

Editorial

01/01

As we step out of our homes this September to go back to school, go back to work, go back to traveling, we might pause for a moment to look back into this home, this peculiar chamber of private life that, in one way or another, we couldn't exit for some time. Perhaps the outside world appears strange, menacing, or deceitful. Maybe it was from staying inside for too long.

But in New York, two hurricanes just passed through in two weeks, as faceless as a pandemic. Many emergency alerts told us to stay home, where we could continue to watch the US government and its friends struggle for reasons to celebrate handing Afghanistan to the Taliban – or rather, to the dismissive euphemism “the Afghan people.”

And soon, on September 11, we in New York can look to the triumphant Freedom Tower and remember the attack on the Twin Towers twenty years ago: a truly tragic event that killed nearly three thousand people in the attack itself, ruining many more lives, and whose hatred and greed for theatricality would permanently stain legitimate anti-imperial militant struggle across the world.

But then, as if working in concert with the 9/11 attackers, the US went on to permanently stain even its own neocolonial military interventions, through the lies of weapons of mass destruction, through the fake custodianship that justified killing hundreds of thousands of Iraqis, Afghans, and US-coalition troops, and through the fomenting of sectarian war in Iraq, which now continues to spread to neighboring countries. With European states humiliated by their complicity, on this twentieth anniversary it should be no wonder that right-wing movements thrive, with their own sectarian promises and racist fictions of closed borders and the purity of domestic space.

Twenty years is a lifetime for many people, even more so for younger people who have grown up on the internet and on screens. What a life indoors, these last two decades. So as we leave our homes this September, let's remember the exceptional damage done these last twenty years, recognize the spread of fake sectarian thinking into our own bodies, minds, and communities, and really try to step outside for the first time.

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