



WHITE SUPREMACY



IC3 CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION

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There are a cluster of hadith and later reports that describe the Prophet Muhammad as “white” and sometimes “white with a reddish tinge,” plus a separate cluster about dyeing hair and beards red with henna.

These texts *have been used* – by some Muslims and by various polemical and white-supremacist/anti-Black authors – to argue that Muhammad was a “white man with ginger hair.” But when you read the full range of reports and the classical commentary, that racialised picture is much more complicated and, in many ways, anachronistic.

Below I’ll walk through:

1. Core hadith on “whiteness” of the Prophet’s complexion
2. Texts on his hair and the red/henna/“ginger” issue
3. How polemicists and racists have used these texts to claim “white, ginger Muhammad”
4. How Muslim and academic writers push back and re-interpret them

1. Hadith describing the Prophet as “white” or “white with a reddish tinge”

1.1. Texts explicitly calling him “white”

Several canonical Sunni collections contain reports in which the Prophet is described as “white” (abyad) or a “white man”:

- Sahih Muslim, Book of Virtues, chapter literally titled “The Prophet was white with an elegant face”. A Companion, Abu Tufayl, is asked if he saw the Prophet and replies: *he had a white, handsome face. Sunnah*
- Sahih al-Bukhari, “Knowledge,” hadith 63. When a Bedouin comes to the mosque asking “Who among you is Muhammad?”, the Companions answer: *“This white man reclining on his arm.” Sunnah*
- Sahih al-Bukhari, “Istisqa’ (Prayer for rain),” hadith 1008. Ibn ‘Umar recites poetry of Abu Talib describing Muhammad as “a white [man] by whose face rain is sought, a protector of orphans, a guardian of widows.” *Sunnah*

- **Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah** of al-Tirmidhi, the classic work on the Prophet's physical description, has a famous report summarised as: “*The Messenger of God had a white complexion with a slight redness and a medium-sized body.*” [Sapelo Square | Sapelo Square](#)

These are the *central* texts that people cite when they claim “Muhammad was white.”

1.2. Texts that put him *between* extremes of colour

Other reports, though, are more nuanced and explicitly say he was not extremely white nor very dark:

- **Sahih Muslim 2347a** (Anas ibn Malik) describes the Prophet as neither conspicuously tall nor short, with a colour that was “neither glaringly white (al-abyd al-amhaq) nor brown (adam)”, and hair neither very curly nor straight. [Sunnah](#)
- The same report is also preserved via al-Tirmidhi and quoted in the Sapelo Square article on “**Prophet Muhammad and the Skin Color Ethic**,” which highlights that some narrations describe him as “brown in complexion (asmar al-lawn)”, and others as “white with a reddish tinge.” [Sapelo Square | Sapelo Square](#)
- Some later summaries of Shama'il-type material describe him as “wheat-coloured” – a middle tone between light and dark common among Arabs – rather than European-style pale. [Muslim and Quran+1](#)

So the *same* hadith corpus contains both “white with a reddish tinge” and “brown in complexion” reports. Classical commentators usually treat these as describing different aspects (brightness vs pigment) or different observers, not as contradictions.

1.3. Hadith about the “whiteness” of particular body parts

There are also scattered reports noting the “whiteness” of specific limbs when his body was visible:

- **Sahih al-Bukhari 4:56:767** – Abu Juhaifa recalls seeing the Prophet at al-Abtah and says: “*It is as if I am still seeing the whiteness of his leg.*” [Hadith Collection](#)
- Other narrations (collected in polemical compilations) talk about the whiteness of his shins, forearms, armpits, stomach, cheeks, etc., usually in passing – for example when his garment is lifted, or when he raises his arms in du'a. Islamophobic sites like Wikislam list a string of these narrations precisely to emphasise “Muhammad’s white complexion.” [Wikislam+1](#)

These limb-focused hadith are heavily used in online polemics to paint a picture of the Prophet as “*epically white*” and to ridicule claims that he could have been brown or darker.

2. Reports about his hair and the “ginger / red” issue

The “ginger” side of the claim pulls together three elements:

1. General descriptions of the Prophet’s hair
2. Hadith about hair dye and henna/katam
3. Claims that he personally dyed his hair/beard red or that his hair looked red

2.1. General descriptions: mostly black hair with few white hairs

Multiple hadith – especially in Muslim and later summarising works – say that:

- The Prophet's hair was jet black, wavy, between his earlobes and shoulders, sometimes parted, sometimes left hanging. pbuu.org+1
- At his death he had “not twenty white hairs” in head and beard. Sunnah+1

These core descriptions don't suggest natural red or ginger hair; they suggest dark (black) hair with very limited greying.

2.2. General Sunnah of dyeing hair, especially with henna and katam

Several widely-cited hadith establish dyeing grey hair as a recommended practice, with emphasis on henna and katam (a dark/reddish plant dye):

- Sahih al-Bukhari 5899 – The Prophet says: “*The Jews and Christians do not dye their hair, so differ from them.*” Sunnah
- A broader fiqh summary (Fiqh-us-Sunnah) cites hadith from Abu Dharr and others where the Prophet says: “The best thing to use for changing grey hair is henna and katam”, which together give a reddish or reddish-brown tone. alim.org+1

These are the texts Muslims use to justify orange/ginger-looking henna beards today, especially among older men in South Asia, the Horn of Africa, and elsewhere. Journalistic and photographic pieces about “red beards” in Bangladesh, Somalia, Afghanistan etc. explicitly tie the fashion back to the Prophet's reported use of henna. GMB AKASH+1

2.3. Reports that his hair appeared red or was stained / dyed

There are a few specific reports that are read as “evidence” that the Prophet's hair was, at least at times, reddish:

1. Bukhari on red-tinted hair from scent – A Companion, Rabi'a ibn Abi 'Abd al-Rahman, says he saw some hairs of the Prophet and they were red; when he asked, he was told the colour came from perfume/oils applied to them, not from natural pigment. Qur'anic misconceptions addressed
2. Report of Umm Salamah showing hair “dyed” with henna and katam – Some hadith-search tools and later writers cite a narration where she produces a hair of the Prophet that appears to have been dyed with henna and katam. islamicity.org+1
3. Sunan Abi Dawud (4206) – Abu Rimthah says he visited the Prophet and saw that his locks, down to his earlobes, were stained with henna, and he was wearing two green garments. UrduPoint+1

Taken together, these become the main textual basis for the claim that the Prophet had – or at least wore – reddish, henna-coloured hair, functionally similar to what English speakers call “ginger.”

2.4. Reports that he *did not* dye his hair

At the same time, there is a strong counter-cluster of reports saying he did not dye his hair at all:

- Sahih Muslim 2341e – Anas ibn Malik is asked whether the Prophet dyed his hair; he replies that the Prophet did not dye, and that he had only a small amount of whiteness in his hair. Sunnah
- Sunan al-Nasa'i, Book of Adornment – A very similar report: Anas says the Messenger “*did not dye his hair; his grey hair were only a little beneath his lower lip, at his temples, and a little on his head.*” Sunnah

- Another Muslim narration via Anas says the Prophet had not reached an age that required dyeing, and that it was Abu Bakr and 'Umar who dyed their hair with henna, not the Prophet. [Sunnah+1](#)

Classical scholars reconcile this by saying:

- The Prophet generally did not dye, because his grey hairs were so few that there was no need;
- A small number of reports that mention henna-stained locks or red hairs may refer to exceptional occasions, or to hair that had been coloured by scent, oils or storage in containers, not active, repeated dyeing. [Hard Questions+1](#)

In other words: the soundest core picture in classical Sunni tradition is black hair with a handful of white hairs, usually not dyed, with a few ambiguous reports that allow some scholars (and later popular writers) to imagine him with reddish-tinted hair or beard in later years.

3. How these texts are used to claim “Muhammad was a white man with ginger hair”

3.1. Internal Muslim uses (non-racial, often idealising fairness)

Inside Muslim tradition, the “white / reddish” descriptions are mostly used to:

- Emphasise his beauty and radiance, e.g. “white with a rosy tinge,” “face like the moon.” [Islam Future → The Future For Islam](#)
- Provide colour detail in devotional descriptions (Shama'il, mawlid literature, modern lectures on the Prophet's physical traits).

The henna/katam reports are used to support:

- The idea that dyeing grey hair – especially with henna – is a Sunnah (commendable practice). [Islam-QA+1](#)
- Cultural practices of orange/red beards as a visible link to the Prophet.

In many of these settings, “white” is not unpacked in modern racial terms; it is often heard as “bright, pure, luminous, fair” – a *value-laden* description, but not necessarily a statement that he was “a white man” in a European/modern sense.

3.2. Islamophobic and white-supremacist uses

Outside Muslim circles, especially in Christian missionary and far-right / white-supremacist discourse, the same texts are used very differently.

Common strategy:

1. Compile every hadith that mentions “white” or “whiteness” – face, leg, shins, forearms, armpits, stomach, etc. – from Bukhari, Muslim and others, probably using online search tools. [Wikislam+1](#)
2. Highlight Bukhari 63 (“this white man reclining on his arm”) and Abu Talib's poem (“a white man by whose face rain is sought”) again and again. [Sunnah+1](#)
3. Combine these with negative or stereotyped hadith about Blackness (e.g., “raisin-headed” people in eschatological reports, or Black slaves in legal discussions) to argue that:
 - Muhammad was literally “an Arab white man”;

- Islam is inherently pro-white/anti-Black;
- And therefore claims about Islam's anti-racist message are hypocritical.

You can see this approach in places like Wikislam's "Muhammad's White Complexion" entry and polemical essays linking his "epic whiteness" to his ownership of Black slaves. [Wikislam+1](#)

Some polemicists add jokes like calling him "the world's biggest cracker" – explicitly framing him as a white man in US racial terms while mocking Black Muslims' identification with him. [Is the Quran the Word of God?](#)

3.3. "Red / ginger" beard in polemics and popular culture

The "ginger" element comes in more from popular culture and fringe writing than from mainstream fiqh or hadith commentary:

- Blog posts and pseudo-historical sites ask "Was the Prophet Muhammad red-haired?" and speculate that he may have had naturally red hair when young, then dyed his beard red with henna later, based on the henna/katam narrations and the report of red-tinted hairs. [redhairmyths.blogspot.com+1](#)
- A conspiratorial blog ("Atlantean Gardens") claims he began dyeing his beard red to look younger and that he was "naturally red-haired," again leaning heavily on henna-related hadith and later red-bearded Muslim figures, while playing into European "red-beard" myths (Barbarossa, etc.). [atlanteangardens.blogspot.com](#)
- Western journalists, Reddit threads and Instagram posts about ginger-bearded Afghanis, Somalis or Bangladeshis routinely explain their style as "copying the Prophet, who dyed his beard red," treating the henna beards as a live remembrance of a "red-bearded Muhammad." [GMB AKASH+2AP Photos+2](#)

These narratives then feed back into Islamophobic and racist spaces, where people say things like "Muhammad had pale skin and a ginger beard; Islam isn't a Black religion" – often in direct arguments with Black Muslims or ex-Muslims.

4. Muslim scholarly and critical responses

Because these "white/ginger" claims are now weaponised in racial arguments, Muslim scholars and Black Muslim thinkers in particular have responded in several ways.

4.1. Re-reading "white" (abyad) in Arab linguistic context

One key line of argument (seen, for instance, in the Sapelo Square article) is linguistic:

- Arabic usage historically often employed "white" (abyad) for an unblemished / luminous appearance or noble character, not necessarily light skin.
- When early Arabs wanted to speak of light-skinned complexions, they sometimes used "red" (ahmar); "white" could also function symbolically for purity, while "black" could function symbolically for sin – without mapping onto specific populations. [Sapelo Square | Sapelo Square](#)

On this reading, some "white" descriptions of the Prophet may be:

- Moral or symbolic, not pigment-descriptive; or
- Describing the quality (clarity, brightness) of his skin rather than its precise colour.

4.2. Emphasising the "middle complexion" hadith

Black Muslim and other anti-racist writers highlight the “neither albino-white nor deep black” hadith and the reports that he was “brown in complexion” or “wheat-coloured,” arguing that:

- The dominant picture is of a medium-brown Arab with luminous, clear skin, not of an extremely pale, European-type white man;
- The diversity of descriptors reflects different observers and emphases rather than a racial category that maps neatly to “white” or “Black” in modern terms. [Sapelo Square | Sapelo Square+1](#)

4.3. De-centring race in the prophetic ideal

Many Muslim writers also argue that:

- Debates over his “race” often import modern racial hierarchies into a 7th-century Arabian setting where the categories did not function in the same way;
- Treating his being “white” or “brown” as theologically important repeats the very colour-hierarchies that Islam, at the level of *principle*, seeks to undercut (“no superiority of an Arab over a non-Arab or white over black except in God-consciousness”).

Others, especially Black Muslims, insist that *how* his colour is portrayed matters deeply because Muslims have historically participated in colourism and anti-Black racism, and whitewashed images of the Prophet can reinforce those hierarchies. [Sapelo Square | Sapelo Square](#)

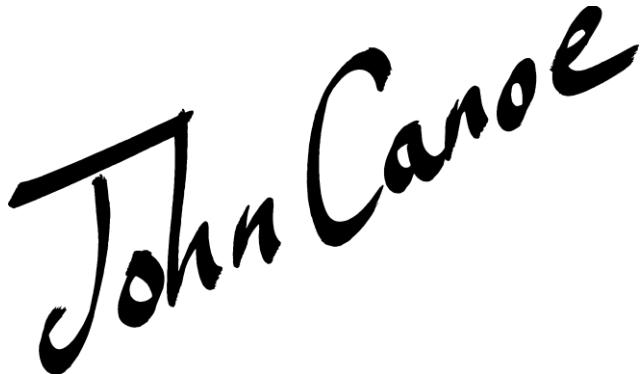
5. Putting it all together

If we pull all of this together, here’s the clearest, text-grounded picture:

1. There are authentic hadith that describe the Prophet as “white” and even label him “this white man,” and there are devotional texts praising him as “white with a reddish tinge.”
2. There are also authentic hadith describing him as “brown in complexion” and explicitly saying he was neither extremely white nor very dark.
3. Multiple hadith note the whiteness of specific body parts (leg, shins, forearms, etc.), and these have been heavily exploited in missionary and white-supremacist propaganda to construct an image of “Muhammad the very white Arab.” [Wikislam+1](#)
4. On hair:
 - The core reports say he had black hair with very few grey hairs and normally did not dye it. [Sunnah+2Sunnah+2](#)
 - Some narrations and later understandings associate him with red/henna-dyed hair, either via:
 - hairs that looked red due to perfume, or
 - reports of henna-stained locks and the general encouragement to dye grey hair with henna and katam. [Qur’anic misconceptions addressed+2Hamariweb.com+2](#)
5. On usage:
 - Mainstream Muslim usage tends to idealise his fairness and link henna dyeing to his Sunnah, but does not usually racialise him as “white” in a modern European sense.

- Anti-Black / Islamophobic discourse aggressively selects every “white” and “whiteness of his...” narration (plus henna-related reports) to argue he was a white man with a ginger beard, and then uses that claim against Black Muslims and against Islam more generally. [Is the Quran the Word of God?+1](#)
- Black Muslims and critical scholars respond by highlighting the full range of reports and the historical Arabic semantics of colour terms, and by critiquing the way whiteness has been centered in traditional and modern Muslim imaginaries. [Sapelo Square | Sapelo Square](#)

Signed



Mr John Canoe (IC3 – Black European)
Investigating Officer

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REPARATION NATION LIMITED

IC3CSI Black Crime Scene Investigators

23 Jersey House

2 Eastfield Road

Enfield

EN3 5UY

Company number: 14761041

Bank Account: 8367 4721

Sort Code: 51-61-34

Website: <https://ic3csi.com>

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Please send all replies and official correspondence to our temporary mailing address:
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POLICE CODES

		IC1		<p>W1 UK White W2 White European W9 Other White</p>		
		IC2		<p>W9 Other White Dark European</p>		
		IC3		<p>B1 Caribbean B2 African B9 Other Black</p>		
		IC4		<p>A1 Indian A2 Pakistani A3 Bangladeshi A9 Other Asian</p>		
		IC5		<p>O1 Chinese O9 Any Other Oriental</p>		
		IC6		<p>M1 White & Black Caribbean M2 White & Black African M3 White & Asian M9 Any Other Mixed</p>		
		IC7		<p>NS Not Stated</p>		

Who are you?

BIRTH PLACE

LINEAGE

APPEARANCE

STATE OF MIND

DNA

UK Government Race and Ethnicity Codes.

Are you a Racist?



IC1



W1 UK White
W2 White European
W9 Other White

1 White Race	WBRI	White British
1 White Race	WCOR	White British - Cornish
1 White Race	WENG	White British - English
1 White Race	WSCO	White British - Scottish
1 White Race	WWEL	White British - Welsh
1 White Race	WOWB	White British Other
1 White Race	WIRI	White - Irish
1 White Race	WIRT	White - Traveller of Irish Heritage
1 White Race	WEEU	White Eastern European
1 White Race	WEUR	White European
1 White Race	WOTW	White Other
1 White Race	WWEU	White Western European



IC2



W9 Other White
Dark European

2 White Race	WALB	Albanian
2 White Race	WOTH	Any Other White Background
2 White Race	WBOS	Bosnian- Herzegovinian
2 White Race	WCRO	Croatian
2 White Race	WGRK	Greek
2 White Race	WGRC	Greek Cypriot
2 White Race	WGRE	Greek/ Greek Cypriot
2 White Race	WROM	Gypsy / Roma
2 White Race	WITA	Italian
2 White Race	WKOS	Kosovan
2 White Race	WPOR	Portuguese
2 White Race	WSER	Serbian
2 White Race	WTUK	Turkish
2 White Race	WTUC	Turkish Cypriot
2 White Race	WTUR	Turkish/ Turkish Cypriot



IC3



B1 Caribbean
B2 African
B9 Other Black

3 Black Race	BAFR	Black - African
3 Black Race	BANN	Black - Angolan
3 Black Race	BAOF	Other Black African
3 Black Race	BCON	Black - Congolese
3 Black Race	BCRB	Black Caribbean
3 Black Race	BEUR	Black European
3 Black Race	BGHA	Black - Ghanaian
3 Black Race	BNAM	Black North American
3 Black Race	BNGN	Black - Nigerian
3 Black Race	BOTB	Other Black
3 Black Race	BOTH	Any Other Black Background
3 Black Race	BSLN	Black - Sierra Leonean
3 Black Race	BSOM	Black - Somali
3 Black Race	BSUD	Black - Sudanese



IC4



A1 Indian
A2 Pakistani
A3 Bangladeshi
A9 Other Asian

4 Asian Race	AAFR	African Asian
4 Asian Race	ABAN	Bangladeshi
4 Asian Race	AIND	Indian
4 Asian Race	AKAO	Kashmiri Other
4 Asian Race	AKPA	Kashmiri Pakistani
4 Asian Race	AMPK	Mirpuri Pakistani
4 Asian Race	ANEP	Nepali
4 Asian Race	AOPK	Other Pakistani
4 Asian Race	AOTA	Other Asian
4 Asian Race	AOTH	Any Other Asian Background
4 Asian Race	APKN	Pakistani
4 Asian Race	ASLT	Sri Lankan Tamil
4 Asian Race	ASNL	Sri Lankan Sinhalese
4 Asian Race	ASRO	Sri Lankan Other



IC5



C1 Chinese
09 Any Other Oriental

5 Chinese Race	CHKC	Hong Kong Chinese
5 Chinese Race	CHNE	Chinese
5 Chinese Race	CMAL	Malaysian Chinese
5 Chinese Race	COCH	Other Chinese
5 Chinese Race	CSNG	Singaporean Chinese
5 Chinese Race	CTWN	Taiwanese



IC6



M1 White & Black Caribbean
M2 White & Black African
M3 White & Asian
M9 Any Other Mixed

6 Mixed Race	MABL	Asian and Black
6 Mixed Race	MACH	Asian and Chinese
6 Mixed Race	MAOE	Asian and Any Other Ethnic Group
6 Mixed Race	MBCH	Black and Chinese
6 Mixed Race	MBOE	Black and Any Other Ethnic Group
6 Mixed Race	MCOE	Chinese and Any Other Ethnic Group
6 Mixed Race	MOTH	Any Other Mixed Background
6 Mixed Race	MOTM	Other Mixed Background
6 Mixed Race	MWAI	White and Indian
6 Mixed Race	MWAO	White and Any Other Asian Background
6 Mixed Race	MWAP	White and Pakistani
6 Mixed Race	MWAS	White and Asian
6 Mixed Race	MWBA	White and Black African
6 Mixed Race	MWBC	White and Black Caribbean
6 Mixed Race	MWCH	White and Chinese
6 Mixed Race	MWOE	White and Any Other Ethnic Group
6 Other Race	OAFG	Afghan
6 Other Race	OARA	Arab Other
6 Other Race	OEGY	Egyptian
6 Other Race	OFIL	Filipino
6 Other Race	OIRN	Iranian
6 Other Race	OIRQ	Iraqi
6 Other Race	OJPN	Japanese
6 Other Race	OKOR	Korean
6 Other Race	OKRD	Kurdish
6 Other Race	OLAM	Latin/ South/ Central American
6 Other Race	OLEB	Lebanese
6 Other Race	OLIB	Libyan
6 Other Race	OMAL	Malay
6 Other Race	OMRC	Moroccan
6 Other Race	OOGF	Other Ethnic Group
6 Other Race	OOTH	Any Other Ethnic Group
6 Other Race	OPOL	Polynesian
6 Other Race	OTHA	Thai
6 Other Race	OVIE	Vietnamese
6 Other Race	OYEM	Yemeni



IC7



NS Not Stated

Information Not Yet Obtained

Refused