whites in British society and communities, is the consciousness of the colonialist and his agenda. The consciousness of the collaborator coconut class is as diverse in colonial expressions as the colonialists themselves (the *political spectrum*). There are right-wing collaborators personified and inspired by the likes of Kwesi Kwarteng, Priti Patel, Rishi Sunak, Zia Yusuf, Suella Braverman etc; and there are left/liberal collaborators pushing British colonial projects of 'British Muslim', 'British Asian' and 'Black British' etc.

If in Britain the consciousness of the oppressed was somewhat healthy, it would impact across society as something inspiring as was the cultural wave that led up to and informed the *four-day uprising against British racism and capitalism of the oppressed in August 2011*. The consciousness of that uprising was crushed at the time through violence (5,000 people sent to jail) and cultural violence which was injecting Britishness deeply into non-white people.

Colonialism can take away the ability for the oppressed to think for themselves:

"The individuals composing the ruling class possess among other things consciousness, and therefore think. Insofar, therefore, as they rule as a class and determine the extent and compass of an epoch, it is self-evident that they do this in its

whole range, hence among other things rule also as thinkers, as producers of ideas, and regulate the production and distribution of the ideas of their age: thus their ideas are the ruling ideas of the epoch.” (Marx, *The German Ideology*, 1845)

The oppressed under the growing pressure of British nationalism / Brexit Britain have let go of their relative abilities to be ‘producers of ideas, and regulate the production and distribution of the ideas of their age’. In the lead up to the August 2011 Uprising, the oppressed were engaged in a number of streams of production of ideas through culture, much of this was done through oral traditions in music (Grime, Garage, Rap, Dub Step) not least the mass underground communication networks of the oppressed that was Pirate Radio. Pirate Radio was **repressed intensely in the period from 2005-2010**, this was then replaced by social media which has been **proven to be a central tool for the rise of racism**.

Major cultural shifts have taken place impacting everyone in recent years. These social trends indicate surging violent racist views and behaviours and the quickening internalisation of colonial white supremacy in the specific form of non-whites *en masse* assimilating into Britishness.

Near-daily non-stop racist race-rioting incidents across Britain of racists clamouring ‘for their country back’ in **raping and killing women in their homes** and beds isn’t the way in which official Britain and Britishness likes to portray itself. The growing nakedness of the system requires covering up the reality. Nevertheless, the naked truth bursts forward repeatedly due to the intensity of the crises its oppression creates. In keeping with this the oppressed see the truth but choose to keep the peace for the system and its criminality: so of course, there is a profound culture of delusion amongst the oppressed.

Non-white people seem to engage in large scale collective self gas-lighting when

they see the ugliness of the reality of racist modern Britain shown back to them in the media. They behave like every day is another day - turn the other cheek, continue being quiet colonial wage-slaves, and make excuses for living through such humiliation. All news platforms and social media headlines report on the most pressing issue for Brits today (and increasingly other populations internalising colonial hegemony in our times): the ‘problem’ of the non-Brit in Britain, the ‘non-Brit’ is code for ‘non-white’. Other words for this *othered* humanity are ‘migrant’, ‘asylum seeker’, the ‘Muslim’ or just: “*isn’t British*”.

The public conversation in mainstream political discourse goes as far as to question the ‘racial purity’ tests of people **including the British Monarch**. To be clear, King Charles is not being othered here nor victimised, but it’s indicative of how extreme and acceptable conversations are being encouraged in the ‘mainstream media’, and reflects how powerless non-white masses are choosing to be in the situation while assimilating into the same framework from which racist attacks and genocide emanate.

Left and Liberal Colonialism in Brexit Britain

The left’s narcissistic behaviour leaves the oppressed more vulnerable

Britishness and British culture are at the same time violently racist and colonialist, but they also have a strong aspect of arrogance & smugness. Racist gas-lighting that comes more from the colonial liberal/left wing who downplay and/or encourage the delusion that: things aren’t as they are or as bad as they are.

This colonial delusion from the left/liberals states that growing fascism of the colonial state is an ‘abnormality’, that the liberal state and its police and laws have to be *made* to work as it ‘should be working’. It seems to make no impact that this approach has failed the oppressed for

generations. Complaining about colonialism doesn’t equate to anti-colonialism, appropriating what appears to be ‘anti-colonialism’ is the racket that pushes multicultural colonial subjects as they scramble for colonial crumbs.

The colonial liberal/left present themselves as the unaccountable saviour of the non-white and promote the idea that the colonial state can, at one time, be a global leader in genocide historically and currently and, at the same time, it can consistently deliver some kind of liberal *law and order* for the oppressed.

The old radical civil-right direct actions of anti-colonial struggles sought to reform the colonial system, but this is different: the colonial liberal/left states that the ‘radical protests’ are to not to even pressure to reform the system, but just to try and make the colonial laws and police act in accordance with the fantasies and delusions of the left/liberal mind and world.

Some call it the understatedness of British culture. However, this is a cover-up for the reality of violence in which liberal postures and sensibilities are an integral part. The non-white has recruited himself as an enthusiastic British colonial wage-slave who would rather prefer the liberal delusion of colonial-culture than face the stark reality of the growing precarity of his life.

British colonialism has always had a strong ‘multicultural’ cultural front to it, which allows the colonialist to indulge in the pleasures of extracting and exploiting from the colonised while needing the colonised to facilitate more colonial looting. Britain dresses up this racket as ‘proof’ as to how the non-whites might attain flimsy certificates of whiteness.

Britain presents itself as a world-leading example of how a state should function and treat its people. Along with other world leading colonialisms, it is so arrogant in these self-beliefs that they are willing to destroy whole countries using liberal discourse in their wars of aggression and occupation (Chechnya 1994 & 1999, Pales-



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tine 2000, Afghanistan 2001, Iraq 2003, Libya 2011, Syria 2011, Palestine/Gaza 2023, Lebanon 2024).

As long as you are not an 'illegal' human being, as long as you show a near-deranged commitment to 'Britishness', you might delude yourself that you are in the 'in-club' and not the target.

'Democracy' and the 'rule of law' in the West are predicated on super profit-making globally through genocide and environmental. Politics 'at home' is supposed to be 'liberal' and 'civil' in the framework of 'modernity' (synonymous with 'Enlightenment', a constructed white supremacist global beacon) as: supreme culture. The practice of this global violence and war on the oppressed is justified as a *white man's burden* that these people need to be violently forced into the western modes of being and governance.

Colonial violence abroad exports social violence away from the centre, and the coconut class knows that it is this global colonial violence that delivers *for themselves* peace in Britain and ensures loyalty of the colonial wage-slave in the *mother country*. The collaborator class assists the colonial war in forgetting about and invisibilizing third world peoples that Britishness has destroyed and killed, by just not talking about what Britain has done to Libyans, Iraqis and Afghans.

This violence and the related deceitful cover-up are the reality for most in the oppressed nations under the white man's military boot. This serves to create a safer pretence of democracy 'at home'. Malcolm X said 'chickens come home to roost', that colonial violence on the *othered*-world will grow to such levels and create such crises that the politics and violence of the 'war on terror' is increasingly evident in the 'domestic' sphere.

Speaking to this: although violent outbursts against othered migrant groups (often Irish communities in Ireland and in Britain) have been a feature of England for centuries, it is no coincidence that [the first national race-riot](#), i.e., an organised state-backed project of violent attacks against all non-white people happened in 1919 at a historic moment when the entire world was finally carved up between the European colonisers. In 1919 Brits conducted mob attacks against non-white people in port cities across the country, communities who were settled around seafaring workers; Somalis, Yemenis, Bengalis and others. As today, the 'reasons' for this racist violence were that they saw these communities as triggering racist anxieties/fantasies on economics, housing, sexual behaviour and violence, and so forth.

Crises of the world system means [record-levels of global wealth concentration](#) (through increased exploitation of labour and land and enforced genocides along with the ecocides), which means the poor get poorer and there are less relative crumbs that can be doled out. However,

this system has never been predicated on the ability to hand out actual crumbs, but rather its ability to control whole social groups by the actuality and threat of state violence and state-backed populist violence as the basis for the cultures of obedience that this British colonial violence demands of non-whites.

Simply: the system is making people poorer, but complaints about colonialism do not equate to anti-colonialism (it's a posture that feeds grifts and rackets of what the right-wing call in their opposite side of their culture war ding-dong: 'race-baiters', the liberal wing to the right wing of the colonial squabble). The narcissism of the colonial liberal/left always hands the oppressed to the right-wing, the same can be said of the way in which the left has pushed the poor into the new Dickensian social malaise and culture of misery of the disempowering 'foodbank'.

The Corbyn Collapse 2015-2020

Constant relenting under colonial bullying depressed and demobilised the oppressed

The problem of the left colonial framework failing the oppressed was writ-large during the period in which Jeremy Corbyn led the Labour Party (Sept 2015 to April 2020). There is a need for proper appraisals and reflections as to what happened around Corbyn's Labour leadership, but I will highlight some possible central problematics that speak to the themes of a long and complex process of collapses into Britishness.

The major controversy around Corbyn's leadership was a question relating to [anti-colonialism of the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples](#). Corbyn didn't behave differently as Labour leader as he did as an MP, he has always been committed to a British colonial liberalism. Instead of mobilising people defending any semblance of anti-colonialism, Corbyn decided to distance from a principled position with the oppressed and to hold that line, and instead signalled that to stand-up against racist criminalisation - while in the historically exceptional position of having a major mass social following - was something you choose not to do and instead you apologise to the colonial bully.

A nuance here is that Corbyn's engagement with political forces involved in anti-colonialism in Palestine and Lebanon in what became a crisis as aforementioned, was a *colonial engagement* in that this is an industry that promotes the idea of finding a common ground between colonialism and the colonised, between the genocider and the genocided. In attempts at finding this common ground, the colonialist always has the upper hand.

Corbyn backed down time and time again. Early on in Corbyn's position as

Leader of Her Majesty's Opposition, the colonial state threw down the gauntlet against Corbyn in an explicit threat of military coup against Corbyn:

"The Army just wouldn't stand for it. The general staff would not allow a prime minister to jeopardise the security of this country and I think people would use whatever means possible, fair or foul to prevent that. You can't put a maverick in charge of a country's security."

"There would be mass resignations at all levels and you would face the very real prospect of an event which would effectively be a mutiny." ([source](#))

Corbyn made no public reply, let alone mobilise against this open threat. A few weeks later another Brit military leader General Sir Nicholas Houghton [said in BBC News interview](#) that Corbyn being unwilling to conduct nuclear war meant that he was not fit for the job of prime minister. As with everything except colonial elections in this period, Corbyn refused to react, and instead wrote a letter of complaint to the very colonial department from which these threats were coming from: [the Ministry of Defence](#).

Corbyn in his liberal *modus operandi* signalled to the oppressed that when under attack from the system you politely ask the system to act in a manner that is contrary to its nature. Corbyn involved himself in anti-war around Iraq 2003, so he knows very well the criminal and violent manner of what Britishness and the state actually is. So choosing to peddle the liberal delusion is a simple win for the oppressor and a terrible loss for the oppressed.

Summer 2020 George Floyd protests

Cause appropriated, colonial state instrumentalises it for the racist culture war

In reflecting on the protests that started in May 2020 against racist violence around the US police killing of George Floyd, it's always interesting to note on what the actual existing balance of social forces existed. As with nearly every protest from or involving non-white people in Britain, the oppressed start from a position of great weakness and little to negligible political ability to assert their collective interests in any socially relevant manner. Instead, perceptions of protests and protest culture are instrumentalised by the colonial state in strategies of co-optation (expanding the collaborator class) and colonial deradicalization programs.

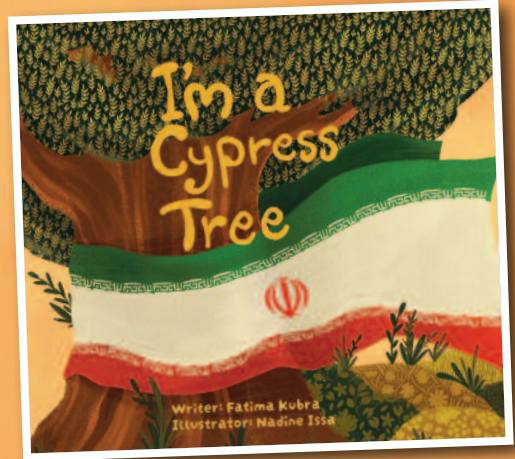
The protests did however show some

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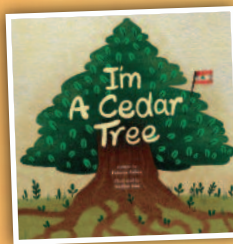
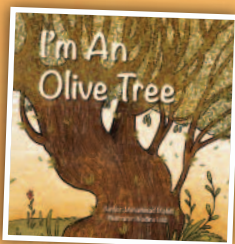
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interest from Black, non-white and allied 'white' oppressed youth to seek avenues to try and push-back. A social sentiment of relative race-class consciousness amongst the oppressed can only be put into reality if there are genuine anti-colonial movements. This is not the case in Britain and never has been outside of the Irish community, barring some anomalies. Nor was it the case in 2020.

The British state and media constructed for the British racist population a bogey man of black radicalism that didn't really exist. This can be illustrated by the fact that British authorities decided to put a grey box on the Churchill statue in Parliament Square. In contrast to the August 2011 Uprising the most anti-colonial youth were not active nor assertively self-determined like Aug 2011, and did not exist in numbers compared to 2011; the August 2011 actions were direct-actions against the police and high street shops, the 2020 protests became bogged-down in the colonially managed and framed 'culture war' around statues and arguments over 'decolonisation' of colonial institutions.

The racist anxiety is heightened by the theatrics of 'radical' Black protests which weren't radical at all. There was a small demographic of a few hundred youth who would protest for Black human rights daily. These groups of Black-led poor youth defended themselves against police brutality in Whitehall for weeks. All political groupings that would claim to be leading these protests, all left these youth to fend for themselves against the police. This, like much history, is unwritten, an erasure of race-class struggle. Similarly, the August 2011 Uprising is also relatively erased by the colonial left, with few examples of documenting this important history.

Massive concentrations of wealth by colonialists in the Covid period is a better indicator of what the powers that be were actually engaged in while putting up BLM flags in their corporate and state buildings on the high streets. Non-white people were politically and economically big losers in this period, which then opened up even lower depths of collapse into the toxic logics of post-Brexit Britain.

2020-2024: Brexit Culture Full Spectrum Dominance

Historic new lows of colonial collaboration and sell-out

The anomaly in this regard in this period was the Roma-led uprising in Harehills in July 2024, (discussed on these pages) which has many important aspects to it, not least the manner in which a very pro-police new Green Party leadership creates itself in these conditions and presents itself as a vanguard pro-state force in the midst of an oppressed peoples' fight-back.

Aside from Harehills, this period sees a form of Brexit accelerationism - i.e., mass

culture of violent colonial settlerism.

The street confrontations between South Asian youth in September 2022 in Leicester was like the British Raj had never ended. With anti-racist unity between Asians and Black youth absent (they type promoted and demanded by e.g. Walter Rodney, Malcolm X and Steve Biko), what spread was all the variant forms of colonial divisions between non-white people, with the Leicester situation adding to the dehu-

A sober look at the targeting of Irish and Muslim communities by the British state including 'anti-terror' activities can easily explain to anyone that there is no room for the oppressed to be saved by somehow forcing the colonialist to be nicer and more liberal.

manised behaviour of the new colonial service class of South Asian migrant labour in Britain.

By Feb 5 2023 one of the most popular Black-run shows on social media (*Tommy Robinson - Evil Or Patriotic?*) had a representative of black radicalism laughing-along to a leading English far-right colonialist agitator using the racial slur: 'paki'. This was a significant part of a connected formation of culture signalling - the last moments of any attempt at push-back at the racist surge. Similarly, on November 29, 2023 5 Pillar's Dilly Hussain interviewed the leading British neo-Nazi Nick Griffin followed by more armchair conversations on Jan 19 2024 and May 14 2024 with two other significant leaders of state-backed British racist organisations.

Whatever the intention, this assists a new normalisation of British fascists and the British colonial state, leading them deep into non-white communities who are, at the same time, facing growing lynch mobs and violent attempts to expel them en masse from Britain.

Gaza 2023: The global colonial offensive

Colonial left and liberalism crashes Palestine solidarity into police and racists' arms

The looming global background to this period of 2023-2024 was the united global colonial offensive in the wake of the Palestinian uprising of October 7th 2023. Anti-

Muslim racism was and continues to be ramped-up, criminalisation and repression being the answer of the British government and media to the genocide in Gaza, which the British state is aiding and abetting. It is worth noting that despite claiming to support Palestinians the actions of some British trade unions as in the case of the RMT Union directly, have worked to support the genocide. This is another example of the appropriation and sell-out of the oppressed in Gaza for British colonial crumbs and positions.

On 11th November 2023, the national pro-Palestine march was subject to open provocations by British racists. This was after the pro-Palestine protest organisers accepted the banning of protests at the Israeli embassy in Kensington, something that had never happened before. The Palestine protest organisers not only refused to organise self-defence of the protests which were being attacked across the country, but actually collaborated openly with police on protests and to the extent of even physically assisting police to detain and arrest protestors. This collaboration between protest stewards and police was a new low for protests in Britain.

On the day itself, the Palestine protest organisers caved into the state and racists and allowed their march to be totally rerouted to allow for a British racists' march. The Palestine protest organisers across the country allowed themselves to become a wing of racist policing for the state within the Palestine protest community, helping the racists to purge the protest community of more radical and assertive anti-colonial minded youth.

The absurdity of dysfunctions in the pro-Palestine camp is born out of the liberal/left-wing of coloniality, the entire protest community has adopted colonial lines of thinking that the British police, judicial system and general state is somehow fixable into a better functioning liberal order as long as they can 'break Israel's influence on Britain'. This logic is forced to produce a movement that deliberately and willingly sends thousands of people into the police, courts and prisons under draconian anti-terror legislation in the deluded hope that British colonial liberalism will save them. A sober look at the targeting of Irish and Muslim communities by the British state including 'anti-terror' activities can easily explain to anyone that there is no room for the oppressed to be saved by somehow forcing the colonialist to be nicer and more liberal.

The Palestine protests were openly harassed and attacked by the organised and state-backed racist networks. Everywhere and every day the pro-Palestinians were humiliated by violent racists and as such were easy pickings for the state and racists to use them as material in the culture war to push the British population into the period in which we are now in: mobs of violent racists wanting to rape and kill non-white people. It was the way in which

the Palestine solidarity circles were manipulated and sold out that allowed the British state and racists to advance their fascism.

2024 onwards: Perpetual and Growing Brexit Britain Lynch Mobs

British racist violence erupts across the island, non-whites in total fear and division and the left runaway

The six days from 30 July 2024 saw British racist lynch mobs active across dozens of areas following the attack on girls at a dance class in Southport which left three girls dead. The perpetrator was a 17 year-old non-white, born in Britain who had been [in contact with mental health teams since he was 13](#). The attack triggered the first national race-riots since the last one in 1919. For six days Brits roamed the streets trying to burn down and kill non-white people in migrant hotels and places of worship and attacking non-white families in their homes and cars.

The violent British surge was primed on every level and had been building to this point for years, at least since August 2011. A summer of racist violence was kicked-off in the pogrom conducted by British colonial settlers in the occupied northern six counties of Ireland. This pogrom [expelled two thirds of the Roma community from Ballymena](#) in June 2025.

Irish people have been subjected to the same treatment by British colonialism in occupied Ireland for decades. The triumph of British racism is the general erasure of this entire situation and colonised people by the colonial left and liberals in Britain. This is a major problem for the oppressed as occupied Ireland has important anti-colonial struggles but also because British colonialism uses its proxies and agents there to lead the general racist project in Britain.

The June 2025 Ballymena pogrom is significant to oppressed peoples in Britain because it was a violent attack on a non-white community that led to that community's partial *expulsion* from the area.

Non-white people appear to have been set up by the British authorities to live within these communities in occupied Ireland. Being settled into these settler communities in the north of Ireland is ominous – is it a testing ground for their project of developing a similar 'Loyalist' project of violent British racism onto colonised people in Britain?

Summer 2025: Migrant Hotels Across the Country Targeted by British Lynch Mobs for Months

Leads to Operation Raise the Colours racist movement, and more race-riot-ing in Southampton and Belfast

Leading British racists are directly linked to Loyalist leaders, and point to these kinds of pogroms in occupied Ireland as examples for Brits to aspire to on the mainland. The summer of 2025 starting early July saw British lynch mobs attempt to burn down and attack non-white people at many hotels housing migrants including Epping, Essex, and Canary Wharf, London. There was also an attempt to burn and kill migrants in West Drayton on Sat 30th August. None of these incidents saw any attempt at solidarity or fight-back from those targeted

What is unique culturally and politically today is that racist violence meets no resistance but 'the other cheek'. The culture of anti-racism has ceased to exist.

and those who claim to be in support of migrant rights etc. These incidents were some of the more well-known and violent, but incidents of racist harassment and provocation are happening extensively and daily across the country.

The 'street Brit', the British racist networks that have been increasingly taking public space, are the genesis of what has become the more openly violently racist movement. In July 2025 an organised new movement started - Operation Raise the Colours - often masking racist narratives under the cover of raising British colonial flags and painting their colours on roundabouts etc. This movement is [explicitly far-right](#) racist (they promote 'stop the boats' for example), and their public activities [have been argued as encouraging street harassment of non-white people](#).

On June 2 202,6 23yr old Vickrum Digwa, a turban-wearing non-white youth in traditional clothing stabbed 18yr old Henry Nowak after a confrontation when Nowak approached Digwa after leaving a pub. Nowak lost his life in the incident. This sparked racist violence in Southampton where the incident took place. Then on the 9 June following an incident whereby a non-white male in Belfast used a knife against a white male, a race-riot erupted in Belfast where rioters violently removed all non-white families from two residential streets.

The violent results of colonial settlerism in occupied Ireland served again to be the inspiration to the aspirations of the racists on the British mainland: the growing demand for the forced removal of all non-white people.

Conclusion

This history of the last six years is a very important period to interrogate and reflect on in understanding how and what are the leading contributory factors that have led to the cultural landscape shifting so dramatically. The challenge of going over these histories is made all that more difficult because it is this very attempt to build cultures *relatively pushing towards* anti-colonial thinking and action that the British colonial state is committed to annulling and erasing.

This dramatic shift has resulted in new nationwide *formal avenues* of open racist violence against non-whites as a daily occurrence organised around racist street-activism. The main strategy behind this is the continuing intimidation of non-white people into inaction and deepening their internalised dehumanisation, and to give them no avenue but colonial assimilation which pushes them still further into the furnace of racist violence.

What is unique culturally and politically today is that racist violence meets no resistance but 'the other cheek'. The culture of anti-racism has ceased to exist. Delusion is the perfect state for the oppressed - it delivers for the colonialist the superficial elements that something seems to be on offer to the colonised, only for that carrot to not actually exist and then in comes the proverbial stick.

The British culture of racist harassment - absolutely a form of violent colonial settlerism in the colonial centre - is culturally hegemonic: it is the actual dominant social culture of and the trajectory of British people and Britishness. It is strong and bold, and has control of the social media sphere as well as the streets.

What happens from here on is much of the same and more of what has taken place: the racist street violence is expanding and the state is leading this racist project and implementing more and more repression and exploitation including pushing for laws to enable the mass forced 'remigration' of people as was attempted in the Tories' failed 'Rwanda policy'. 'Hostile environment' is an ongoing general reign of terror of jailing, torture and expulsion of non-white people around official state definitions of 'alien' and 'illegal'.

There is no sign that there is any potential for a new cultural wave of assertiveness from the oppressed. All indicators are that the culture of cowardice and delusion as well as British colonial assimilation is growing without opposition, and that the toxic and globally destructive British project continues, facilitated by the sell-out class.

Dedan Kimaathi

is an anti-colonial advocate for over thirty years based in the heart of whiteness, London. He is directly connected through family with anti-colonial resistance to British colonialism in Kenya and Undivided India, and has been committed to anti-colonial projects and networks across the three Southern continents and Ireland. His recent writings can be found at [Sons of Malcolm](#).

The National Security Act is the Latest Expression of British Dystopia

A key feature of the Gaza genocide has been the systematic closure by complicit regimes of legitimate avenues to challenge it. Pro-Israeli western governments have engaged in unprecedented crackdowns on civil liberties in order to provide cover to the Zionist state. The latest attack in Britain comes in the form of the newly introduced National Security (State Threats) Act, an insidious piece of legislation that further blurs the line between activism and terrorism, says **Faisal Bodi**.

After four ambulances belonging to the Jewish volunteer agency, Hat-zola, were attacked in the London suburb of Golder's Green in the early hours of 23 March, the UK government propaganda machine swung into action.

Underlining the seriousness of the situation, Prime Minister Keir Starmer convened a COBRA meeting, the acronym given to high-level UK government committee which meets to coordinate responses to major national emergencies, mostly but not exclusively terrorism-related.

Government friendly media outlets plastered the incident all over their front pages, adding another layer of alarmism: an obscure group calling itself "The Islamic Movement of the Companions of the Right Hand" which was linked to the Iranian state had claimed responsibility for the attack.

The chief of London's Metropolitan Police, Sir Mark Rowley, and his assistant joined the chorus, placing the incident and group within a wider context of purported state-sponsored Iranian attacks on Jewish interests in Europe.

"The rapid growth in recent years of Iranian state threats is grave: hostile state

surveillance activity, 20 disrupted plots, and recent attempted attacks on the Iranian diaspora," Mr. Rowley told guests attending the (conveniently timed) annual dinner of the Community Security Trust the following evening. "None of this is isolated. It is part of a rapidly shifting threat landscape."

Within a few days, a narrative was established in which this hitherto unknown entity, which was also said to be behind multiple anti-Semitic attacks across Europe, also posed a clear and present danger to Jews in Britain. By any measure, it was a wholly disproportionate reaction to an incident which had caused no injuries and was being treated by police as a racially motivated arson attack, not terrorism.

Apart from being unduly sensationalist, the other problem with this account was that it wasn't supported by any facts. Firstly, British authorities have never revealed any details about alleged Iranian plots but have increasingly mentioned them as its US and Israeli allies have ratcheted up the rhetoric and aggression against Tehran, hiding behind the curtain of national security to avoid public scrutiny.

Secondly, as Professor David Miller has

painstakingly demonstrated, The Islamic Movement of the Companions of the Right Hand (IMCRH) appears to be a fiction, an intelligence cut-out that only exists in the hard drives of Western spy agencies and which emerges (very conveniently) at exactly the same time as Britain is providing logistical and intelligence support to the US and Israeli blitzkrieg on Iran. No links to the alleged Telegram channel exist in the public domain to allow for verification. Instead we have to rely on reports about claims of responsibility from two pro-Zionist think-tanks and the Israeli Ministry of Diaspora Affairs, hardly credible sources. Miller shows that of the 10 attacks on Jewish interests in Europe supposedly claimed by the group, five did not happen. The five that did were all low impact causing no casualties, with arrests made of suspects unconnected to one another with no proof of any relationship with Tehran.

Given that no-one was injured in the Golders Green incident and police declared it to be a racially motivated arson rather than a terrorist attack, the wholly disproportionate official reaction, usually reserved for high-level terrorism attacks, would sug-

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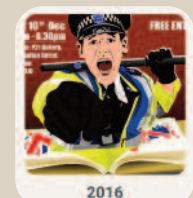
2019



2018



2017



2016

gest that it was curated. It was the not so hidden hand of state bringing the mood music against Iran to a crescendo, establishing a fake foreign threat to manufacture consent for unpopular policies that would otherwise be fiercely resisted. From the very outset, Britons have been overwhelmingly opposed to their country's involvement in the US-Israeli attacks on Iran. **In March, a YouGov poll showed that 70% of respondents were opposed to the UK joining any offensive action against Tehran.**

This then is the anatomy of the National Security (State Threats) Act: a piece of legislation built on an entirely confected threat posed by the agencies of an allegedly hostile state. With its enactment the propaganda cycle was complete. Having created and then ramped up the threat level with fake intelligence to justify draconian new laws, the introduction of the law itself also served to inflate public concern, making it appear justified.

Shortly after the NS(ST)A was introduced, the press picked up on another alleged threat from Iran. On 15 July police arrested a 39 year-old dual British Iranian national, formally charging him two days later with assisting a foreign regime. According to the few details that are available in the public domain, Vahid Aberi, had allegedly written a letter to the Iranian consulate in London, referring to himself as a "humble servant" and asking how he could assist his "dear compatriots". How police became aware of this approach is unknown but they responded by deploying an undercover agent to play the role of an Iranian official, directing Aberi to pick up luggage from a designated collection point. He was led to believe the bag contained a drone. Rather than confirming UK government claims of a rising Iranian threat the story gives rise to more allegations of threat fabrication and police entrapment. According to official accounts, Aberi was a freelancer who sought to approach Tehran on his own initiative: he certainly wasn't approached or invited by Iran. The police sting was designed to indulge him; without it his court-

ing of the Iranian government may well have gone no further (of course, this fact didn't stop the mainstream media from having a field day and using the incident to reinforce a putative Iranian threat).

To the unsuspecting public, the NS(ST)A is a national security imperative. But for those prepared to scratch the surface, it reveals another, more sinister, driving force. The delegitimization of agencies like the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps has long been a key demand of Zionist lobby groups and the NS(ST)A is designed specifically to give effect to that aim. Indeed, the first act of the legislation, which came into force in June, was to proscribe support for the IRGC. Israeli government mouthpieces in the UK Jewish community such as the Campaign Against Anti-Semitism, the Board of Deputies of British Jews and the Jewish Leadership Council (JLC) have campaigned relentlessly for sanctions to be applied to Iran. With the start of the genocide in Gaza, their efforts took on more urgency as it became clear that Tehran and the other constituents of the Axis of Resistance would not change course in the fight against Zionism. On 14 April the Board of Deputies and the JLC met with **Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper to demand**, among other things, "the need for the government to move with urgency to proscribe the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps".

The NS(ST)A must be seen in the context of the accelerating Zionisation of British politics in response to the Gaza genocide. Faced with overwhelming public opposition to the slaughter of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, groups and individuals that claim to represent British Jews but are first and foremost agents of the Israeli state have gone into overdrive to (a) shield Israel from criticism, (b) protect Israeli interests in the UK and (c) dictate the media narrative. Their preferred route has been by bribing British politicians with political donations and all-expenses paid propaganda trips to Israel and packing the corridors of power with Zionists. Some 37%

of the current Labour Party and 39% of PM Andy Burnham's new cabinet are members of the Labour Friends of Israel, a pro-Israel lobby group dedicated to promoting Israel interests and the Zionist cause. Among Conservative MP's that figure rises to 80%. In the last cabinet presided over by Keir Starmer, **13 out of 25 members received money from pro-Israel lobbyists.**

In respect of shielding Israel from the unprecedented criticism it is facing, pro-Israel groups have leaned on the authorities to employ hate speech and anti-terrorism legislation to limit legitimate political expression of a nation state. The examples are too numerous to list. They have also succeeded in criminalising direct action that targeted Israeli arms companies and their supporters with criminal damage to make it too costly for them to continue their role in the genocide. The ban on Palestine Action and the exemplary punishments handed out to its actionists is a key case in point, (interestingly, Palestine Action, has also faced unsubstantiated media allegations of **being funded by Iran**). And in respect of (c) while the sheer enormity of the crimes being committed in Gaza have made it impossible for mainstream media to hide the truth, there are still enough journalists and media networks prepared to push the case for Israeli innocence and victimhood.

The NS(ST)A was introduced as a standalone piece of legislation but it is effectively an extension of the 2023 National Security Act. The latter targets individuals acting on behalf of foreign powers (Aberi was charged under this legislation) while the former is directed at support of state-linked bodies and non state entities acting on behalf of or as proxies for foreign governments. The keywords in both Acts are "foreign power threat activity" - actions done for, on behalf, or with the intention to benefit, a foreign power. The NS(ST)A creates three main crimes:

1. inviting support for a designated body such as the IRGC
2. assisting a designated body



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3. obtaining material benefits such as money or information from a designated body

As with nearly all “anti-terrorism” legislation, what actually constitutes a “material benefit” is left vague enough to grant authorities maximum leeway in enforcing the provision. According to the head of the Islamic Human Rights Commission’s legal department, Abed Choudhury, the deliberate imprecision allows authorities discretion in deciding at what point receiving a material benefit has crossed the criminal threshold. The focus is likely to be on who it is that performs the act rather than their intention. “So, if someone from the Times obtains information from IRGC it will be viewed as journalism but if it is an anti-government whistle-blower it will be deemed to be criminal.” The other danger to civil liberties he foresees is again one that runs through the entire framework of anti-terrorism legislation: authorities will seek to use secret evidence behind closed doors, hiding behind the cover of national secrecy to avoid public scrutiny.

Deja Vu? Yes, we’ve been here before. Just as anti-terrorism legislation was strengthened and deployed ahead of British forces in the (also illegal) invasion of Iraq in 2003, the NS(SA)A is similarly intended to deal with the fallout of an unwanted foreign intervention. In the days immediately preceding the invasion of Iraq the UK Parliament introduced the Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 (Continuance in force of sections 21 to 23) Order 2003, which allowed it to indefinitely detain foreign “terror” suspects without trial. And following the invasion, it smuggled in another piece of legislation inside the Criminal Justice Act 2003 that extended the pre-charge detention period for terrorism suspects from 7 to 14 days. This Act also included a provision that prohibited the “glorification” of terrorist acts (which conveniently includes acts of self-defence against invading British forces).

Also in keeping with all recent anti-terrorism legislation, the NS(ST)A is politically motivated rather than security driven. Its purpose is to create and amplify a threat to seek legitimacy for pre-planned foreign policy decisions and impose yet more infringements on fundamental freedoms. In the absence of any evidence to prove otherwise, I would aver that IRGC related activity in the UK is non-existent or negligible, certainly not serious enough to warrant a whole new body of legislation. Its designation then serves another purpose, which is to close off one avenue of opposition to imperial aggression, in the same way that the proscription of Palestine Action seeks to shut down a principal avenue of opposition to Israel.

By design, modern anti-terrorism laws are intended to be dragnets, scooping up all and any opposition activity that might pose a threat to state interests. Their draconian scope and provisions are designed to be a deterrent. This is borne out by the statistics. Of all the terrorism related arrests made

since 2001, the year in which the Terrorism Act 2000 came into force, only 42% of all terror-linked arrests have resulted in a charge, and of those charged, 65% faced explicit terrorism-related charges. Last year saw a dramatic spike with over 3000 people arrested on suspicion of expressing support for Palestine Action. In July this year, the Draconian absurdity of anti-terror laws was highlighted when a number of people supporting 1500 people charged under the Ter-

The NS(ST)A is a continuation of the slow drip removal of the fundamental right to dissent that started around the turn of the Millenium.

rorism Act 2000 for protesting the 2025 proscription of Palestine Action were themselves arrested under the same legislation for attempting to read poems in solidarity with the inhabitants of the besieged Gaza Strip. Comparisons with the effect of anti-terror laws during the Troubles in Northern Ireland is not misplaced. Just as no further action resulted from the majority of arrests under the Northern Ireland laws - while they were in force, the Emergency Provisions Act of 1973, and the Prevention of Terrorism Act 1974 were used to drag an estimated 60,000 overwhelmingly innocent people from their beds - so too are more recent anti-terrorism laws instruments of victimisation and criminalisation.

The NS(ST)A is a continuation of the slow drip removal of the fundamental right to dissent that started around the turn of the Millenium. It is part and parcel of the same regulatory regime that has brought us policies like PREVENT aimed at deterring and snuffing out certain types of dissent before they arise by identifying ‘suspect’ behaviour, akin to the “thoughtcrime” proscribed by the Party in Orwell’s 1984. It should be remembered that when it was introduced in 2003 (another product of the so-called War on Terror) PREVENT was a non-statutory government programme. It only got a statutory footing in 2015 when the new Conservative government made its implementation a duty for public sector bodies such as hospitals, schools and local authorities. PREVENT has had a devastating impact on the Muslim community which it was mainly designed to target, pulling innocent people into a huge security dragnet which is so wide as to consider even innocuous actions as indicators of extremism and future terrorism.

In 2016, a four-year-old boy in Luton was threatened with a Prevent referral after nursery staff misheard his pronunciation of “cucumber” as “cooker bomb”. The case went to a local social services panel, which took no further action. In 2021, another four year-old boy was referred to PREVENT by his after school club for saying his father had guns and bombs in his shed - it transpired he was talking about the popular video game Fortnite. Also in 2021, a Muslim primary school pupil aged 11 was referred after a teacher mistook the word “alms” for “arms” during a classroom discussion. Prevent effectively polices the non legislated space, serving as a deterrent against anti-state criticism by creating a new category of pre-crime. Despite repeated calls by IHRC among others, for it to be scrapped, it remains a key part of the security state panopticon.

It is also difficult to argue that in designating the IRGC, Britain will add to the political pressure being applied on Iran by a body of other states to have proscribed it, the most significant of which are the US, Canada, Australia, Saudi Arabia and most recently the EU. The US designation of IRGC as a Foreign Terrorist Organisation goes back to 2019 and is probably the most sweeping anti-Iranian sanction anywhere. It not only prohibits people in the US from dealing with the IRGC but also anyone, anywhere in the world (it tackles the problem of extra-jurisdictionality by way of secondary sanctions against offending entities). However, despite its far-reaching scope, the ban has not had the desired effect of forcing the Iranian government to impose restrictions on its civilian nuclear programme nor has it halted Tehran’s support for regional resistance movements. In fact, it has been so ineffective that the US and Israel have had to resort to the last-ditch measure of military action against Tehran. War is diplomacy by other means and clearly all other means have failed.

In conclusion, like its recent antecedents both preceding and during the “War on Terror”, the NS(ST)A is both a propaganda stunt and an attack on civil liberties. Mired in the immorality of its decisions to militarily and politically support the genocide in Gaza and the illegal war against Iran, the British government is resorting to the tried and trusted tactic of invoking national security to crack down on dissent. The price is the further erosion of our right to protest state praxis. History attests that when states remove fundamental rights in the name of national emergencies, they seldom restore them.

Faisal Bodi

is a commentator and former journalist. He has written extensively for the Guardian and Independent as a specialist on Muslim affairs and has also worked for Aljazeera. He currently works for the Islamic Human Rights Commission, the longest standing Muslim led rights advocacy group in the UK, and is co-editor of The Long View.

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First presented at the end of 2022, these papers and presentation chart and analyse the already evident collapse of the 'New World Order', its repercussions, not least in

Palestine, and the possible futures opening up as a result. This book is essential reading for anyone who wants to hear from authentic academic and activist voices, speaking from within decolonial and anti-imperialist politics.

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