

LONGFORM



In 1917, Ottoman forces at the shores of the Dead Sea.

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# KURDISH MASSACRES

## One of Britain's Many Original Sins

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For those who believe in the fairy tale of original sin, Adam and Eve, so goes the narrative, partook of the forbidden fruit, fell from grace, and were forever banished from the garden. The same narrative informs us that the second major sin, an infinitely more hideous one, was the result of a jealous and covetous fratricidal criminal deed.

Cain's murder of his brother Abel is held up as a Mark of Cain, a mortifying act of ignominious behaviour that has become an archetypal motif in theological dissertations, social and jurisprudential discourse, and literary lore.

Humanity's history is writ large with the ghastly Mark of Cain and in the blood-splattered scripts of every nation and every clime.

The brutal Turkish onslaught on the Kurdish population of northern Syria can be trailed to the May 1916 connivance of the secret Anglo-French meeting to divvy up the spoils of World War I.

In a manner of speaking, the carnage unfolding in Northern Syria is one of Britain's early 20th century Near Eastern original sins (one of many similar sins across the globe) that bears the Anglo Mark of Cain emblazoned in gory detail in today's bloodstained Palestinian, Syrian, Kashmiri, Somali, Iraqi, Yemeni, Afghani, and Burmese soils, to name but a few.

Prior to 1917 the exhausted Ottoman Empire's rule over Syria, Palestine, Jordan, Iraq, and small swaths of the

Arabian Peninsula was losing its grip. The empire was gasping its last breath as a result of The Sick Man of Europe's involvement in WWI and the hubris that befalls spent empires. Smelling victory at smashing the Triple Entente, Mark Sykes and François George-Picot, British and French diplomats, convened a secret 1916 kleptomaniac meeting to carve up the Ottoman Empire and Arab World into their spheres of influence.

In 1901 huge oil reserves were being discovered in Iraq, Iran, and the Arabian Peninsula, reserves that enticed the ever-ruthless and greedy Brits and French, much like Cain, to covet large expanses of desert which were heretofore merely uninhabitable backwashes.

And 85 years later another superpower, led by Bush the Elder in 1991 and his son, Bush the dumber in 2003, would twice invade Iraq and pulverise it back to the stone-age—all because of oil, that black gold that jaundices moral behaviour and justifies covetous Mark of Cain schemes to lay claim to what belongs to others.

Having successfully colonised much of the world in the late 18th and 19th centuries, between them Britain and France had well over 100 colonies across the globe. Gibraltar, East Africa (Egypt, Sudan, Kenya), South Africa (Rhodesia, Zululand, Natal), Central Africa (including Nigeria), multiple islands in the Caribbean, Central Asia and the lower Asia sub-continent (Afghanistan, Brunei,

Burma, Hong Kong, Ceylon), and, of course, India and Kashmir, the jewels/pearls of British Imperial possessions, to name but a few, were subjected to British Imperial hegemony.

In their typically arrogant disposition, the British referred to these possessions as their dominions, protectorates, and Commonwealth countries (including South Africa, Canada, New Zealand and Australia—acquired at high cost to the indigenous populations). For its part, France acquired Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Niger, Madagascar, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, and Cameroon (shared also by Germany and Britain). Britannia not only ruled the world, but she also pompously bragged that the sun never set on her empire.

Not to be outdone, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Belgium, Holland, and Germany swallowed what's left of the Asian, African, and Latin American real estate to enrich themselves with these continents' rich natural resources.

To implement their 1916 Sykes-Pico agreement, the Brits and French urged the Arabs to take up arms against the Ottomans with promises of independence. And in 1917 the Brits schemed up the Balfour Declaration promising (more like stealing) Palestine and handing it (much like John the Baptist's severed head served on a silver platter) over to European Jews.

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