

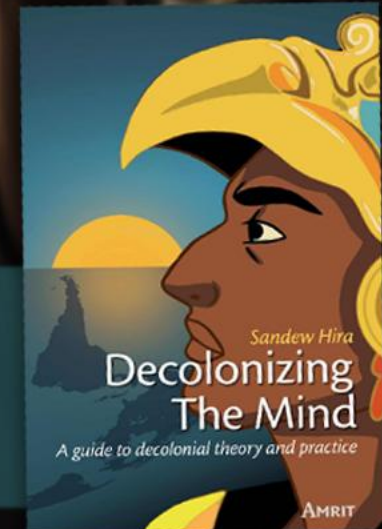
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What is decolonial theory?

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

The DTM theory of racism

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



#032

04-03-2024

Racism

- ❑ *“A global system of economic, social, political and cultural institutions that organize the relationship between human beings on the basis of superiority and inferiority.”*
- ❑ It is not about feelings (prejudices, antagonistic feelings)
- ❑ It is not about human interaction in the personal sphere (‘everyday racism’, white privilege)

Characteristics

- ❑ The organization of human relations along the lines of superiority and inferiority in economics, social relations, political systems and culture.
- ❑ The production of concepts of superiority/inferiority to justify the system.
- ❑ The link of these concepts to the character of the authority of knowledge production.
- ❑ The creation and institutionalization of mechanisms for colonizing the mind.

The authority of knowledge production

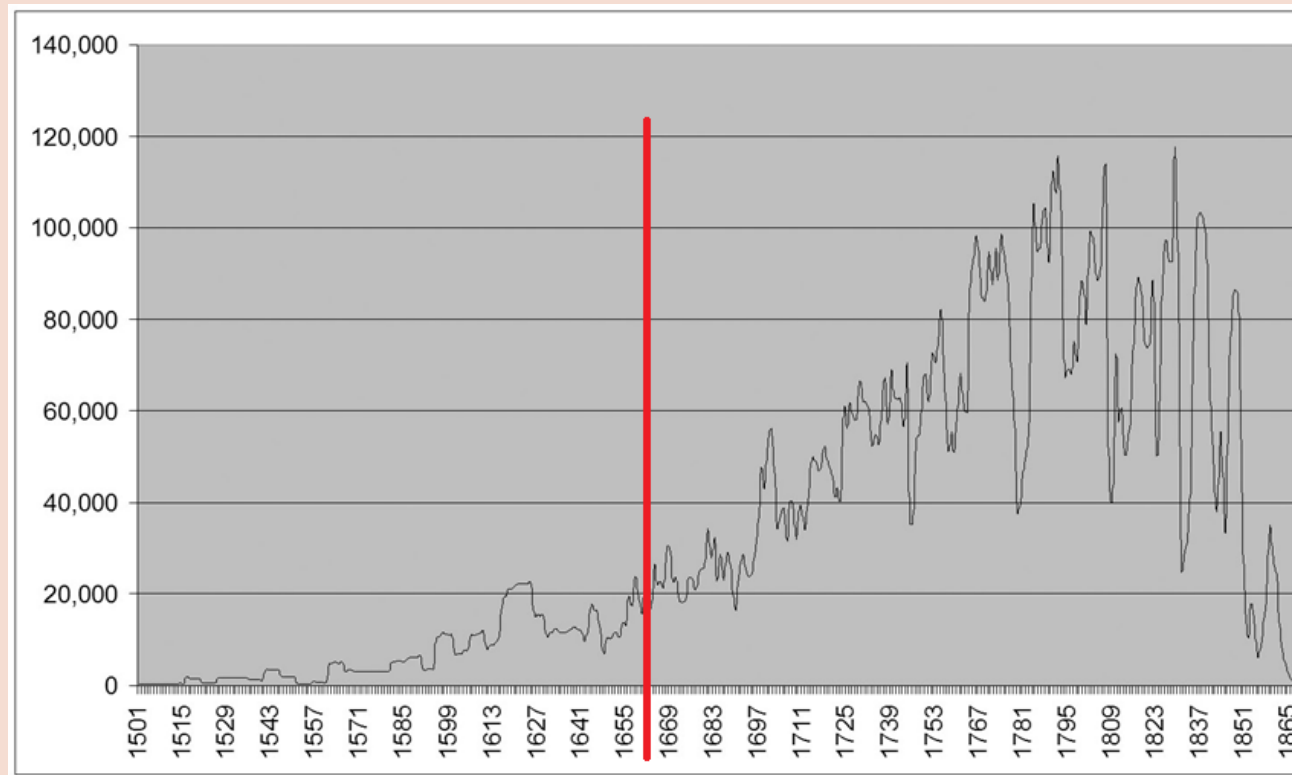
The collection of institutions in a society that is regarded as the source of valid knowledge.

The authority of knowledge production

- ❑ The collection of institutions in a society that is regarded as the source of valid knowledge.
- ❑ Racist concepts in colonialism are link to the authority of knowledge production. There are three forms of racism:
 - ❑ Theological racism: the concept of superiority/inferiority that is argued from theology and is linked to theologians as the authority of knowledge production.
 - ❑ Biological racism: the concept of superiority/inferiority that is argued from philosophy and the natural sciences and is linked to philosophers and natural scientists as the authority of knowledge production.
 - ❑ Cultural racism: the concept of superiority/inferiority that is argued from the social sciences and is linked to social scientists as the authority of knowledge production.

Two foundations of European civilization: Christianity and European Enlightenment

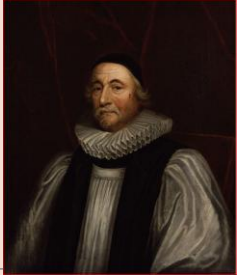
1. 1500-1650: Colonial civilization is based on Christian theology
2. Since 1650: Colonial civilization is based on the European Enlightenment



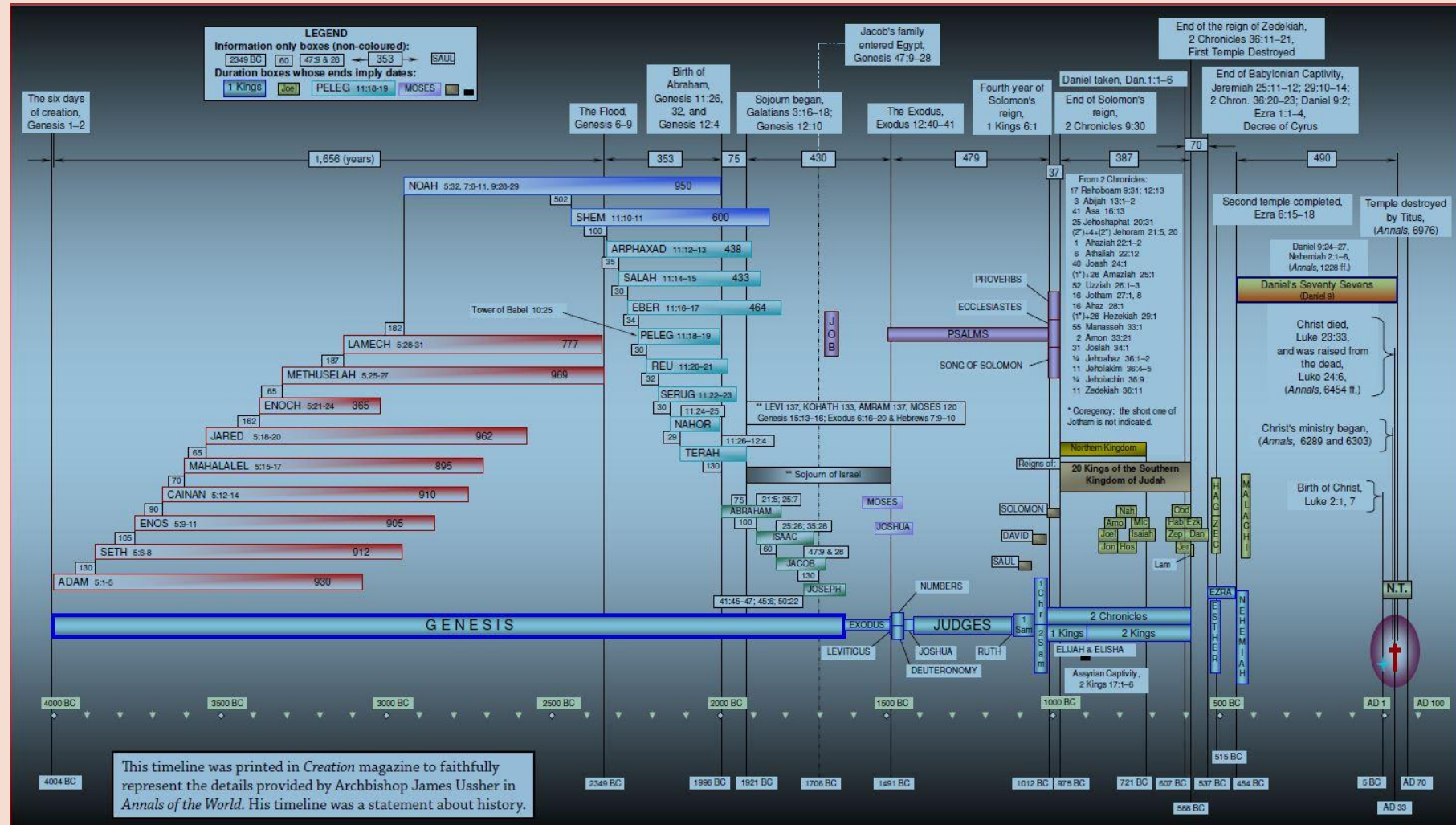
The authority of knowledge at the start of colonialism

- ❑ Bernal Díaz del Castillo (1492–1584): *"We came here to serve God and the king, and also to get rich"*.
- ❑ Christian theologians produce valid knowledge

The Christian knowledge base



Irish archbishop James Ussher (1581-1656): God created the universe including life around 6 pm on 22 October 4004 BCE



Religion and colonization

Where they animals or humans?



Inferior humans beings

Tomás Ortiz, Bishop of Santa Marta: *“They are like asses, stupid, crazed, having no sense, considering it nothing to kill and be killed; they don’t tell the truth unless it benefits them, they are inconsistent, have the vices of beasts, are not capable of understanding doctrine, are traitors, cruel, vengeful, and never pardon, lazy, thieves of low and mean judgment, are as cowardly as rabbits, dirty as pigs, they eat lice, spiders, and raw worms, have no art or human skills, are like brute animals. In all, I say, that never did God create people with so much vice and animal behavior.”*

Church as authority for colonization: 1513 - *Requirimiento*

“Acknowledge the Church as the Ruler and Superior of the whole world, and the high priest called Pope, and in his name the King and Queen Doña Juana our lords, in his place, as superiors and lords and kings of these islands.”

“If you do not do this, and maliciously make delay in it, I certify to you that, with the help of God, we shall powerfully enter into your country, and shall make war against you in all ways and manners that we can, and shall subject you to the yoke and obedience of the Church and of their Highnesses; we shall take you and your wives and your children, and shall make slaves of them, and as such shall sell and dispose of them as their Highnesses may command; and we shall take away your goods, and shall do you all the mischief and damage that we can.”

Friar Antonio Montesinos
(1475-1540)



Liberation theology

“Tell me by what right and with what justice do you hold these Indians in such horrible servitude? With what authority have you waged such detestable war, bringing havoc and death never before seen on these people who were living peacefully and calmly on their lands? How can you keep them so exhausted and oppressed, without giving them food or curing their illnesses, which were caused by the excessive work you have forced upon them and by which you cause their deaths, or more accurately put, by which you murder them. All of this so you can daily acquire more gold. Are these not human beings? Do they not have rational spirits? Are you not obliged to love them as you love yourselves? Do you not understand this? Do you not feel this? How can you remain lethargically in such a deep slumber? Be assured that living like this you cannot save yourselves any more than can the Moors or the Turks, who do not have or want the faith of Jesus Christ.”

1542: the New Laws against population decline

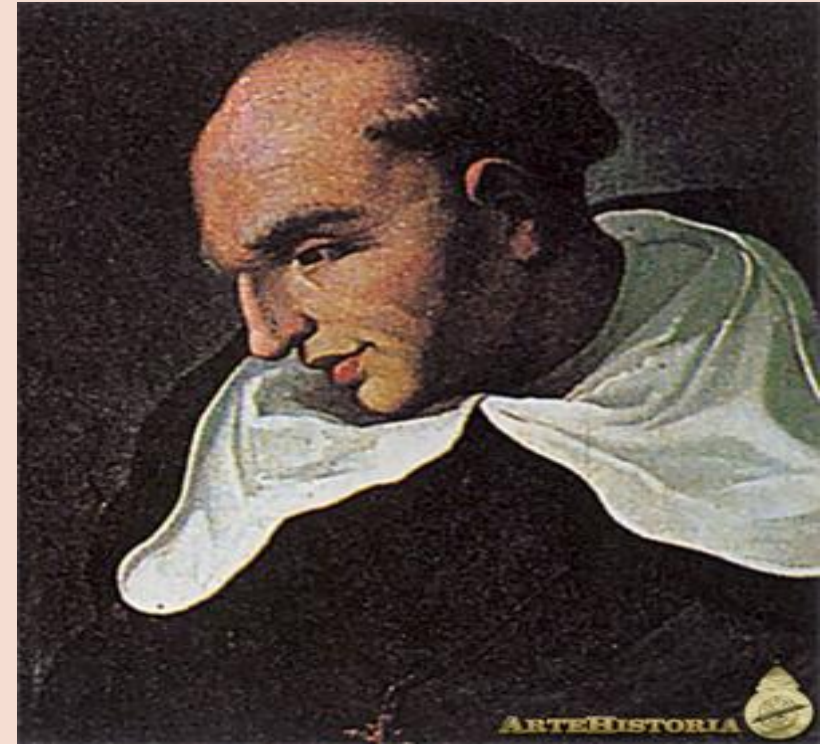
“We ordain and command that from hence forward for no cause of war nor any other whatsoever, though it be under the title of rebellion, nor by ransom nor in other manner can an Indian be made a slave, and we will that they be treated as our vassals of the Crown of Castile since such they are.”

1550: Debate of Valladolid: theological racism



*Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda
(1494-1573)*

“Is it lawful for the King of Spain to wage war on the Indians, before preaching the faith to them, in order to subject them to his rule, so that afterward they may be more easily instructed in the faith?”



*Bartholomé de Las Casas
(1484-1566)*

Arguments based on

Theory:

- ❑ Saint Augustine (354-430)
- ❑ Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)
- ❑ Aristotle (384-322 BCE)

Empirical facts

- ❑ Sepúlveda: work of Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés
- ❑ Las Casas: forty years of experience in the Americas

Sepúlveda

1. The indigenous people are barbarians and inferior to the Spaniards. Therefore a war against them is justified, because inferior people should be ruled by superior people.
2. The indigenous people commit crimes against natural law: idolatry and sacrifice of humans to their god.
3. The indigenous people oppress and kill innocent people.
4. War may be waged against infidels in order to prepare the way for preaching the Faith.

Las Casas

1. Spaniards can act like barbarians.
2. Christians don't have jurisdiction over people who don't live in their territory. God is the only one that has the power to pass the final judgment
3. Saving a few innocent people by killing many innocent people does not make sense.
4. Proper method of conversion in Christianity is not force
5. *"The Church can justifiably wage war only against those unbelievers who would maliciously prevent the spread of a faith, either by trying to make those who had already received it abandon it or by placing obstacles in the way of those who, in all probability, would come to believe."*

Las Casas on empirical data

"It is not surprising that Oviedo reviles the Indians with so many slanderous lies, and there are two reasons for this. The first is that he was one of those looters who went to the mainland in 1513 at the time of Pedrarias [Dávila]. They, before anyone else, began at the province of Darién, which stretches to the gulf of Urabá, and laid waste to the whole mainland with complete inhuman savagery. They spared neither women, children, or the aged, and even burned men alive so that they might steal their gold, divide the other men among themselves, that is, enslaved them... Oviedo should try to make reparation by offering restitution for these detestable obscenities, rather than by his accusing slanders and shameless lies defame a gentle and decent people."

Las Casas: four kinds of barbarism

- ❑ *loose and broad sense of the word means any cruel, inhuman, wild, and merciless man acting against human reason*
- ❑ *those who do not have a written language that corresponds to the spoken one*
- ❑ *those who, either because of their evil and wicked character or the barrenness of the region in which they live, are cruel, savage, scottish, stupid, and strangers to reason*
- ❑ *those who do not acknowledge Christ*

Las Casas on crime of idolatry, sacrifice of humans and eating of human flesh

- ❑ Christians don't have jurisdiction over people who don't live in their territory.
- ❑ God is the only one that has the power to pass the final judgment
- ❑ The crime of human sacrifice might actually not be a crime if it is a sacrifice to God
- ❑ Human sacrifice occurs on a small scale, so it should not be blown out of proportion.
- ❑ The eating of human flesh might not be a crime
- ❑ No evidence of cannibalism on a large scale

Las Casas on oppression and killing of innocent people

- ❑ A benefit is not conferred on a person against his will
- ❑ Saving a few innocent people by killing many innocent people does not make sense.
- ❑ Spreading the gospel is an aim of the Spanish invasion of the Americas and this is obstructed by these practices.
- ❑ God is the ultimate judge, not the Spaniards

Las Casas on on war against infidels in order to prepare the way for preaching the Faith

- ❑ Proper method of conversion in Christianity is not force
- ❑ Conversion to Christianity is a benefit for the converts, but that benefit can not bestowed upon them if they don't want it.
- ❑ The combination of force and preaching the gospel is ineffective
- ❑ The combination of theft of gold, rape, violence and preaching the gospel gives a false message about Christianity to the Indigenous people. These are not methods of Christians but of Muslims.
- ❑ Experience shows that force is not needed with the Indigenous people
- ❑ There is only one reason to use force in the conversion of the Indigenous people: *“The Church can justifiably wage war only against those unbelievers who would maliciously prevent the spread of a faith, either by trying to make those who had already received it abandon it or by placing obstacles in the way of those who, in all probability, would come to believe.”*

Hatuey: the Taino response - 1

“This is the God the Spaniards worship. For this they will fight and kill. They will persecute us for this, and therefore they must throw them into the sea. These tyrants tell us that they worship a God of peace and equality, but they take over our land and make us their slaves. They talk about an immortal soul and their eternal rewards and punishments, but here they are stealing our possessions, seducing our women and raping our daughters. They cannot match us in courage, so they cover themselves with iron that cannot be broken by our weapons.”



Hatuey: de Taino response - 2

“Just before the execution, a priest came to him to offer him spiritual assistance. The priest showed him a cross and asked him to accept Jesus and thereby get a place in heaven.

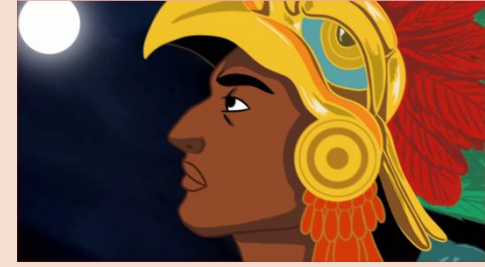
Hatuey asked him, “Are there people like you in heaven?”

He replied, “There are many people like me in heaven.” To which Hatuey said: “I don't want to go to heaven but to hell, because in heaven live such cruel people as you.”



The Aztec response

Cuauhtémoc
(1495-1525)



"Our Sun has gone down. Our Sun has been lost from view and has left us in complete darkness. But we know it will return again, that it will rise again to light us anew.

But while it is there in the Mansion of Silence, let's join together, let's embrace each other and in the very center of our being hide all that our hearts love and we know is the Great Treasure.

Let us hide our Temples, our schools, our sacred soccer game, our youth centers, our houses of flowery song so that only our streets remain. Our homes will enclose us until our New Sun rises.

Most honorable fathers and most honorable mothers, may you never forget to guide your young ones, teach your children, while you live how good it has been and will be.

Until now our beloved Anahuac sheltered and protected our destinies that our ancestors and our parents enthusiastically received and seeded in our being.

Now we will instruct our children how to be good. They will raise themselves up and gain strength and as goodness make real their great destiny in this, our beloved mother Anahuac."

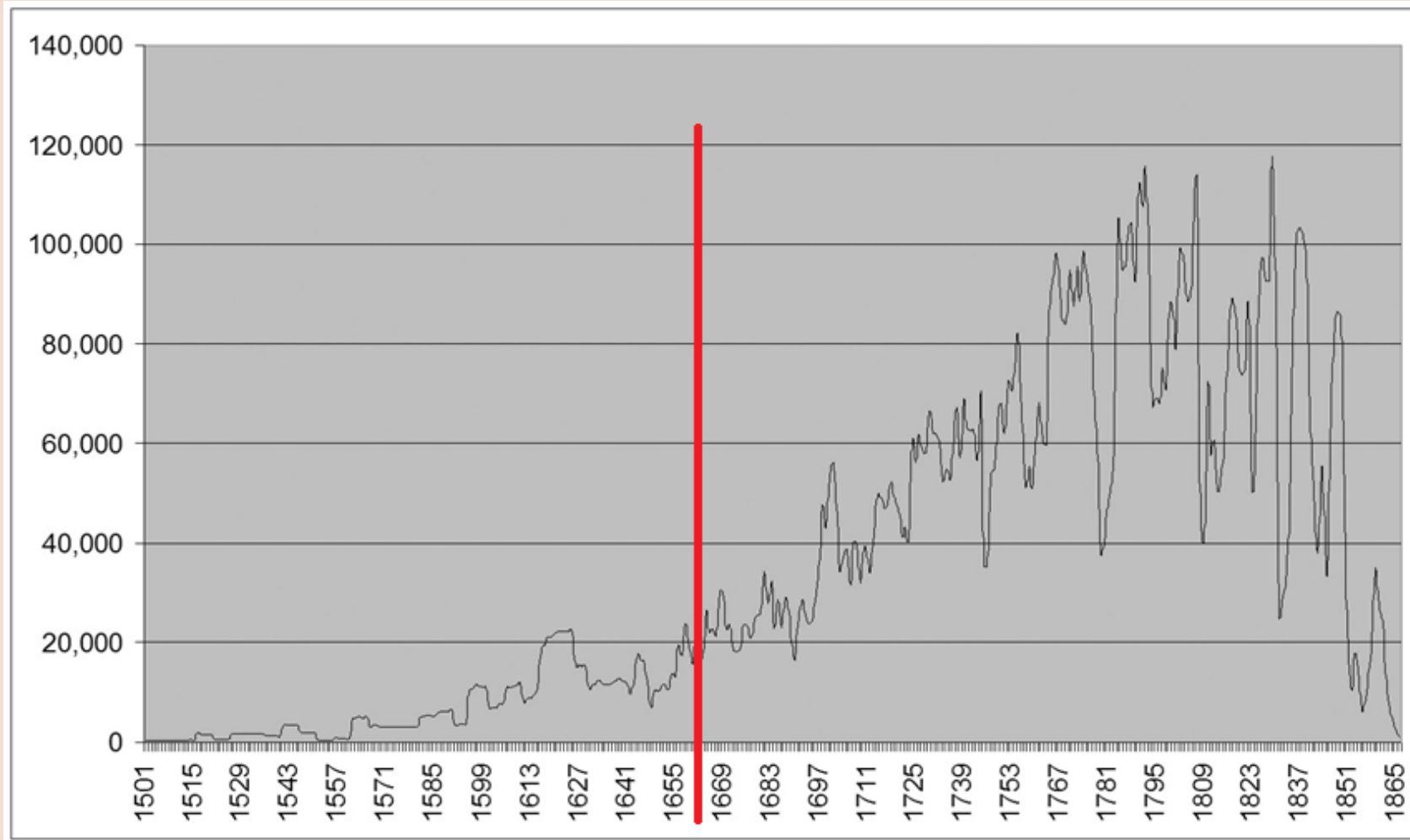
Significance of the Valladolid debate

D. Castro, *“Valladolid was little more than a confrontation between two faces of the same empire. One belonged to the colonists and was represented by Sepúlveda; it demanded a free hand in the exploitation of Spanish territories and its people as the colonists saw fit. The other was represented by Las Casas, who advocated a more benevolent and systematic exploitation while positioning the crown as the overriding regulator of the exploitation of the colonies and their people in a rational and productive manner.”*

Las Casas and black enslavement

In 1517 some settlers asked the Spanish king for license for the trade in enslaved Africans. They used the argument of relieving the burden on the Indigenous population. L. Clayton: *“Las Casas picked up on the idea, and, back in Spain in 1517 – 1519, he suggested to young King Charles ’ s counsellors that a license be issued to import Negro slaves directly from Spain or Africa to the islands.”*
He later regretted the advice.

The European Enlightenment, globalization and slavery

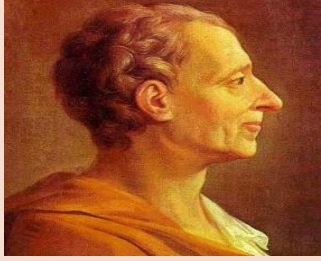


Biological racism: 1650-1850

- ❑ Authority of knowledge production: shifts from theology to philosophy and natural sciences; start of European Enlightenment
- ❑ Philosophy:
 - ❑ Separates science from theology
 - ❑ The ethics of Eurocentrism is hidden in claims of neutrality, objectivity, universalism and superiority.
 - ❑ Opens the way for Eurocentric natural sciences detached from ethics
- ❑ Natural sciences
 - ❑ Use biology to classify human beings as superior and inferior (is ethics not science)
 - ❑ Link to the institutions of global economy and trans-Atlantic enslavement
- ❑ Philosophy become racist

Charles de Montesquieu (1689-1755) (

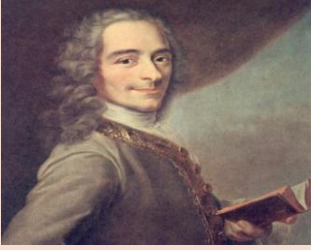
Separation of powers: legislative branch, judiciary branch, executive branch)



“Those concerned are black from head to toe, and they have such flat noses that it is almost impossible to feel sorry for them. One cannot get into one's mind that god, who is a very wise being, should have put a soul, above all a good soul, in a body that was entirely black... A proof that Negroes do not have common sense is that they make more of a glass necklace than of one of gold, which is of such great consequence among nations having a police. It is impossible for us to assume that these people are men because if we assumed they were men one would begin to believe that we ourselves were not Christians.”

Montesquieu, Ch. De (1989): The Spirit of Laws. Cambridge Text in the History of Political Thought. Cambridge, p. 250. Origineel 1748.

Voltaire (1694-1778)



“Their round eyes, their flattened nose, their lips which are always large, their differently shaped ears, the wool of their head, that very measure of their intelligence, place prodigious differences between them and the other species of men... And they are not men, except in their stature, with the faculty of speech and thought at a degree far distant to ours. Such are the ones that I have seen and examined... And one could say that if their intelligence is not of another species than ours, then it is greatly inferior. They are not capable of paying much attention; they mingle very little, and they do not appear to be made either for the advantages or the abuses of our philosophy.”

Mellow, J. (2013): Enlightenment Racism: Voltaire. <http://jamesmelov.blogspot.nl/2013/07/enlightenment-racism-voltaire.html>. Accessed 6 May 2015.

David Hume (1711-1776)



“I am apt to suspect the negroes, and in general all the other species of men (for there are four or five different kinds) to be naturally inferior to the whites. There scarcely ever was a civilized nation of any other complexion than white, nor even any individual eminent either in action or speculation. No ingenious manufactures amongst them, no arts, no sciences. On the other hand, the most rude and barbarous of the whites such as the ancient Germans, the present Tartars, have still something eminent about them, in their valour, form of government, or some other particular. Such a uniform and constant difference could not happen, in so many countries and ages, if nature had not made an original distinction between these breeds of men. Not to mention our colonies, there are negroe slaves dispersed all over Europe, of whom none ever discovered any symptoms of ingenuity; though low people, without education, will start up amongst us, and distinguish themselves in every profession. In Jamaica, indeed, they talk of one negroe as a man of parts and learning; but it is likely he is admired for slender accomplishments, like a parrot, who speaks a few words plainly.”

Hume, D. (1994): Political Essays. Cambridge. Original 1777, p. 86.



Immanuel Kant (1724-1804)

“The Negroes of Africa have by nature no feeling that rises above the ridiculous. Mr. Hume challenges anyone to adduce a single example where a Negro has demonstrated talents, and asserts that among the hundreds of thousands of blacks who have been transported elsewhere from their countries, although very many of them have been set free, nevertheless not a single one has ever been found who has accomplished something great in art or science or shown any other praiseworthy quality, while among the whites there are always those who rise up from the lowest rabble and through extraordinary gifts earn respect in the world. So essential is the difference between these two human kinds, and it seems to be just as great with regard to the capacities of mind as it is with respect to color.”

Kant, I. (1992): Observations on the feeling of the beautiful and sublime. in: Kant, I. (1992): Lectures on Logic, pp. 18-62. Origineel 1764. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge, p. 59.



George Hegel (1770-1831)

“The Negro, as already observed, exhibits the natural man in his completely wild and untamed state. We must lay aside all thought of reverence and morality — all that we call feeling — if we would rightly comprehend him; there is nothing harmonious with humanity to be found in this type of character.”

Hegel, G. (2001): The Philosophy of History. Batoche Books. Ontario. Origineel 1837, p. 110-111.

Biological racism

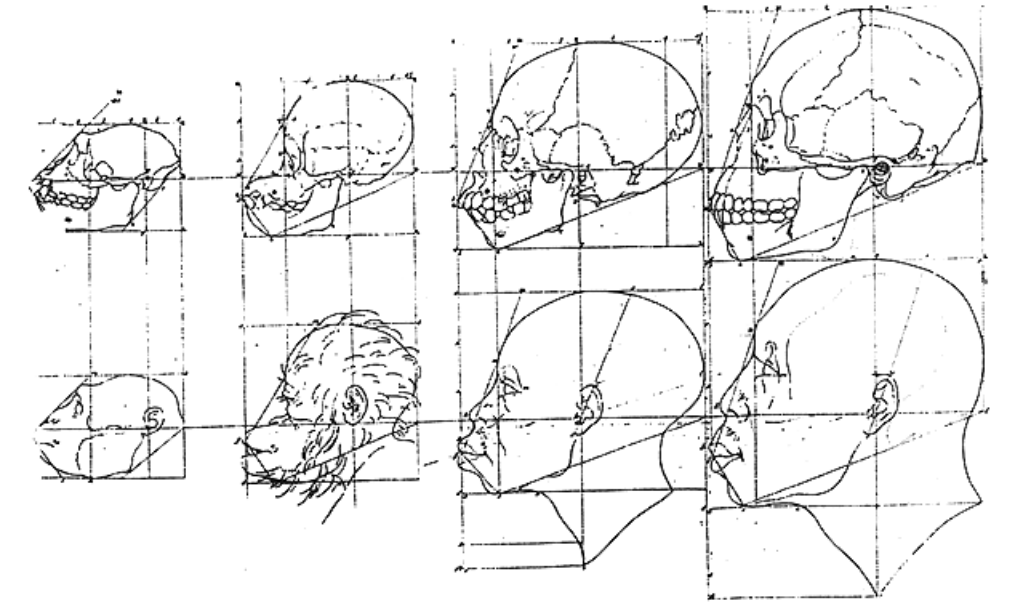
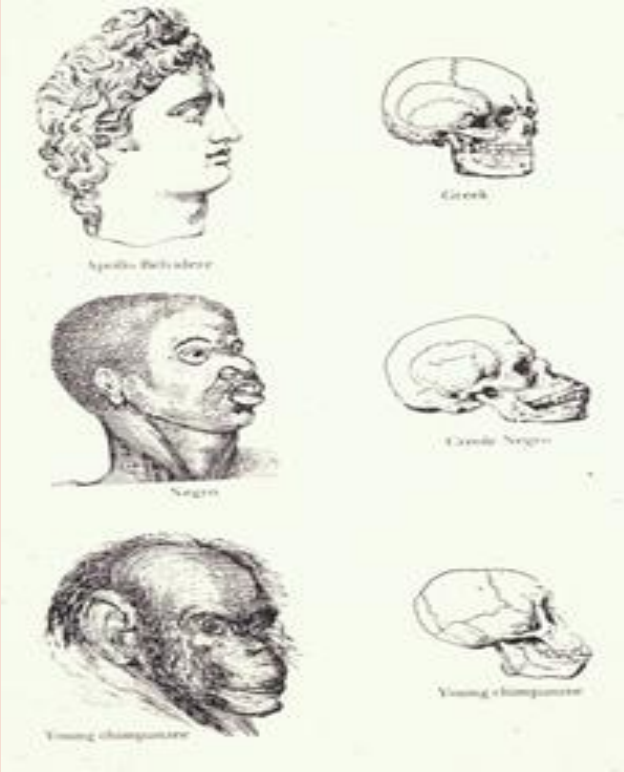


Fig. 2: from left to right, comparative facial angle in monkey, orang-outang, Negro, and Kalmuck, from Camper
Reproduced courtesy of the History of Medicine Division, the National Library of Medicine



Insult as sciences: 1 - Classification of human races: physics and ethics

Carl Linnaeus
(1707–1778)



1. The Americanus: red, choleraic, righteous; black, straight, thick hair; stubborn, zealous, free; painting himself with red lines, and regulated by customs.
2. The Europeanus: white, sanguine, brownny; with abundant, long hair; blue eyes; gentle, acute, inventive; covered with close vestments; and governed by laws.
3. The Asiaticus: yellow, melancholic, stiff; black hair, dark eyes; severe, haughty, greedy; covered with loose clothing; and ruled by opinions.
4. The Afer or Africanus: black, phlegmatic, relaxed; black, frizzled hair; silky skin, flat nose, tumid lips; females without shame; mammary glands give milk abundantly; crafty, sly, lazy, cunning, lustful, careless; anoints himself with grease; and governed by caprice.

Insult as sciences – 2: Gorilla and African

Charles Darwin
(1809-1882)



“The inability to move the ears in man and several apes is, however, partly compensated by the freedom with which they can move the head in a horizontal plane, so as to catch sounds from all directions. It has been asserted that the ear of man alone possesses a lobule; but “a rudiment of it is found in the gorilla and, as I hear from Prof. Preyer, it is not rarely absent in the negro.””

Insult as sciences – 3: Evolution of man

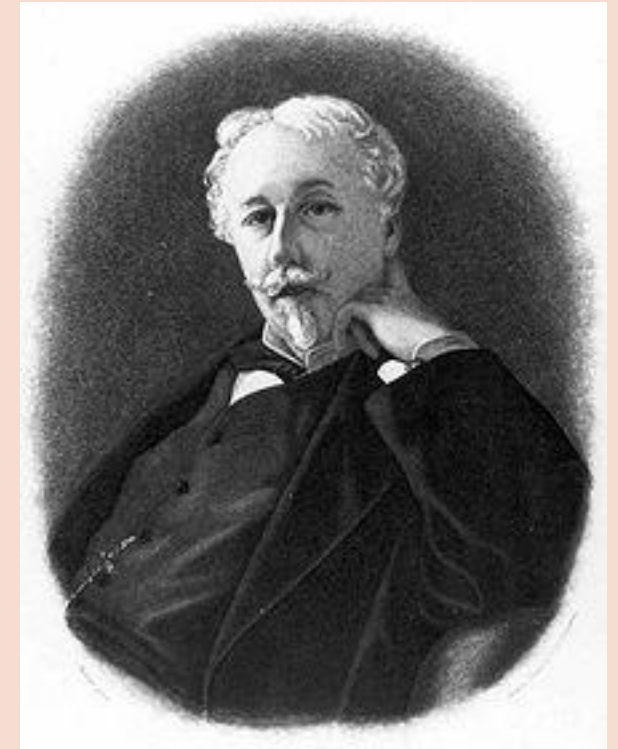
Charles Darwin
(1809-1882)



“At some future period, not very distant as measured by centuries, the civilised races of man will almost certainly exterminate, and replace, the savage races throughout the world. At the same time the anthropomorphous apes, as Professor Schaaffhausen has remarked will no doubt be exterminated. The break between man and his nearest allies will then be wider, for it will intervene between man in a more civilised state, as we may hope, even than the Caucasian, and some ape as low as a baboon, instead of as now between the negro or Australian and the gorilla.”

Arthur de Gobineau (1816-1882): *On the inequality of races*

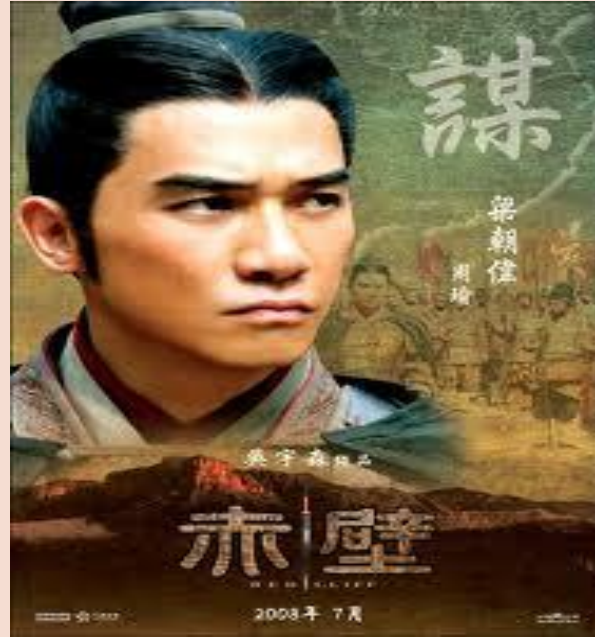
- ❑ White race = superior, intelligent
- ❑ Yellow race: mediocre
- ❑ Black and brown race: stupid



Classification of races by Gobineau



Intelligent

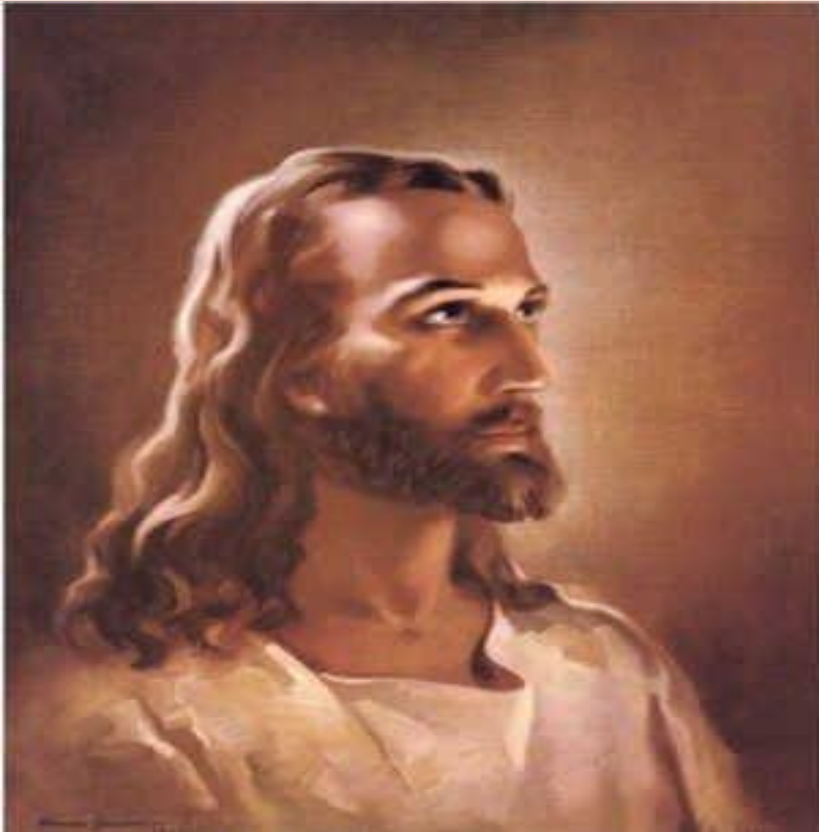


Mediocre



Stupid

Theology: the change of Jesus from a brown Palestian into a white Swede



European views of Africans before the rise of the trans-Atlantic enslavement

- ❑ Africans were regarded as respectful human beings
- ❑ Racism came out of slavery and not the other way around

The black man as a nobleman: blackness not linked to inferiority



*Painting from 1500 by Belgian painter Jan van Mostaert:
nobleman visits queen of Austria*

African as a prince



*African prince visits European court
by Nicolaes Berchem (1650)*

Black king visits Jesus



*Three kings visit at the birth of
Jesus Christ by Rafael Sanzio
(1483-1520)*

Cultural racism: 1850-

- ❑ The rise of social sciences
- ❑ The legal abolition of enslavement
- ❑ The colonization of Asia, Middle East and the rest of Africa
- ❑ The articulation of superiority/inferiority is no longer based on biology but on culture

Foundation of cultural racism: theory of phases

- ❑ All human beings may be equal biologically, but not all cultures are equal
- ❑ Everything develops from a lower and simple phase to a higher and more complex phase, like Darwin's concept of lower and higher life forms
- ❑ Western society represents the higher and most complex phase of human civilization and culture

Social darwinism

- ❑ Herbert Spencer (1820-1903): The strong should see their wealth and power increase while the weak should see their wealth and power decrease: survival of the fittest
- ❑ Thomas Malthus (1766-1834): increase of population stops at the boundaries of food supply, the weakest will not survive (law of nature)
- ❑ Nazism took over the concepts and social darwinism got discredited

Law of three stages of human progress in knowledge

1. Theological stage: explanation of nature and life by personified deities
2. Metaphysical stage: explanation by impersonal abstract concepts, an abstract God.
3. Positivist stage: scientific explanation based on observation, experiment, and comparison. The West is in the positivist stage

*August Comte (1798-1857)
founder of sociology and positivism*

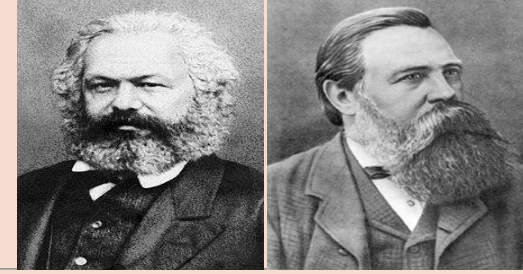


Max Weber (1864-1920)

- ❑ Europe is advanced: technological, economical and cultural. Why?
- ❑ Europe has the best religion: Protestantism. Not crimes of colonialism but the mentality of hard work, rational conduct and economic insight has made it possible



Marx and Engels: stages of modes of production



- ❑ Primitive-communal. Societies where primitive gathering, fishing and hunting form the base of the economy. The production is so meager that they must be shared equally in order to avoid death by starvation.
- ❑ Asiatic mode of production: the communal groups living in villages ruled by chieftains, clans, priest-kings, who perform trading, military or irrigation-directing functions for the whole. They extract a surplus from the communes through taxes. So there is a social differentiation in the community.
- ❑ Ancient, Classical or slave mode of production. The work is done by slaves. They themselves are the property of slave owners.
- ❑ Feudal. The ultimate producer is a serf, part of whose time must be given to work for his lord and part remains to him to till his own soil.
- ❑ Capitalist society: modern society based on private ownership of the means of production: everything becomes a commodity.

Eurocentric Criteria for stages

- ❑ Technology
- ❑ Economics
- ❑ Scientific development

DTM argument

A society can be advanced in technology and economics, but backward in morality and culture



How racism was introduced in Eurocentric knowledge production - 1

1. A linear view of world history claims that Western civilization pretends to be a universal civilization.
2. Western civilization is unique. No other society knew science, freedom or rational thinking. Science arose in Western Europe with modernity (another name for colonialism after the demise of Christian theology). Before modernity there was no science, no systematic production of valid knowledge about nature and society, no rational thinking. Only the West has realized these achievements.
3. Eurocentric science is objective. There can be a bias, but biases can be corrected and thus maintain its objectivity.

How racism was introduced in Eurocentric knowledge production - 2

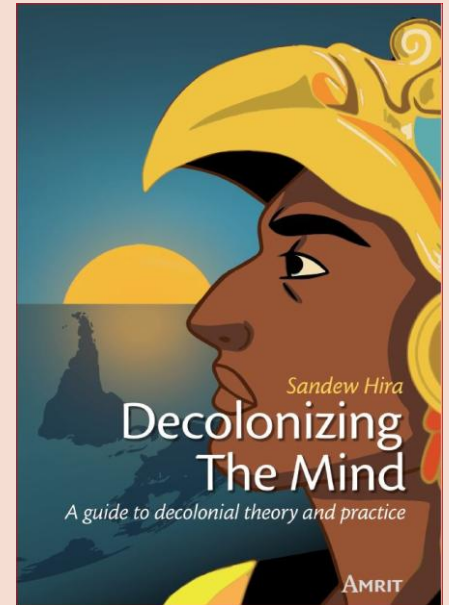
1. Objective knowledge means that it is universal knowledge. The law of gravity goes for the whole universe. The laws of economics goes for the whole economic world.
2. Objective knowledge was developed in Europe. It did not exist outside of Europe.
3. The step to superiority is now small: Objective knowledge is superior to knowledge that is not based on the canon of Eurocentric epistemology. European science is superior to precolonial science.
4. Superior knowledge came from white Europeans. Racism is embedded in science.

Conclusion

The DTM theory of racism is the most comprehensive and coherent theory of racism.

Source in the DTM book

- Chapter six
- Download the PDF of the PowerPoint on www.sandewhira.com



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