

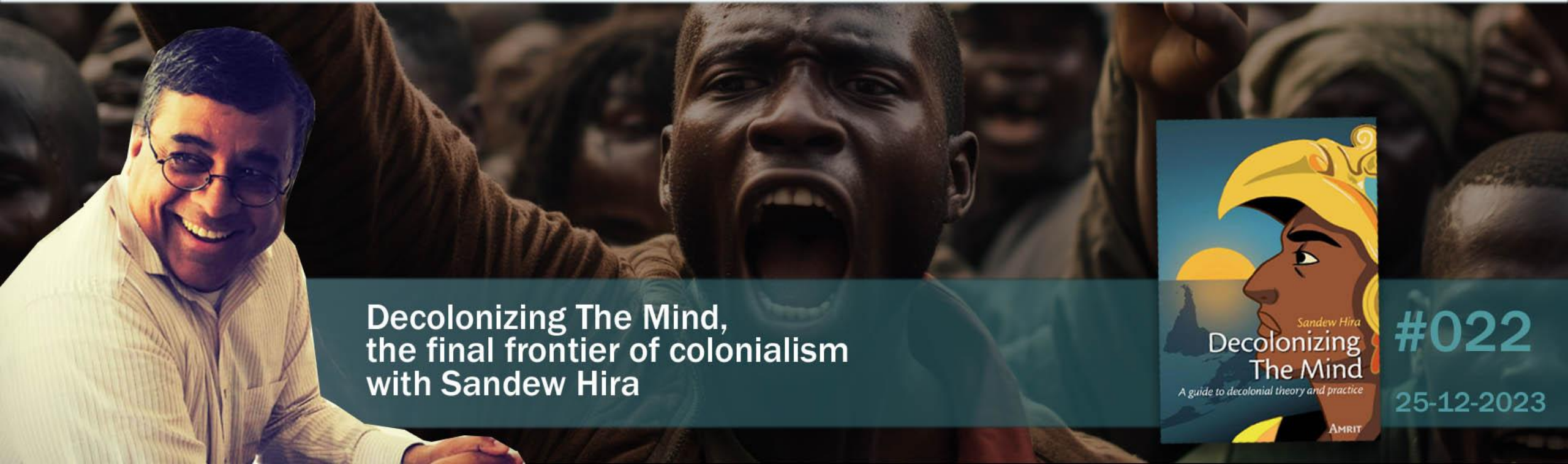
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## What is decolonial theory?

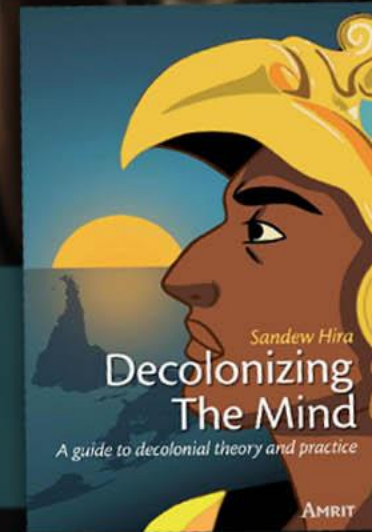
The background, nature, strength and weaknesses of decolonial theory and practice



# The current narratives about civilization: Western Asia



Decolonizing The Mind,  
the final frontier of colonialism  
with Sandew Hira



#022

25-12-2023

# Palestine

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- ❑ 20,000 Palestinian killed, 50,000 wounded. Horrible Christmas.
- ❑ Hamas still fires rockets; no progress in ceasefire
- ❑ Israel closes settlements in the north, no new settlements: settlers are angry
- ❑ Almost 500 Israeli soldiers killed since October 7; In 2006 Lebanon war 121 killed
- ❑ China starts technological boycott of Israel: shifting relations of power in the conflict
- ❑ New world order, new world civilization

# Development of Islam

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- ❑ Islam began in Western Asia (Arabia) in 7<sup>th</sup> century
- ❑ Today 2 billion people, a quarter of the world, are Muslims.
- ❑ Three countries have Islamic Republic in their name: Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan and Mauritania.
- ❑ There are 50 countries with a Muslim majority population.

# Expansion of Islam

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- ❑ Trade, economic relations and missionary activities
- ❑ Military and violent conquest
- ❑ Many dynasties in different parts of the world
  - ❑ Western Asia from Egypt to Iran
  - ❑ North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa and horn of Africa
  - ❑ Eastern and Southern Europe
  - ❑ South Asia

# International cooperation of states

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The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation is an intergovernmental organization founded in 1969. It has 57 member states: Afghanistan, Albania, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Algeria, Djibouti, Chad, Indonesia, Morocco, Cote d'Ivoire, Palestine, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Guyana, Iraq, Iran, Cameroon, Qatar, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Comoros, Kuwait, Libya, Lebanon, Maldives, Malaysia, Mali, Egypt, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somali, Sudan, Surinam, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, Togo, Tunisia, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Oman, Jordan, Yemen.

# Islam is very diverse

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- ❑ Sunni (85%) and Shia 15% and others
- ❑ Four major Sunni schools of jurisprudence: Hanafi, Shafi'i, Maliki and Hanbali.
- ❑ Many cultural traditions: from Indonesia to Azerbaijan

# Clash of civilizations: Islam in the front

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Samuel Huntington: *“Conflict along the fault line between Western and Islamic civilizations has been going on for 1,300 years. One such challenge comes from immigrants from other civilizations who reject assimilation and continue to adhere to and to propagate the values, customs, and cultures of their home societies. This phenomenon is most notable among Muslims in Europe, who are, however, a small minority.”*

# The colonial dimension of Islam

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- ❑ Conformism
- ❑ Modernity



# Conformism

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Syed Ahmad Khān (1817-1898) from India: *“I am in favour of the consolidation of the British Government, not because of any love or loyalty to the British, but only because I see the welfare of the Indian Muslims in that consolidation. And I feel that they can emerge from the present state of decline only with the help of the British government.”*

# Modernism: Islam needs to modernize

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- ❑ Modernity is the rise of reason and science in Europe against Christian theology that blocked reason and science.
- ❑ Is Islam responsible for decline and stagnation in Muslim countries?

# The anti-colonial dimension of Islam

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- ❑ Anti-colonial response to modernity
- ❑ Pan-Islamism
- ❑ Fundamentalism
- ❑ The specific case of the Iranian revolution

# Anti-colonial response to modernity

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French racist Ernest Renan (1823-1892) argued that the Muslim religion was by its very essence opposed to the development of science, and that the Arab people, by their nature, do not like either metaphysical sciences or philosophy.

Jamāl ad-Dīn al-Afghānī (1838-1897): Modern science is not in contradiction with the Qur'an: *"The Muslims must not turn to pure imitation of Europeans, as this will open their countries to the acceptance of European rule. Instead, they should find the inspiration for reform and science in their own religious texts, especially the Koran. The latter, if properly interpreted, will be found to be compatible with modern values and even to predict them."* Al-Afghānī Muslim civilization saved science: translation by Arabs of Greek and Roman literature in all major disciplines of science.

# Pan-islamism: unite Muslims across the globe

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- ❑ Major leaders Jamal al-Din Afghani (1839–1897), Muhammad Abduh (1849–1905) and Sayyid Rashid Rida (1865–1935)
- ❑ Anti-colonial efforts to confront European penetration of Muslim lands.

# Fundamentalism

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- ❑ Anti-Western narratives
- ❑ Salafism/wahhabism: promote sunni-Shia divide
- ❑ Agression against other religions. In 2001 Taliban blew up two 6th-century monumental statues of Buddha carved into the side of a cliff in the Bamyán valley of central Afghanistan. In 2016 ISIS destroyed monument of ancient city of Palmyra.

# The specific case of the Iranian revolution

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The positioning of the Iranian revolution by Ayatollah Khomeiny:  
*“Islam is a religion of those who struggle for truth and justice, of those who clamour for liberty and independence. It is the school of those who fight against colonialism...In order to ensure the unity of the Muslim people, to liberate the Islamic homeland from the domination of the influence of imperialists, we have no other way out than to form a true Islamic government, do whatever is necessary to overthrow the other tyrannical pseudo-Muslim governments put in place by foreigners, and once this goal is attained to install the universal Islamic government.”*

# Khomeiny on the rule of law

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An Islamic government is a government based on the rule of law: *“In an Islamic government, all people are under the protection of the law. No one may endanger their safety, break into their houses, arrest them, imprison or exile them, or summarily execute them on the basis of a simple accusation or suspicion. Under such a government, everyone can have full confidence in the law of the Prophet, and no judge or dignitary dare act contrary to it.”*



# Ayatollah Khamenei on Islamic governance and Islamic civilization

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*“The great ideal of the Revolution is establishing a new Islamic civilization and preparing for the rising of the sun of the greatest “Wilayat” (Guardianship)... This is a society in which knowledge, progress, dignity, justice, the power to face global waves, and wealth exist. We have such an image in mind. We call this, ‘The New Islamic Civilization’.”*

# The new Islamic civilization is not just for Muslims

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*"We should be striving for the new Islamic civilization- for the sake of humanity. This is dramatically different from what powers think about humanity and from how they act. This does not mean conquering lands. It does not mean violating the rights of nations. It does not mean imposing one's beliefs and culture on other nations. Rather, it means offering a divine gift to nations so that they choose the right path of their own volition and with their own choices and decisions. The path that global powers have dragged nations towards is a wrong and deviant path. Today, this is our responsibility."*

# Comparison with Western civilization

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*“One day, by using the knowledge and philosophy of Muslims, the people of Europe managed to build a civilization for themselves. Of course, this civilization was a material one. Since the 16th and 17th centuries of the Christian calendar, the Europeans began to shape a new civilization. Because it was a material civilization, they used different instruments without any scruples. On the one hand, they moved towards colonialism and towards conquering nations and looting their wealth and on the other hand, they strengthened themselves from the inside by means of knowledge, technology and experience. This was how they helped this civilization dominate the human world. This was what the Europeans did in the course of four, five centuries. The civilization that they presented to the world provided beautiful reflections of technology, speed, comfort and different amenities for the people, but it did not provide them with happiness and it did not administer justice.”*

# Iran in Western media

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- ❑ Iran is a functioning democracy met many political views
- ❑ The West does not report on 17.000 people killed by socalled Iran resistance supported by the West
- ❑ Women emancipation: literary, education, participation in politics and economic, university education
- ❑ Sexual politics: transgender operation free, ban on LGTB

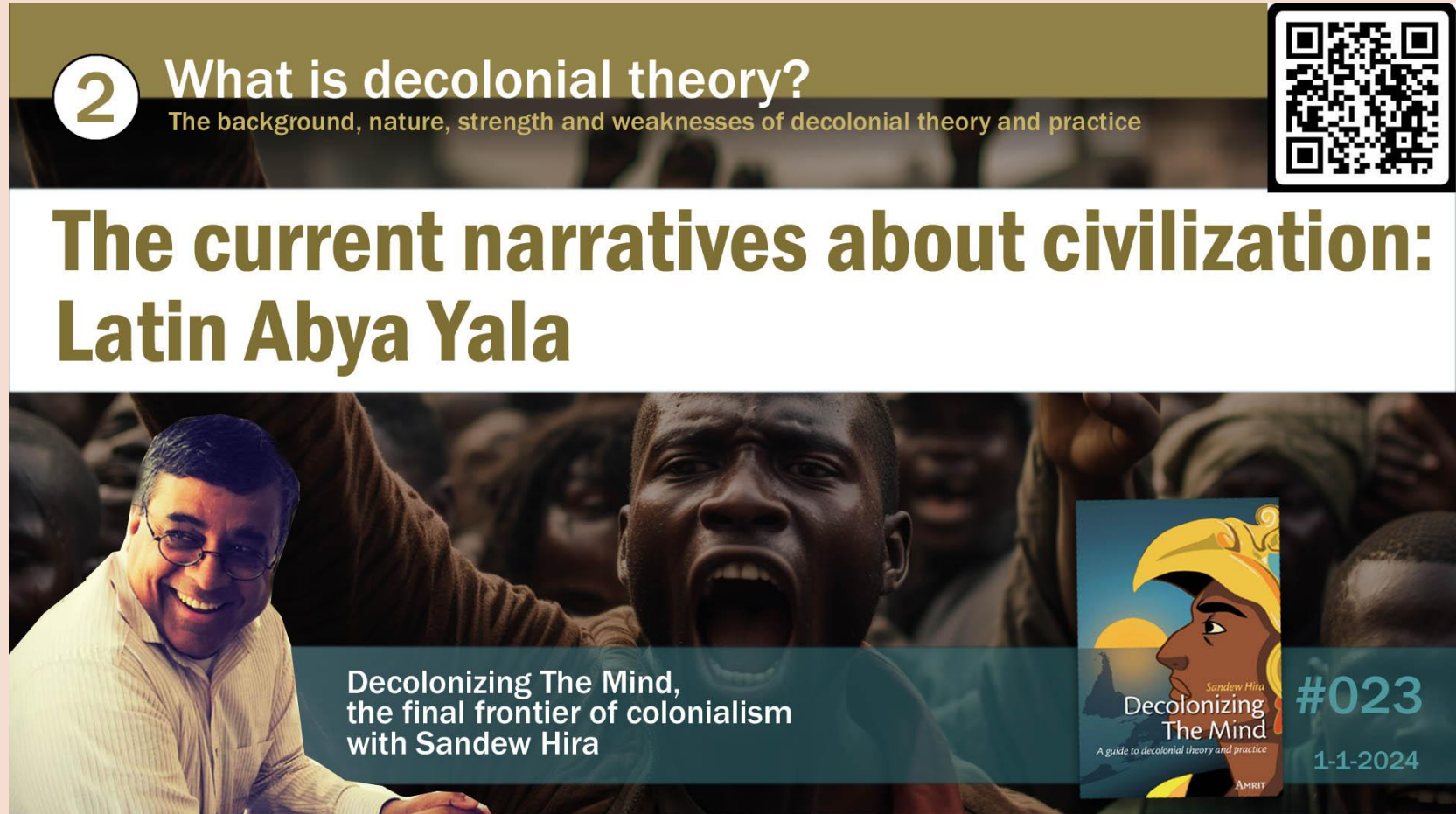
# Islam and a new pluriversal world civilization

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- ❑ There are schools in Islam willing to engage in this discussion
- ❑ Focus on two levels
  - ❑ Theoretical: how to reconstruct knowledge per discipline
  - ❑ Practical: what does this knowledge helps in building a new world institutions

# Next episode: the Latin Abya Yala narrative

- Aztec
- Maya
- Inca




**2** What is decolonial theory?  
The background, nature, strength and weaknesses of decolonial theory and practice

**The current narratives about civilization:  
Latin Abya Yala**

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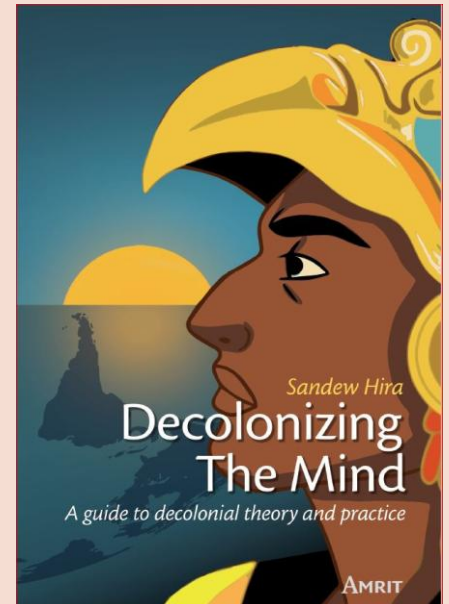
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A guide to decolonial theory and practice  
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# Source in the DTM book

- Index: Islam
- Download the PDF of the PowerPoint on [www.sandewhira.com](http://www.sandewhira.com)



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**SANDEW HIRA**  
Author. Activist. Decolonial Thinker.

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