

Race, Racism, and Real Roots

(or, why it seems so easy for people to revert to, and keep under wraps,
“You @#\$@#\$ [fill-in-the-blank]!”

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Synopsis

(for the complete paper, contact the author)

What are the roots of racism, by which we can and should understand something that is not merely an ‘attitude’ but a practice with full physical, social, individual, and biological consequences, encompassing and leading toward and supporting, justifying, actions and movements of ethnic separatism, hierarchical valuation, “cleansing”² and genocide?

There are roots, very deep roots, that apparently few, if any, have been willing to consider and to face head-on before. Only by addressing these causes, these roots, and these constantly-reinforcing stimuli, can we as a society (local, state, national, global) ever hope to do anything about the matter.

Racism is only a surface phenomenon, a “tip of an iceberg” (a very ugly, but deep and huge iceberg). And it has little at all to do with surface phenomena per se.

Racism and attitudes about race do not have much at all to do about color. Nor genetic or epigenetic attributes. Not shape of the head or profile, not the presence or absence of any particular gene sequences. There may be classifications of people, genotypes, cultures, according to a variety of classification schemes, just as there are in biology and medicine. But racism is not about this. Not originally, not fundamentally, not today.

Racism is fundamentally about capital, wealth, money.

Material wealth and the perceived power of capital.

Racism is about doing what one can to push others down because they are a barrier to having, seizing, and keeping material wealth, through the generation and promotion, by force if at all possible, and certainly by mythmaking, by misinformation, by subterfuge, of a view that certain other people are less intelligent, less capable, less reliable, less worthy, less valuable, and in short, “less” than those who have perceptible, superficial, trade-able wealth.

None of the racism that has developed over centuries (longer yes, but not as intensively and forcefully as in the past 500 years) and which appears, on the surface to be rife with arguments

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² “ethnic cleansing” is a dangerous euphemism because it is an abusively misleading “softening up” of language that describes nothing less intolerable than physical and mental abuse and, ultimately, destroying and killing)

about superiority or inferiority (one has only to read through modern-day hate literature to see how broad is the spectrum of this) – none of this really originates with anything about attributes and characteristics of individuals, groups, “races.” That is all what some people have worked up, even to the point of believing that these are the motivating reasons, as a mechanism to justify what is at bottom a desire to take, to subjugate, to compete oppressively, for material wealth, for money and financial power.

Long ago very dark people known to ethnologists and etymologists as “Dravidians” had a tremendous civilization around the Indus River in what is now Western India. Short, dark, smart, creative, industrious, and by the way, comparatively wealthy. They had advanced technology like running water and sewage systems. Other civilizations around the world were also advanced in their own ways and times. Some in central and southern Africa, others in Polynesia, and in the Americas, and simply, everywhere that it was possible to set up a relatively stable society. This included nomadic peoples and cultures as well – as can be demonstrated by the different peoples of Central Asia, Siberia and North America.

Now let’s move through time and examine a few moments of Change, when racism came into play for different groups of people. There is a tendency to focus upon blacks and whites in the English colonies and then United States of America. This is not where the deeper roots are to be found.

When and how did so-called “black, brown, red, yellow,”³ and other groups, including some so-called “white” groups, become “less-thans, underlings, inferiors, lower-ranks” that were to be treated in any number of ways with less value, rights, respect?

The triggers were pulled in and kept pulled in each case when money got into the picture. Everything else about racism has come later as a psychological tool, as a means of instilling and maintaining fear, division, separation, in order to justify, in the minds of those who are susceptible, a belief system that will support financial dominance.

Racism practices emerged and flourished in different societies and times when it became clear to some group X that if “those people over there” were treated as inferiors, then “those people” could be used to group X’s advantage, either as explicit slaves, or as serfs, or as the people to whom group X could sell the inferior goods, give the inferior education, rent the inferior housing, etc., etc., etc.

It began in each case as soon as one group X came in contact with another and new group Y, as all the X’s and Y’s were migrating and exploring over the continents and seas. Black Africans, for instance, did not become labeled and classified – and shunned – as inferior or negative in character, culture, intelligence, etc. until it became practical for some to turn communities and populations into slaves or virtual slaves. The same for every other ethnic group that has been the object of racial oppression and subjugation.

And today it continues but there is a new transformation underway, one that is moving away from distinctions of color and genotype and very definitely, very clearly, toward distinctions of perceived capital assets.

³ Clearly, no genetic/ethnic group is really black and certain not red or yellow. This is itself an outgrowth of the desire by promoters of racism to separate apart people into definable, easily-distinguished, easily-labeled, easily-discriminated groups. It helps the labeling process which is necessary for easier discrimination.

We are definitely not seeing racism on the basis of color and physical attributes disappearing, and in fact, it is on the increase in many parts of the world, with the claim being made that wherever those increases and upsurges of racism are to be found (notably, USA, Russia, some parts of Africa like Zimbabwe, and some parts of China), it is highly connected with one thing – Getting the Money of those other people.

However, there is a new and insidious racism evolving, and it appears to have its roots in America and mainly since the 1980's. This is the new racism of wealth, credit, and the dollar-value that defines a person, replacing all other measures, including intellect, education, experience, accomplishment, and even such qualities that should not "figure into the equation" – family "pedigree," color, ethnic origin, nationality, religion.

"How much money you have" is now the increasingly definitive measure of a person, and his or her family, his mind, and his experience. And all the worse if you are not the right skin color, ethnic origin, nationality, sex, etc.

A person can be a brilliance scientist, and be treated with respect and dignity, but show him to the growing majority of neo-racists (who are not necessarily only of one ethnic group, no, not at all!) to be economically distressed, and almost instantly he (and his work, accomplishments, contributions to society, value, skills, experience) all become something that is downgraded, devalued, and somewhat about the same as the attributes – and chances for getting up in the world professionally and personally - of a smart black child growing up on a plantation in South Carolina in the 1840's – something cheap, low, and maybe to be sold or traded next weekend for a horse or mule, but definitely not someone on whom to bestow education, trust, responsibility, opportunity.

In present-day "modern" society it is considered to be improper, even illegal, to do things that violate a person's civil rights over their skin color, ethnic or national origin, religion, etc. We have established all sorts of laws, practices, and taboos.

However, we are becoming increasingly racist in a financial, oligarchical sense. We are discriminating more and more against people purely on the basis of how they are seen as a number or set of numbers that connect with money, with capital assets, with property, bank accounts, investments, financial power, credit ratings. People are becoming "proles" - the new form of "serf", "slave", and every other derogatory classification.

This is to the massive, universal detriment of all. It only boosts other forms of racism and hate-mongering, and it will bring down our entire society and civilization. It is a racism that must be addressed and reversed, cured, stopped, and the only way to do that is through a combination of education, moral development, and legislation for support but not for dependence.

The evidence is overwhelming. One has only to look to the changes that have occurred in the USA within the past 20-25 years, and especially during the past decade. People are measured by their money, not by their brains, skills, education, capability. This is the most insidious form of discrimination and it will only get worse and worse if it is not forcefully and massively addressed. Soon, it will feed and re-feed the old "traditional" forms of racism based upon color and other ethnic attributes. This is already happening, especially in the USA. We must address this cancer of racism head-on and without relent.