

**“EUCLID” MUST FALL: THE “PYTHAGOREAN”
“THEOREM” AND THE RANT OF RACIST AND
CIVILIZATIONAL SUPERIORITY — PART 1**

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Abstract

To eliminate racist prejudices, it is necessary to identify the root cause(s) of racism. American slavery preceded racism, and it was closely associated with genocide. Accordingly, we seek the unique cause of the unique event of genocide + slavery. This was initially justified by *religious* prejudice, rather than colour prejudice. This religious justification was weakened when many Blacks converted to Christianity, after the trans-Atlantic slave trade. The curse of Kam, using quick visual cues to characterize Blacks as inferior Christians, was inadequate. Hence, the church fell back on an ancient trick of using false history as secular justification for Christian superiority. This trick had resulted in a false history of science during the Crusades when scientific knowledge in translated Arabic texts was indiscriminately attributed to the early Greeks, without evidence. This false history enabled belief in religious superiority to *mutate* into a secular belief in White superiority. After colonialism, and the Aryan race conjecture, the belief in White superiority further mutated into a belief in Western civilizational superiority, openly propagated today by colonial education. Hence, to eliminate racist prejudice, it is necessary to engage simultaneously with the allied prejudices about Christian/White/Western superiority, based on the same false history of science.

Keywords: Euclid, Pythagorean theorem, racism, civilizational superiority

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Introduction

During my oral presentation (keynote address at the 5th annual meeting of the Conversational School of Philosophy, Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen and the University of Pretoria),² many people were puzzled by my statement that racism is primarily about a sense of superiority, not the colour of the skin. To clarify this, let us go back to a question raised long ago (ALLEN 1994; WILLIAMS 1944): what came first, whiteness or slavery? The answer is quite definite: it is *slavery which came first*, whiteness came later. As Williams puts it (1994, 7), “Slavery was not born of racism: rather, racism was the consequence of slavery.” This answer was strongly corroborated by others such as Theodore Allen in another way: “When the first Africans arrived in Virginia in 1619, there were no ‘white’ people there; nor, according to the colonial records, would there be for another sixty years.”

Given that slavery came first, and given that the belief in whiteness and racism came later, we need to ask: what was the *cause* of slavery? Answering this question would enable us to identify the root cause of racism, with a view to eliminating it.

Doctrine of Christian Superiority

To arrive at a meaningful answer, I suggest that the question be broadened. Africans (“Blacks”³) were very inhumanely treated in the Americas, but so also were so many indigenous peoples, illiterately called ‘Indians’, who were systematically exterminated across the Americas, in the biggest genocide in all human history. Whether genocide was more horrible or slavery is hardly a question to be discussed; but this *combination* of genocide and slavery is a *unique* phenomenon in human history. A unique phenomenon must have a unique cause. Therefore, instead of looking for a cause of slavery alone, we ought to seek the common cause of the unique combination of genocide and slavery. [Given that slavery in the US has itself been considered genocide (CONGRESS 1951) examining the combination of genocide+slavery is the logical thing to do.]

2 “‘Euclid’ must fall”, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kAP1BcK8mLE>.

3 See the review of (TSRI, 2016) by Jonathan Chimakonam (CHIMAKONAM, 2018).

Indeed, even for those who believe that social conditions are determined by economic factors (“means of production”), it is illogical to look at slavery in isolation. Undoubtedly, slavery provided free labour. But what provided the *land* on which that labour was put to work? That land was obviously provided by genocide of the indigenous populations in Americas⁴ (and Australia).

Too narrow a focus on slavery alone confounds issues: for then one must consider issues (considered by Williams) such as the slavery of “Indians” versus the slavery of Blacks, versus the export of convicts and the poor from Europe (the predominant source of cheap labour in Australia, and a key cause of the civil war in the US). Likewise, too narrow a focus on a specific geographical area obscures issues, for it might suggest that genocide in North America (of “Red” Indians) was due to different causes from the genocide in Central America (of e.g. the Maya) or the genocide in South America (of e.g. the Incas), or the genocide in Australia (of the Australian aborigine).

Further, there is no shortage of apologists who play on the word “slavery”, ignoring the possibility that the word might mean different things. For example, among Muslims, slaves could be kings, as in the well-known case of Mamluks or the several dynasties of Black princes in India (RAJU 2017). Since these “slaves” could so easily, and so often, turn rulers, that kind of “slavery” obviously did *not* result in racism. For those whose objective is to understand the origins and cure of present-day racism, it is usual, but inadequate, to try to restrict the play on the word “slavery” to the unique kind of slavery (“trans-Atlantic slave trade”) which preceded racism.

But, while (“trans-Atlantic”) slavery undoubtedly preceded racism, it was not necessarily the (sole) *cause* of racism. For example, both (“trans-Atlantic”) slavery and racism could have had a common earlier cause. To arrive at some actionable insight about racism, we need to focus on a unique cause. The unique aspect of slavery on the American continent was that it was combined with

4 It is empirically manifest that the native American and Australian populations were almost entirely killed. As discussed later on, the “Doctrine of Discovery” provided religious and legal sanction. See, for example, (CLARK 1995; DE LAS CASAS 1992; GALEANO 2009)

genocide. To reiterate, such a unique phenomenon must have a unique cause. Thus, it is better to try to locate the unique cause of the unique phenomenon of genocide + slavery on the American continent.

The term “cause” is also particularly prone to misinterpretation, especially in a social context, where there usually are a multiplicity of causes (RAJU 2003). Thus, it could easily be argued that the “cause” of genocide + slavery was the greed for wealth, or that it was enabled by better weapons, or better-developed means of production, though, as a matter of fact, even these material causes came *after* the wealth acquired by Western nations through genocide and slavery. Obviously, also, better weaponry (relative to Africans and Native Americans) came earlier through the Muslims after centuries of Crusades. However, my interest is not at all in such material causes or the “how” of it, but rather in the “why” of it.

To put matters bluntly, I come from a tradition where, even over 2500 years ago, in supposedly barbaric pre-Christian times, the followers of Buddha and Mahavira were ferociously debating whether it was ethical to *unintentionally* step on an ant and kill it (hence Jain monks wear masks to avoid unintentionally swallowing any tiny creature, or insect, and carry brooms to sweep aside any ants etc. in their path, to avoid “unintentionally” stepping on them and killing them). So, the question is really: what was the *ethical or moral justification* in the West for mass murder and mass slavery of human beings?

The West has boasted of an “age of enlightenment”. What was that strange Western “enlightenment” which not only permitted genocide + slavery but allowed Westerners to celebrate and take pride in the mass killing and inhumane treatment of other human beings and then to call this spreading of “civilization”? Needless to say, not only some greedy people, but also many top ethical thinkers in the West such as Immanuel Kant (KANT 2011; NEUGEBAUER 1990) and John Locke endorsed as ethical the slavery of Blacks. So, the question really is not about coarse causes such as human greed, but about the special features of the West which enabled people not only to live with these crimes against humanity (which genocide + slavery obviously was), but to justify them as ethical and moral. I will argue that what was involved in such excessively faulty ethical and moral justification was a misplaced sense of superiority.

Marxists have often neglected the issue of moral or ethical justification as unimportant.⁵ However, the fact is that those simplistic “moral” and “ethical” justifications exist inside the minds of people. Those internalised racist prejudices (sense of White superiority) are the ones that really concern us today, for they cannot be abolished by law, the way slavery, segregation, and apartheid were abolished by law. The Black Lives Matter agitation demonstrates the persistence of racist prejudices inside the minds of, for example, the US police who are supposedly the law enforcement agency.

My question, about the root *causes* of racism, is really a question about how to try to eliminate racism today by locating and eliminating those causes. The only way to eliminate these prejudices, about a sense of “White superiority”, in the minds of people, is to ruthlessly expose their faulty basis.

Paradoxically, the question of the cause of that mental prejudice becomes narrower if we broaden the question still further to include colonialism. That is, instead of considering slavery alone, or genocide + slavery, we consider genocide + slavery + colonialism, and ask for its unique cause. Obviously, all three cases of genocide, slavery and colonialism involved not only the murder and most inhumane treatment of vast numbers of people, but also the *ethical and moral* justification for it. As the racist Rudyard Kipling put it, it was part of the “White man’s burden”, and “civilizing mission”. On the opposite side, Du Bois (1995) recognized the connection between these three different forms of oppression when he allegorically suggested the oppressed unite to overthrow the oppressor.

A fact sometimes forgotten is that there were massive genocides under colonialism as well, famous among which are the cases of Belgian genocide in the Congo or the late Victorian holocausts in India, due to British-made famines such as the Bengal famine of 1943, etc. Once we have decided to take up the combined

5 Marxists regard ethics as part of the “superstructure”, though some accept that the superstructure acts back on the base. (as clarified by ENGELS 1890; MARX 1970 preface) Gramsci divided the superstructure into a political part and a civil part which act to create a synthesis of coercion and consensus to create hegemony. (ANDERSON 2017)

question of genocide+slavery, it is illogical to place genocides in each continent, such as North America, South America, Africa, and Australia and Asia, in separate compartments. Therefore, also, it is natural to expand the question of the cause of genocide+slavery to the question of the cause of genocide+slavery+colonialism.

In the simplest terms, what I am suggesting is that instead of focusing on racist prejudice (or the sense of White superiority) in isolation, we should expand the question to think also of colonial prejudice (or the sense of Western superiority). This better enables one to arrive at the root cause of both those prejudices, a cause which one can actually tackle, by eliminating the way this bunch of related prejudices are propagated today (by the education system).

Of course, slavery and colonialism are also linked in other ways. Clearly, the abolition of slavery was linked to the rise of colonialism, whether the abolition was due to the increasing slave revolts after the Haitian revolution (DU BOIS 1965, 38–39), or whether it was due to Britain's loss of its major slave holdings (its first source of wealth) after American independence, followed by the serial bankruptcies among the remaining British slave holdings on Jamaican sugar plantations (WILLIAMS 1944) and due to higher profits from colonialism, and the British desire to use "moral" arguments to compete economically against the French slave holdings.

The inclusion of colonialism is also important to what is happening in Africa *at present*. Despite the end of slavery, segregation, and apartheid, Africans still continue to face colonial oppression today due to the colonial education system, as demonstrated by the Rhodes must fall agitation. The key aspect of colonization is mind capture, by using the education system to indoctrinate people from an early age. Colonialism uses mental fetters instead of the physical ones used in slavery. Specifically, for any actionable purpose such as decolonization, it is important to understand how colonial education, by teaching the prejudice of *Western* superiority, reinforces the prejudice of *White* superiority.

Finally, taking colonization into account clearly shows that the ill-treatment of others by the West was *not* merely due to better military power or superior technology or anything like that. Thus, for over 250 years after the arrival of Vasco da Gama in India, Europeans lagged behind in technology and science, and also in their

military strength, which was completely insignificant compared to that of Indians. As late as the end of the 17th century, the governor of the British East India Company was literally kissing the ground in front of Emperor Aurangzeb begging for pardon,⁶ and paying a huge fine for attempted British military excesses.

Nevertheless, shortly after the British victory of 1757 in Bengal (after the collapse of centralized power in India, and a victory achieved by bribes⁷ paid with borrowed money, *not* superior technology), the British were very soon (in less than 30 years, by 1786) putting on great airs (JONES 1799), and later put-up public notices of “Indians and dogs not allowed”, exactly as they did in Iran. This was a different manifestation of the same prejudiced sense of superiority, which enabled the West to declare both genocide and slavery earlier as “enlightened”. There is no denying the fact that just as a sense of racist (or White) superiority persists today, equally a sense of colonial (Western) superiority also persists. Finding a common cause of both would enable one to do away with both. It is necessary to tackle both simultaneously since the one reinforces the other.

So, a good starting point is to begin with the question: why was that sense of White superiority so *foolish* as to be associated with the colour of the skin? Why were Westerners so foolish as to believe for centuries that the colour of the skin makes one human being “superior” to another?

Once the question is asked, the answer is obvious enough. First of all, the church was the sole moral hegemon in Europe. Second, an obviously foolish belief, which is widespread and persistent, is a sure sign of organized superstition. In the Western context, both morality and superstition point to the church: for there

6 As in this 1780 French painting: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anglo-Mughal_War#/media/File:The_English_ask_pardon_of_Aurangzeb.jpg.

7 That this victory was obtained by bribery is widely known. For a simplified account, see, e.g. <https://www.livemint.com/Opinion/zgaDxyMuIrH3QWHElwkX3M/Blame-the-British-Raj-on-bankers.html>. The British were backward in navigation techniques then and desperately seeking inputs from India, see e.g. (RAJU 2007, 2020c). Indian steel technology used for the famed “Damascus” swords and canons, guns, etc. was long famous, and a 2400 year old example of a non-rusting iron pillar (Ashoka pillar) is on public display in Delhi.

is only one agency – the church – capable of exerting such widespread and long-term influence on Western thought and making vast numbers of people believe all sorts of foolish things. Church power is based on superstitions, hence ever since the church-state nexus of the 4th c. CE, church rule has always been characterized by the deliberate spread of foolish superstitions.

Native Americans have long recognized the key role played by the church and its “Doctrine of Christian Discovery” in their genocide and resulting land grab (NEWCOMB 1992).⁸ The Doctrine of Christian Discovery⁹ begins with the papal bulls’ *Dum Diversas* and *Romanus Pontifex* (1454) which explicitly directed all Christians to kill and enslave non-Christian AND loot them as a *moral* duty (DAVENPORT 1917, 20–26):

‘to invade, search out, capture, vanquish, and subdue all Saracens and pagans...and other enemies of Christ [i.e., all non-Christians]...to reduce their persons to perpetual slavery, and to apply and appropriate...[their] possessions, and goods, and to convert them to...their use and profit.’¹⁰

This papal order of genocide and slavery as the moral duty of all Christians was justified by quoting bloodthirsty passages¹¹ from the Bible. "Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. You will rule them with an iron sceptre; you will dash them to pieces like pottery." [Psalm 2:8-9 N.I.V.] "May the praise of God be in their mouths and a double-edged sword in their hands, to inflict vengeance on the peoples, to bind their kings with fetters, their nobles with shackles of iron, to

8 <https://www.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/public/indianed/tribalovereignty/middle/wamiddle/wamiddleunit1/pointnpointtribes-lessons/lesson2-materials/fivehundredyearsofinjustice.pdf>.

9 <https://doctrineofdiscovery.org/>.

10 See also, Robert Francis, "Two Kinds of Beings: The Doctrine of Discovery And Its Implications for Yesterday and Today," web article at <http://www.manataka.org/page94.html>. (Now at <http://web.archive.org/web/20200318205910/https://www.manataka.org/page94.html>.)

11 There are numerous such passages in the Bible. See, e.g., (GREEN 1979, chp. 5, “Mass killings ordered, committed, or approved by God”).

carry out the sentence written against them. This is the glory of all his saints. Praise the Lord." [Psalm 149:6-9 N.I.V.]

That is exactly what happened, as described by the first-hand account of Bartoleme de Las Casas (DE LAS CASAS 1992), who accompanied Columbus on his second voyage in 1493:

And the Christians, with their horses and swords and pikes began to carry out massacres and strange cruelties against them. They attacked the towns and spared neither the children nor the aged nor pregnant women nor women in childbed...They laid bets as to who, with one stroke of the sword, could split a man in two or could cut off his head or spill out his entrails with a single stroke of the pike. They took infants from their mothers' breasts, snatching them by the legs and pitching them headfirst against the crags or snatched them by the arms and threw them into the rivers, roaring with laughter and saying as the babies fell into the water, 'Boil there, you offspring of the devil .'...They made some low wide gallows on which the hanged victim's feet almost touched the ground, stringing up their victims in lots of thirteen, in memory of Our Redeemer and His twelve Apostles....

What is amply clear from Las Casas' description is that this genocide (Las Casas' initial estimate was 12 million killed¹²) was a *religious* hate crime, a natural follow up to the extreme religious hatred nurtured during the Crusades and the Inquisition. There is no mention of whiteness anywhere; it was all about "offspring of the devil" and "in the memory of Our Redeemer and His Apostles". This clearly falls under the UN definition of religious genocide. What mattered to the European interlopers was the colour of the religion, not the colour of the skin.

There should not be the slightest doubt that it was the Christian church which was responsible for inciting both the world's worst case of genocide and the unique phenomenon of genocide+slavery, though the church involvement is often obscured.

12 Subsequent estimates have estimated the total figure as around 100 million. (STANNARD 1992)

Thus, in the 1550 debate between Las Casas and the theologian Gaines de Sepulveda (COX 1959, 334) the summary points in defence of genocide + slavery were that the “Indians” (Native Americans) should be killed and enslaved: because of “the gravity of their sins”, because of “the rudeness of their heathen and barbarous natures, which oblige them to serve those of more elevated natures, such as the Spaniards possess”, and “for the spread of the faith; for their subjection renders its preaching easier and more persuasive”, etc. To reiterate, what mattered to these European interlopers, who initiated genocide and slavery, was only the colour of the religion, *not* the colour of the skin; the church taught that Christianity *demande*d inhumanities against non-Christians, for the profit of Christians.

There should be no confusion that genocide and slavery, since initially instigated by a pope, was confined to Roman Catholics. As the US Supreme Court later explained,¹³ this “Doctrine of Christian Discovery”, though a religious doctrine, was part of the law of the land (grab!). It is just on the basis of that proclaimed *religious* doctrine that non-Christians are *legally* regarded as so inferior that any *land* belongs to the first Christian to spot it. The judge also explained at length that this doctrine, though it was first promulgated by a pope, was well accepted by Protestant countries, such as Britain, and *hence* was deemed part of US law.

Noticeably, also, this is part of current reality, not something antiquated: neither the legal ruling has been revoked, nor has this hate doctrine enshrined in the papal bulls been withdrawn, though it incited the biggest genocide in the world, far, far bigger than anything the Nazis might have done. There is no law against the denial of *this* holocaust. Nor has the church, or its popes, with their purported direct hotline to god, been condemned or penalized in any way for its long-term support of genocide+slavery, though the few native Americans who survive, protest against these papal bulls, and genocidal proclamations.¹⁴ Under these circumstances, of the

13 Johnson and Graham's Lessee V McIntosh 21 US (8 Wheat) 543, 5 L.Ed. 681 (1823). For a list of more recent cases, see, <https://doctrineofdiscovery.org/law/>. See, also, (RAJU 2015)

14 For the currently ongoing protest, see, for example, <https://doctrineofdiscovery.org/event/198-years-domination-event/>. Also, (MANATAKA AMERICAN INDIAN COUNCIL 2020)

persistence of such church dogmas *and* the laws based on them, how can the related mental prejudices be eliminated?

Native Americans have clearly identified church dogma as the initial moral justification for their genocide, and the accompanying land grab. While many Blacks and theoreticians of race have also pointed out the key role of Christians (DU BOIS 1965, 33–34) and church dogma in the initial moral justification of slavery, it has not been emphasized adequately. However, the church's role in both genocide and slavery is undeniable. Given that the church is the self-appointed guardian of morality, European ideas of morality in the 15th to 17th c. were and had to be based entirely on church dogma.

Indeed, African slavery was the immediate context of the bull Romanus Pontifex, as also that of the earlier 1452 bull *Dum Diversas*.¹⁵ Then, the Portuguese had just learnt to sail past “Cape” Bojador, by (counter-intuitively) staying far enough away from land, and had brought back the first African slaves to Portugal in 1441. That is, the church had authorized the slavery of non-Christians, significantly *before* the beginnings of the transatlantic slave trade: so our focus should be not on the trans-Atlantic nature of the subsequent slave trade, but on the relevant church dogmas responsible for its origins and the various forms of the manifestations of that same dogma today.

The stage for genocide + slavery was naturally set by the 15th century. Four centuries of persistent Christian religious hatred and aggression against Muslims – the Crusades – combined with the extreme inhumanities of the Inquisition, such as common public burnings of heretics, and witch hunts, had dehumanized Christians, enabling their religious leaders (the church) to promulgate such proclamations.

From Christian Superiority to White Superiority

Placing the beginning of genocide + slavery at the end of the Crusades and the Inquisition also provides another valuable insight.

15 Davenport (1917) has both the originals and translations. An online account is in <https://doctrineofdiscovery.org/papal-bulls/>.

To reiterate, it is indubitable that slavery preceded whiteness. However, that does not mean that slavery was the *cause* of belief in whiteness, as many people have proposed. Rather, both slavery and whiteness had a common origin in *religious* prejudice. From the 15th to the end of the 17th c. what mattered was the colour of the religion not the colour of the skin,

In the 16th and early 17th century, the colour of the skin was no part of the “moral” justification offered for either genocide or slavery. The idea of whiteness or the colour of the skin developed later, when the attempt to justify slavery on the grounds of religion, or the moral right of Christians to kill and enslave non-Christians, ran into trouble. As in the earlier debate between Sepulveda and Las Casas, one of the grounds on which the right to kill and enslave non-Christians had been morally justified by the church was that it would facilitate conversions to Christianity. That is exactly what happened: after the transatlantic slave trade, many black slaves converted to Christianity. These conversions made it difficult to morally justify the continued enslavement of Blacks, solely on the religious grounds that they were non-Christian. This threatened the huge profits from slavery and the slave trade. Hence many people now tried to restrict the conversion of slaves.

Given this threat to profit, the church quickly adjusted morality, tailoring it to suit financial profits. On the subsequent Bible defence of slavery (PRIEST 1851), the moral justification of slavery now switched to the “curse of Kam”, or the Bible superstition that Blacks were black because of the curse placed by the Christian God (and not due to the heat of the sun as Herodotus had asserted long ago). Incidentally, as Diop (1974, 242-et. seq.) correctly argues, the correct version is “curse of Kam” (not “curse of Ham”) from the Egyptian km meaning black, or km.t (kemet) meaning Egypt.

The reliance on a specific curse in the Bible is only one indication of the pressure of Black conversions on the dogma of (Christian) *religious* superiority, which pressure forced the dogma to mutate into a claim of *racist* (White) superiority. This process of mutation of Christian superiority into White superiority was initially justified on the grounds that Blacks, even if converted to Christianity, were Christians of an inferior sort, who had been cursed by the Christian god.

These Bible arguments offered in support of racism, fitted well with a long tradition of handling new converts, a tradition set during the preceding centuries of the Inquisition. Since the 12th c., church inquisitors found it convenient to use quick *visual* cues (such as Moorish dress), to spot suspect new converts, who had converted due to the force of circumstance, after the Christian conquest of some parts of Muslim Spain. (Recall that the Inquisition was very active even in the 16th c. and was being applied even in India, though only in the very limited territory of the small fishing villages of Goa controlled by the Portuguese.)

On this church Inquisitional tradition, these new converts displaying these visual cues were automatically suspected of heresy, therefore deemed fit to be subjected to extreme physical torture, again deemed a highly moral act, in imitation of the Christian god. This was exactly the inhuman treatment routinely meted out to black slaves. In other words, even if Blacks converted, they were classified as “inferior Christians”. In the American case, the obvious quick visual cue now was the colour of the skin, which was used to spot and classify Blacks as “inferior” Christians, even after (and if) they converted. But this still involved a continuation of religious prejudice.

But, of course, even the church realized that this appeal to the curse of Kam, or a single quote from the Bible made for a thin “moral” defence. This was especially the case, in the 17th and 18th c., when the belief in the church manipulation of the Bible was growing, after the victory of Protestantism. Specifically, the veracity of the authoritative church version of the Bible was being questioned, despite the church attempts to suppress the *criticism* of critics, such as the scientist Isaac Newton,¹⁶ even if the actual critics escaped. Noticeably, many of these church critics (but fanatical Christians) fled (or were exported) to North America, to form a significant part of its White/Western population.

The other church method, of course, to suppress criticism, was to burn alternative Bibles such as the earliest (Aramaic) Bibles, found in India, as was deceitfully done with the earliest Syrian

16 For the suppression of Newton’s 7-volume critique of the church and its understanding of the Bible, see Raju, *The Eleven Pictures of Time: The Physics, Philosophy and Politics of Time Beliefs* chp. 4 “Newton’s secret.

Christian Bibles in India in the 1599 Synod of Udayamperoor (“Synod of Diamper”) to hide the fact that these earliest Bibles disagreed so much with the church-sanctioned Bible. The point is that with so much disagreement over the Bible, a single quote from the Bible was not adequate justification, for the continued slavery of Blacks, on which a huge amount of Western wealth then depended

Therefore, the church fell back on another old trick: false history, or lies about the *past*, and not merely lies about the *future*, about what fate awaited people after death. Understanding this shift from a religious biblical justification to a secular historical justification is crucial to the rest of this article.

False history was an old church trick, dating back not only to the Crusades, but also long before that to the time of the first religious war that the church waged against “pagans” in the Roman Empire between the 4th to the 6th century. Since the time of Orosius (5th c.), and his “History *Against* the Pagans”, false history was used to provide *secular* justification for the church dogma of Christian superiority (in this world), by suggesting that the Christian god treated Christians preferentially even in this world, and not merely in the purported future life after death. In Weber’s famous thesis (WEBER 2001), the belief in rewards in *this* world was the basis of capitalism, or in Ronald Reagan’s crude language, “The rich are rich because they are good”, or its unstated contrapositive “the poor (=Blacks, non-Christians) are poor because they are bad”. Though Weber mistakenly attributed this belief solely to Protestantism, it has a long background in church thought. This secular justification was politically needed in the 5th c. because “pagans”, who believed in complete equity, laughed at the church attempts to change the belief in life after death as a way to establish inequity or religious superiority of Christians.

Recall that, after grabbing state power in the Roman empire, the first thing that the church did was to change the earlier belief in equity held also by early Christians. Equity was a belief very dear to the earlier Egyptian/pagan philosophers, and hence a part of the pre-Nicene Christianity of Origen. The belief in equity was expressed geometrically by saying that souls were like perfect spheres, indistinguishable from each other. But equity made the church and its priests politically irrelevant: for, since all would be saved anyway, why, then, would anyone want to convert to Christianity? And, if no

one converted, how would the church fill its coffers? Therefore, in 552, the Christian Emperor Justinian, who had earlier shut down all schools of philosophy in the Roman Empire, and the fifth Ecumenical Council, pronounced the great curse of the church (anathema) on this belief in equity or spherical souls (RAJU 2003, 39; Chp. 2, “The curse on ‘cyclic’ time”).

This was accompanied by other major and politically convenient changes to church dogma, in favour of inequity. For example, the possibly scientific¹⁷ “pagan” belief in *reincarnation* (a series of lives after death) was changed to the Christian belief in *resurrection* (life after death exactly once), which superstitious belief impressed upon people the urgency to convert, for they got only one chance, in this life, not a series of chances. A side effect of this was that hell was no longer a temporary reform school, as envisaged by Origen¹⁸ (and “pagans”). Accordingly, the Christian god changed already in the 5th c. from a moral reformer to a sadist, who eternally tortured non-Christians with no future objective in mind, but only to punish them for not having gone to the church and converted to Christianity before death. Augustine explained how the ridiculous superstition of resurrection “in the flesh” was compatible with the belief in the fires of hell,¹⁹ by giving the example of mythical salamanders who survived fires.

As evident from Dante (ALIGHERI 1996) this superstition of eternal physical torture of non-Christians, in the flesh, including the torture of Paigambar Mohammed, was firmly entrenched in the minds of Christians by the 14th century. Since it is obviously moral to imitate God, this perverse image of a God who eternally tortured all non-Christians created the moral justification for the genocides of non-Christians, and the physical cruelties of the slavery that followed. These crimes against humanity were merely an imitation of what the Christian God did, hence regarded as “moral”.

By the 15th century, four centuries of Christian religious war against Muslims – the Crusades – had taught the church a valuable

17 See, (RAJU 2003). Or, see the detailed abstracts posted at <http://ckraju.net/blog/?p=186>.

18 Origen, ‘Appendix on Origen’, 2008, <http://ckraju.net/papers/Appendix-on-Origen.pdf>, for quotes from Origen’s *De Principis*.

19 Augustine, *City of God*, Book 21, chps. 2-4. The salamanders are in chp. 4. <https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/120121.htm>.

political lesson. Hatred unites and pays, whether it was hatred against the Muslims used to combine the squabbling nations of the Christian part of Europe under a religious banner, or hatred of heretics, which united the faithful flock into a bunch that enjoyed a sadistic spectacle. Though Christianity started off as a doctrine of love, that was long ago. The church, after it married the state in the 4th c., continuously modified Christianity to suit its politics, and by the 15th c., after the Crusades and the Inquisition, had turned it into a vicious doctrine of hatred, for its political advantage. This hatred was towards all non-Christians.

Of course, it was natural for the church to immediately extend to the “New World” its doctrine of extreme hatred towards all non-Christians. Accordingly, immediately after Columbus’ voyage, the pope issued another papal bull *Inter Caetera* (of 1493) (DAVENPORT 1917), the biggest land grab in history, of dividing the world into two parts, both to be owned by Christians: one part to be owned by Spain and the other part by Portugal.

To summarize, the church dogma of religious (Christian) superiority provided the initial “moral” justification for *both* genocide and slavery, or the murder, enslavement, and inhumane physical ill-treatment of all non-Christians. In the 16th and early 17th centuries, the colour of the skin was no part of the “moral” justification offered for either genocide or slavery, it was all about the colour of the religion.

However, due to the pressure of conversions, and the weakness of relying on a single quote from the Bible (“curse of Kam”), the church went back to the old trick of false history to provide a secular justification for its claim of extreme Christian superiority. Noticeably, in the 18th c. Immanuel Kant (or David Hume) did *not* use the Bible to justify his racist assertion (KANT 2011; NEUGEBAUER 1990) that “Blacks should be whipped into silence”. Instead, he resorted to the secular claim that Blacks were not creative.

The relation of this secular claim to false history may not be obvious: to understand it let us ask the counterfactual question: could Kant have made a similar dismissive assertion about *Greek* philosophy, that “Greeks were not creative”? That Greeks merely copied the Egyptians in everything that they did? That is, *could Kant have asserted the non-creativity of Blacks if he believed in the*

argument of George James (JAMES 2001) that Greek philosophy is stolen from black Egyptians?

Quite specifically, I refer here to the *substance* of James' thesis, that Greek philosophy is derived from the Egyptian, and *not* to the particulars of his charge that the transfer from Egyptian to Greek was brought about personally by Aristotle who physically plagiarized from the library of Alexandria, which charge has been the subject of many quibbles (LEFKOWITZ 1996). (Indian philosophy teaches that one must address the substance, or the best possible reformulation of an argument, and those quibbles are used only when no strong arguments are available against the real thesis.) For example, it would be part of the substance of James' thesis if Greek philosophy imitated Egyptian philosophy, just as Greeks learnt from the Egyptians, the way Greeks manifestly imitated Egyptian gods,²⁰ or Greek architecture is an undeniable imitation of the Egyptian and Persian architecture. It would also be part of the substance of James' thesis if any Greek texts in the Library of Alexandria derived from translations of earlier Egyptian and Persian²¹ texts done during Ptolemaic times. It would also be part of the substance of James' thesis if later day racist historians appropriated Egyptian and other achievements to Greeks, as more broadly asserted by Bernal (BERNAL 1987).

What is little known, however, is the church contribution to concocting a false *history* of Greek achievements. The Orosian tradition of false history during the first religious war went ballistic: during the second religious war, the Crusades. The earlier church trick of Christian-chauvinist history was turned into a bigger con-trick of a systematically false history of *science*, which attributed the beginning of science to early Greeks.

20 Herodotus, "Almost all the names of the gods came into Greece from Egypt." *History*, Euterpé, 50–58, trans. G. Rawlinson, Encyclopaedia Britannica, Chicago, 1996, p. 60.

21 The translation from Egyptian to Greek was quite natural in Ptolemaic times, and I specifically mention the translation from the Persian because Zoroastrians have been complaining, for at least the last 2000 years, about the destruction and translation of the Zend Avesta by Alexander (MÜLLER 1963, p. XXXI). Dishonest Western "historians" like Lefkowitz (1996) simply deny it. An extract is posted at <http://ckraju.net/papers/presentations/images/Dinkard-SBE-37-p-xxxi.jpg>,

Why science? Because the Crusading church wanted to lay claim to valuable scientific knowledge, exactly as it later laid claim to all land in Americas and Australia. Though the land grab has been understood, the knowledge grab is little known. Scientific knowledge is useful in war, even in a religious war. At the time of the Crusades, Muslim Europe (the Umayyad Khilafat of Cordoba, which fragmented before the Crusades, creating a tempting target) was not only immensely wealthier but was also far ahead of Christian Europe in terms of scientific knowledge. Hence, after the surprise of the first Crusade, the subsequent Crusades were a losing proposition for centuries (though the church gained monetarily through either win or loss) (RAJU 2012). Hence, the church soon enough realized that it needed scientific knowledge (e.g., of bridge-building), if its hope of grabbing Muslim wealth through the Crusades were ever to be fulfilled. Hence, as a first step to grab Muslim wealth, it sought to grab and appropriate that world scientific knowledge available in the huge libraries of the Muslims (and so useful for warfare). This was world scientific knowledge, because Muslims had, for centuries, openly accepted learning mathematics, for example, from Indians, since the 8th c.

However, there was a problem. For centuries earlier (and many centuries later) the church had declared knowledge in non-Christian books as heretical and fit only to be burnt. For example, even in the 16th c., on this ground of heresy, the church, burnt all the books (codices) of the Maya, which are *hence* no longer available. Therefore, during the Crusades, an excuse had to be invented, to bypass this book-burning policy of the church to be able to learn from the books of Muslims (*prima facie* heretical), instead of burning them, especially during the fanaticism of a religious war.

The excuse was concocted by manipulating history. The origin of all scientific knowledge (RAJU 2009) in captured Arabic books was attributed to the early Greeks. Why early Greeks? Because the early “Greeks” were then regarded as the sole “friends of Christians” (RAJU 2014),²² as asserted by Eusebius. Attributing the knowledge in those Arabic texts to early Greeks enabled those texts to be deemed a “Christian inheritance”, and appropriated, and

22 See, also, C. K. Raju, ‘Not out of Greece’ (5 Lectures) (University of South Africa, Pretoria, January 2017), <http://ckraju.net/unisa>.

mass translated into Latin. Starting 1125, a vast number of Arabic texts were translated into Latin, and the undeniable fact is that these translations were studied for centuries in the first European universities (such as Paris, Oxford and Cambridge) set up by the church,²³ *during the Crusades*, to digest this appropriated knowledge. This included the translated texts of Ibn Rushd (Averroes), studied as “Aristotle”, and the translated Arabic books of Ibn Sina (Avicenna), particularly *al Canon fi al Tibb*, which were used as key medical texts from the 12th to the 17th c. It also included the text today attributed to “Euclid”.

Note that “translation” in the above paragraph refers only to translations directly from Arabic to Latin. Translations from Arabic to Byzantine Greek had been going on from at least as early as the 9th c., and went on until the 15th c. Many of these Byzantine Greeks’ texts were later translated into Latin. Notable examples are the Panchatantra text translated from Sanskrit to Pehlavi (and Syriac) then to Arabic, Greek and then Latin and then to numerous European languages as Aesop’s fables.²⁴ In science, a notable example is the astronomical work of Ibn Shatir (KENNEDY; ROBERTS 1959) translated from Syriac to Greek and then to Latin, whose work is dishonestly attributed to Copernicus²⁵ to this day.

Though a vast number of Arabic books were translated into Latin, during the Crusades, in this article, we will focus (in part 2) on just one such translation from Arabic to Latin: the text today attributed to Euclid. This text was first brought to Christian Europe and translated into Latin by the crusading Christian spy Adelard of Bath. Shortly afterwards, Gerard of Cremona translated the Arabic text as part of the 1125 CE mass translations of Arabic texts from the

23 The church did set up these universities during the Crusades (e.g., MUNRO 1897), and later controlled them for centuries.

24 Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ed. J.B. Bury with an Introduction by W.E.H. Lecky (New York: Fred de Fau and Co., 1906), in 12 vols. Vol. 7, note 63. https://oll.libertyfund.org/title/gibbon-the-history-of-the-decline-and-fall-of-the-roman-empire-vol-7#Gibbon_0214-07_899.

25 Copernicus’ “lunar model is identical to Ibn ash-Shatir’s...The question therefore is not whether, but when, where, and in what form he learned of Maragha theory.” (SWERDLOW; NEUGEBAUER 1984, 47) A Greek translation of Ibn Shatir’s Syriac work was available in the Vatican library, which Copernicus visited.

Toledo Arabic library, obtained after Toledo fell to Crusaders. The translations were financed and organized by the church.

During the religious fanaticism of the Crusades, no one questioned the extreme fantasy of an early Greek origin of all scientific knowledge (RAJU 2009) in captured (or imported) *Arabic* books. Since the church commonly insists on faith, for it has no evidence of God or heaven or hell or Jesus, no European dared demand evidence. Anyway, the simple fact is that the primary evidence for purported Greek contribution to science still does not exist, and any demand for primary evidence for this fantastic thesis of Greek origins of scientific knowledge is still deflected today with a variety of “academic” tricks, part of the church legacy in Western academics.

In the next part of this article, we will take up in detail the specific case of lack of evidence for “Euclid”. However, first, let us complete the story of racism.

The appropriation of world scientific knowledge in Arabic books to Greeks was hardly the first or the last case of appropriation of knowledge. While the use of the genocidal “dogma of Christian discovery” to appropriate land (three whole continents), and to appropriate labour (by morally/legally justifying slavery of Blacks), is somewhat understood, its use to appropriate a huge variety indigenous scientific *knowledge* during the pre-colonial²⁶ “age of discovery” is hardly understood. Prominent among these post-renaissance appropriations of indigenous knowledge are the false claims that e.g., “Copernicus discovered heliocentricity”,²⁷ already mentioned earlier, or the claim that “Newton discovered calculus” (RAJU 2007). These two fake claims are at the centre of the fake

26 As regards precolonial appropriations in just the limited case of Indian mathematics, starting from elementary arithmetic see, e.g., see Raju (2020a)

27 In the particular case of Copernicus, like that of Mercator, an added issue was the fear of the Inquisition. Thus, Copernicus was frightened that, like his friend Scultetus, he would be arrested by the Inquisition for dabbling in “heretical” texts, written by Muslims. Accordingly, he (a) claimed it was his own idea without referring to his Muslim source, (b) delayed its publication till he was on his deathbed, (c) wrote a preface citing various church authorities (pope, cardinal etc.) to establish the theological correctness of the theory. As such, this method of appropriating knowledge, by individuals scared of the Inquisition may be called the “Inquisitional model” of false history.

story of the scientific revolution. What is curious is the tenacity with which Western historians hang onto these false faith-based “grand narratives” in the history of science, long after their falsehood was first exposed.²⁸

This bogus history of science, that most mathematics and science is the work of early Greeks and post-renaissance Europeans, made it a fairly easy matter to move from the Bible defence of slavery, which categorised Blacks as inferior Christians, to the secular defence of slavery that Blacks were not creative, and that Whites had created most math and science in the world. The shift from Greeks as the “sole friends of Christians” to Greeks as Whites was easy. Even though it was eventually acknowledged that the “early Greeks” who purportedly created mathematics and science were not from Athens but from Alexandria located in Egypt in Africa, it only required a flight of the imagination, which comes so easily to the faithful, to imagine that they were all Whites. (Of course, the possibility of early Greek translations from the Egyptians is axiomatically excluded, as is the possibility of later-day appropriations through translations from Arabic to Byzantine Greek.) That flight of the imagination is strongly promoted by school texts and Wikipedia today by posting White-skin images of the purported authors of all supposed early Greek works. And post-renaissance Europeans in the relevant time period (after the end of the Crusades, and before the abolition of slavery) were all Whites anyway, given the huge use made of the doctrine of Christian discovery to appropriate knowledge.

From White Superiority to Western Superiority

However, there was another complication, which makes clear the advantage of considering not merely genocide + slavery, but genocide + slavery + colonialism. With the rise of colonialism, even the secular racist defence of Christian domination, using a chauvinistic history of science, was undermined by the bogus Aryan race conjecture inspired by William Jones’ thesis of 1786 (JONES

28 See, e.g., the series of popular-level articles on “Marx and mathematics”, particularly parts 2 and 4. (RAJU 2020b, 2020d)

1799). The Aryan race conjecture led to the widespread belief that many among the colonized were of the same race as the colonizer.

But a false history of science was also a key source of (soft) power, and colonizers recognized they needed this additional source of power to offset their military weakness in the colonies. A false history of science helped to invent the grounds to assert the inferiority of the colonized. But this false history of science could no longer be merely a racist history (since, in terms of the prevailing perception, that racist category did not quite apply to the colonised). Accordingly, colonial historians twisted that earlier false history of science, to retain its substance, by another mere change of categories. *The claim of racist superiority now mutated into a claim of civilizational superiority*: both early Greeks and post-renaissance Europeans were now portrayed as part of the nebulous civilizational category “West”. In short, instead of White racist superiority, the notion peddled now was that of Western civilizational superiority. But its basis remained the same: a long tradition of false Christian chauvinist history of science since the Crusades, as bolstered by later-day “Christian discoveries” of knowledge, and as further later promoted by racist and Western historians.

In India, when Macaulay²⁹ spoke about the need to change the education system, and the supposed need for Indians to follow the European/church education system, he emphasized the purported *civilizational* superiority of the West in *science*. (The entire chain of false claims, and their mutations, is summarized in Fig. 1.) This false claim of *civilizational* superiority, and its consequence, that imitating Western education is essential for science, is today accepted by OIC countries (RAJU 2011), China, and all of Africa.

Ironically, in the 20th century, historians such as Toynbee (1957) reconnected the “civilizational” category “West” back to Western Christianity, prevalent in Western Europe, which is the part of Europe that exclusively participated in colonisation and is consequently wealthier. This completed the circle, by reconnecting the seemingly secular claim of civilizational superiority back to the original claim of Christian religious superiority, with the minor

29 (“But when we pass from works of imagination to works in which facts are recorded, and general principles investigated, the superiority of the Europeans becomes absolutely immeasurable.” T. B. MACAULAY 1835)

modification of changing “Christian” to “Western Christian”, or the West.³⁰ Post-Cold-War Strategic theorists like Huntington (1997) have picked up Toynbee’s theory, which was a critical theoretical basis of the politics of the recently concluded Trump era.

That brings me back to my starting point: that racism is not about the colour of the skin but about the sense of superiority. This started as a belief in Christian religious *superiority* (15th - 17th c.), and later mutated into a secular belief in White/Western *superiority*. Ultimately, the underpinning of this secular justification for “superiority” was a false history of science, initially concocted during the Crusades, and then maintained by racist, colonial, and other Western historians.

A key actionable conclusion that emerges is this: to eliminate prejudices about racist superiority, the whole gamut of false claims of Christian/White/Western superiority must be tackled, for these related claims of superiority strongly support racist and colonial prejudices. Moreover, unlike the claim of White superiority, based on skin colour alone, the related claims of Western superiority is still openly propagated by the colonial education system.

This way of understanding things is useful: for it shows us an achievable way to eliminate racist prejudice. To eliminate racist prejudices today, which prejudices persist in the minds of people, it is *not* enough to attack colour prejudice alone. It is essential to concertedly expose the falsehoods of the history of science, which are used to provide the secular justification for the claims of Christian/White/Western sense of superiority.

However, there is another difficulty in this action agenda. Colonial education is regarded as essential for mathematics and science. But, as we will see in part two, the false *history* of mathematics and science is intertwined with a bad *philosophy* of mathematics and science, a key part of current colonial education.

30 See the definition of the term "West" in the glossary of Raju (2003)

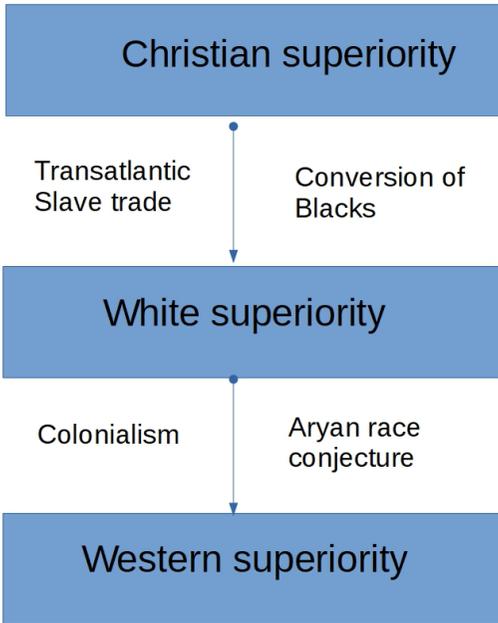


Figure 1. Evolution of claims of superiority.

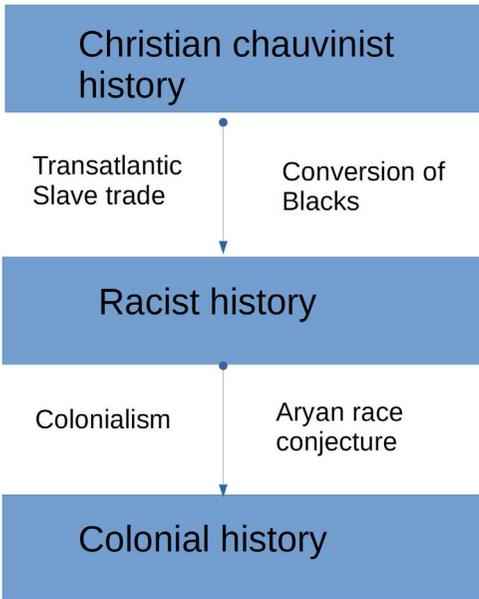


Figure 2. Parallel evolution of false history as secular justification for claims of superiority.

Models of Christian chauvinist history

Orosian model (5th c.)
History against the Pagans

Byzantine model (8th c.)
Translations of Arabic texts TO
Byzantine Greek (and appropriation to
Greeks by interpolation)

Crusading model (12th c.)
(Concoction of Greek origins of Arabic texts
translated to Latin, e.g. "Euclid")

Inquisitional model (15th c.)
(Byzantine Greek translations from
Arabic/Syriac further translated to
Latin and appropriated to Christians
e.g. Copernicus)

**Christian Discovery model
(16th c.)**
(Indigenous knowledge appropriated
to Christians, e.g. Indian calculus
attributed to Newton and Leibniz)

Figure 3. Evolution of Christian chauvinist history.

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