

‘Western’ and ‘White Civilization’: White Nationalism and Eurocentrism at the Crossroads

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Eurocentric and nationalist interpretations of world history continued to prevail over internationalist–cosmopolitan and globalist–multiculturalist visions and their respective aspirations for world peace in the post-World War II era. This was witnessed most vividly in French, U.S. and other nationalist rejection of UNESCO’s attempts to rewrite both national histories and the overall history of humanity from a ‘multicultural global connections’ point of view in the post-World War II, post-colonial setting. With respect to UNESCO’s world history project, the

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explicit aim “was to distinguish it from the ethnocentric and especially the Eurocentric world histories of the past” in order to overcome “the obstinacy with which so many representatives of so-called ‘European’ or ‘Western’ civilization regard the latter – their own – as the only true civilization.”¹ Much the same applied to UNESCO’s efforts to rewrite various national histories from a cross-cultural and transnational point of view. As Hunt highlights however, the UNESCO history of France written from this vantage in the 1950s was not published until 2012 due to French nationalist opposition.² Likewise, the only American historian appointed to write a volume for the UNESCO *History of Humanity* series, Louis Gottschalk, having finally overcome his own Eurocentric bias, was criticized by not only American counterparts and reviewers, but the French Sorbonne historian Roland Mousnier, who “objected that this kind of separate-but-equal approach obscured the most significant world development of the period 1300 to 1775 – the rise of the west.”³

And so we come full circle back to the so-called ‘new world histories’, emerging as they did from out of this post-World War II, post-colonialist trend. Like Gottschalk and Stravinos before him, William H. McNeill, one of the chief pioneers and inspirations of the new world history movement, himself modeled the called-for transformation by shifting his focus across the span of his career from *The Rise of the West* (1963) to a more nuanced and balanced view of *The Human Web: A Bird’s-Eye View of World History* (2003).⁴ Global, multicultural, transnational approaches to world history, and to history in general, were on the rise. But while McNeill and others were embracing this trajectory, disparate voices were lamenting and fighting to save *The Vanishing West: 1964–2010: The Disappearance of Western Civilization from the American Undergraduate Curriculum*.⁵ They faced major obstacles, however. One of the most formidable was the ongoing conflation of Western/European Civilization with white civilization and accompanying charges that Western Civilization was inherently racist. Indeed, the Nazi and other fascist-nationalist atrocities had, on top of the nationalist violence of World War I, placed increasing strain upon Eurocentric, nationalist and racist interpretations of both Western and world history (not to mention European, American, Japanese and multiple other national histories). But it would be naïve to suppose that the mere absence of explicit references to white racist ideas within the continuing narratives of ‘advanced Western civilization’ in the post-World War II, post-colonialist era indicated a complete

and genuine break between the two. On this matter, Malcolm X, in stark contrast to Martin Luther King, Jr's views (see end of Chap. 1), said:

I've got to point out right here that what I'm saying is not racist. I'm not speaking racism, I'm not condemning all white people. I'm just saying that in the past the white world was in power, and it was. This is history, this is fact. They called it European history, or colonialism. They ruled all the dark world. Now when they were in power and had everything going their way, they didn't call that racism, they called it colonialism.⁶

Certainly Truman's executive order to desegregate the U.S. military in 1948, the *Brown versus Topeka, Kansas Board of Education* decision of the Supreme Court in 1954 (which effectively overturned the 1896 Supreme Court segregationist ruling of 'separate but equal'), and President Johnson's signing of several civil rights and immigration acts between 1964 and 1967 all reflected various degrees of sincerity and achieved various levels of practical effect. But the Detroit and Chicago race riots of 1943 and 1968 respectively, the ongoing racist treatment of Carl Brashear and others like him in the military, the need to deploy National Guard troops to desegregate public schools and universities in the face of angry white racist mobs, and the countless other instances of white racist opposition to the Black Civil Rights Movement in the 1950–1960s all testify to the continuing presence and power of white racist ideas of varying degree within the U.S. Apartheid in South Africa was also alive and well, though coming under greater international scrutiny while experiencing similar domestic protests. Likewise, white nationalism and accompanying expressions of racism⁷ were by no means dead in Britain or elsewhere in Europe. Robert Young thus begins his study of *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West*, with a quote from the Algerian French feminist writer Hélène Cixous, who, from her vantage, "saw how the white (French), superior, plutocratic, civilized world founded its power on the repression of populations who had suddenly become 'invisible', like proletarians, immigrant workers, minorities who are not the right 'colour'."⁸

Along, therefore, with the growing impact of the Vietnam War as well as the women's and gay liberation movements and other similar forces on the rise in the 1950–1960s, it was, within the U.S., precisely these lingering, albeit now discreet associations of Western Civilization and white civilization and their alleged advanced standing in the world which

came increasingly under attack in the face of both domestic and international pressures. Professors such as Frederic L. Cheyette at Amherst began to insist, therefore, that, “[d]espite its claim to be universal, ... Western Civ in truth was limited and provincial, a history of those who were men, white, Christian, and European.”⁹ Likewise:

In rejecting the [Western Civ] course, Harvard faculty members, in principle, rejected the historical pre-eminence of Western man. ...This breakup of an educational creed coincided with the breakup of the world that inspired it. ...the rise of the Third World confronted the United States with an international environment of polycentrism and cultural diversity. Europe was no longer the world. Emerging were other peoples, other histories, a globe of historic diversity beyond the imagination of earlier Westerners, ...As educators came to recognize the world in this way, they recognized, at the same time, the poverty of the Western Civ course.¹⁰

Indeed, Malcolm X, in the speech cited above, had noted that “as the base of power shifts, what it is doing is bringing an end to what you and I know to have been white supremacy. ...[T]he white world, or the Western world, is having its power curtailed.”¹¹ And with that, the Western Civilization course was phased out in most colleges and universities by the early 1970s.

But the lingering problem of conflation between Western and white civilization was not therein resolved. It continued to haunt national debates which arose in the 1980s over Stanford’s Western Civ replacement course, now repackaged as ‘Western Culture’. The proposal for the new ‘Western Culture’ course was first put forward by the Committee on Reform and Renewal of Liberal Education in January 1976. No references to the problem of Western civilizational and white racial conflation, or of racism, appeared within the report, only the recommendation that the new course would “cover many of the important cultural creations and movements in Western civilization and, at least, sketch the social and political history.”¹² After a decade of debate however, Stanford American history professor Carl Degler summarized things quite accurately before the faculty senate in 1988, saying: “The principal objections, I gather, are that it is...too narrow in its focus since it fails to include writings from cultures outside the West, or by persons who are not white males.” But however covertly it may have been shrouded in more politically correct language, Degler himself, in fact, exemplified this dilemma.

In opposition to yet another newly proposed replacement course on Culture, Ideas, Values (CIV), he immediately went on to assert:

As a historian of the United States I would be the last person to deny the ethnic, racial, and cultural complexity of American society. But, from the same perspective, I find it puzzling, if not troubling, to learn that some of the dominant and influential ideas in modern America are to be seen in CIV as originating outside the West. Few historians of the United States believe that the culture of this country has been seriously influenced by ideas from Africa, China, Japan, or indigenous North America, to name the more prominent non-Western sources of the present population of the United States.¹³

Such a view leaves few other options than white Americans to serve as the sole sources for “the dominant and influential ideas in modern America.” And this was precisely the complaint of Bill King, President of Stanford’s Black Student Union, who raised the original objection to the Western Culture course. He suggested instead courses which would make clear “that they [the white Europeans] were just as indebted to my [black] ancestors as they were to their own.”¹⁴ In this, King was in essential agreement with Malcolm X, who said: “once you see that the condition that we’re in is directly related to our lack of knowledge concerning the history of the Black man, only then can you realize the importance of knowing something about the history of the Black man.”¹⁵ George Reisman therefore recognized that “[i]n these statements, Western civilization is clearly identified with people of a certain type, namely, the West Europeans and their descendants, who are white.” Attempting to shift the focus from race to intellect however, he continued to contend that “the intellectual substance of Western civilization is nothing other than the highest level of knowledge attained anywhere on earth, in virtually every aspect of every field, and if the purpose of education is to impart knowledge, then its purpose is to impart Western civilization.”¹⁶ In making this argument, Reisman neglected, however, to address the historically problematic association of alleged ‘white superiority’ with ‘intellectual superiority’. Meanwhile, associate professor of English Barbara Gelpi believed the aim should be “laying bare the racist and sexist assumptions within the very foundations of Western culture.”¹⁷ Attempting to shift the focus from a racially oriented to a ‘culturally heterogeneous’ perspective, Herbert Lindenberger, reflecting back on “On the Sacrality of Reading

Lists: The Western Culture Debate at Stanford University,” summed up the Stanford decision to do away with its Western Culture curriculum and institute the new CIV curriculum as follows:

The institution of Western civilization courses in America in the wake of the First World War responded not only to the European sense of cultural crisis, but, coming as it did precisely at the time that the United States first felt itself a world power, served to portray this power as heir to that whole tradition we came to call Western. Stanford’s recent move toward a more globally oriented [CIV] course recognizes at once the increasingly heterogeneous make-up of the country’s college-student population and America’s entanglement in a world economy over which it can no longer exercise the control it once enjoyed.¹⁸

In the midst of it all, William J. Bennett, appointed chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) by President Ronald Reagan in 1981, made a national issue of the Stanford case. He put together a ‘study group’ made up of 31 scholars, most of whom were white,¹⁹ to inquire into “the State of Learning in the Humanities in Higher Education.” In 1984 he thus published *To Reclaim a Legacy: A Report on the Humanities in Higher Education* in which he made the following impassioned plea:

We are a part and a product of Western civilization. That our society was founded upon such principles as justice, liberty, government with the consent of the governed, and equality under the law is the result of ideas descended directly from great epochs of Western civilization – Enlightenment England and France, Renaissance Florence, and Periclean Athens. These ideas...are the glue that binds our pluralistic nation. The fact that we as Americans – whether black or white, Asian or Hispanic, rich or poor – share these beliefs aligns us with other cultures of the Western tradition. It is not ethnocentric or chauvinistic to acknowledge this. No student citizen of our civilization should be denied access to the best that tradition has to offer.

Ours is not, of course, the only great cultural tradition the world has seen. There are others, and we should expect an educated person to be familiar with them because they have produced art, literature, and thought that are compelling monuments to the human spirit and because they have made significant contributions to our history. Those who know nothing of these other traditions can neither appreciate the uniqueness of their own nor understand how their own fits with the larger world. They are less able to

understand the world in which they live. The college curriculum must take the non-Western world into account, not out of political expediency or to appease interest groups, but out of respect for its importance in human history. But the core of the American college curriculum—its heart and soul—should be the civilization of the West, source of the most powerful and persuasive influences on America and its people.²⁰

The report thus reflected an appreciable measure of balance, especially in its genuine respect for the non-Western world and its “significant contributions to our [world’s] history.” Like Degler, the report even acknowledged “our pluralistic nation...black or white, Asian or Hispanic, rich or poor,” but it nowhere affirmed any contribution on the part of such peoples to ‘the Western tradition’. Indeed, the author of the report, Bennett, had coauthored a book in 1979 entitled *Counting by Race* which spoke out against Affirmative Action, i.e., against foundational Civil Rights legislation.²¹ Bennett’s racially-colored views also found expression elsewhere over the years, as seen for example in his genocidal comment in 2006 that “you could abort every black baby in this country, and your crime rate would go down.” He was condemned for his ‘racial’ statement by both President Bush and New York Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg.²²

Allan Bloom then took up the matter in his 1987 best-seller, *The Closing of the American Mind: How Higher Education Has Failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today’s Students*. He mocked the idea that “Black students are second-class...because they are being forced to imitate white culture,” suggesting that “[r]elativism and Marxism made some of this claim believable.” He implied instead that it was “because they are academically poor.”²³ He likewise “wrote a letter to the *Wall Street Journal* editor in 1989,” making “a rigorous if eccentric case for a classic liberal education rooted in the Western canon – in which he argued that the Stanford revisions were a travesty.”²⁴

Following closely behind, the February 1988 U.S. edition of *Newsweek* magazine carried an article by David Gates and Tony Clifton titled “Say Goodnight, Socrates: Stanford University and the decline of the West.”²⁵ Six years later, in 1993, Bernard Knox published *The Oldest Dead White European Males and Other Reflections on the Classics*. There he argued that

the Greeks and the heritage they have handed down to our Western Civilization...is today a controversial theme, as the deliberately provocative title of the first essay [“Homer is Dead”] suggests. Advocates of

multiculturalism and militant feminists, among others, have denounced the traditional canon of literature that has so long served as the educational base for Western societies, repudiating it not only as sexist and racist but even as an instrument of ideological *Gleichschaltung* [standardized authoritarianism] used by a ruling class to impose conformity.²⁶

David Sacks and Peter Thiel—the latter a former speech writer for William J. Bennett—followed in 1996 by publishing *The Diversity Myth: ‘Multiculturalism’ and the Politics of Intolerance at Stanford*. The title was slightly revised and broadened for the paperback edition, appearing in 1998 as *The Diversity Myth: ‘Multiculturalism’ and Political Intolerance on Campus*. Both authors were graduates of Stanford now working together at a conservative think-tank, the Independent Institute, in Oakland, California. Chapter 1, “The West Rejected,” started with an italicized quote from columnist Charles Krauthammer: “*First, Stanford capitulated to separatist know-nothings and abandoned its ‘Western Civilization’ course because of [the course’s] bias toward white males (you know: narrow-minded ethnics like Socrates, Jesus, and Jefferson).*” In polemical overstatement of the case, they went on to portray the curriculum change at Stanford as

an unqualified denunciation of the West. ...It referred not just to a single class at Stanford, but to the West itself – to its history and achievements, to its institutions of free-market capitalism and constitutional democracy, to Christianity and Judaism, to the complex of values and judgments that help shape who we are.²⁷

In defense of classical Western Civilization, they argued against emerging ideas of ‘multiculturalism’ and ‘diversity’, condemning them as neo-liberal covers for anti-right-wing political intolerance.

In 1997, Gary Nash, Charlotte Crabtree and Ross Dunn intervened in the debate with *History on Trial: Culture Wars and the Teaching of the Past*. They advocated in defense of multiculturalism and diversity, decrying what they considered to be a “right-wing assault” in the course of attempting to set national history standards. All of them had participated in a two-year effort (1992–1994) to establish recommended standards, only to watch the U.S. Senate vote in early 1995 to “condemn” them.²⁸

Meanwhile, two other graduates of Stanford, Victor Davis Hanson and John Heath, added their voices to the debate in 1998 with a book

entitled *Who Killed Homer? The Demise of Classical Education and the Recovery of Greek Wisdom*. From their vantage,

every American should care. The demise of classics means more than the implosion of an inbred academic discipline, more than the disappearance of one more bookosaurus here and there. For chained to this sinking academic bureaucracy called classics are the ideas, the values, the vision of classical Greece and Rome. These are the ideas and values that have shaped and defined Western civilization, a vision of life that has ironically come under increasing attack here in the elite universities of the West just as its mutated form is metastasizing throughout the globe.²⁹

But the U.S. was not the only place where Eurocentric visions of the preeminence of Western civilization continued to vie for interpretational merit while retaining implicit or, in more extreme form, explicit association with white civilization. The British historian J.M. Roberts maintained a classic Western Civ plus approach to his *History of the World* without essential revision from 1976 until his death in 2003. There he argued that, “as a way out of their troubles,” peoples everywhere across the world “look...to the West” as “the master-source of the modern world.” Surely a historian of the caliber of Roberts must have been aware just how closely his latter reference resembled historically white supremacist ideas of a ‘master race’. Whatever the case, he was clear in asserting that “no other tradition has shown the same vigour and attractiveness in alien settings as the European: it has no competitors as a world shaper.” Against this background, he contends, in support of his thesis, that “[o]ne reason why so many black men clamour vociferously against the white-dominated societies they live in is” not because they have been so oppressed and violated, but “that they in fact wish to realize the ideals of human rights and dignity evolved by European civilization.” Not only does his choice of descriptive language here—clamour vociferously—cast ‘black men’ in a less than positive light; European civilization is, in his eyes, exclusively associated with and ‘evolved by’ the white societies which ‘dominate’ them. Indeed, Roberts’ singling out of ‘black men’ here in juxtaposition to white Europeans indicates that he views them, within the larger context of his argument, as one of the ‘alien settings’ (cf. African heritage as non-European) in which his white-dominated European tradition serves to provide them “a way out of their troubles,” namely the troubles they “clamour vociferously” about.³⁰

THE POST-COLD WAR AND POST-9/11 TURN

Notwithstanding ebbs and flows as well as variation across regions, opposition to racism, ethnocentrism and nationalism continued to mount from World War II down to 9/11, at least within the Western world. This environment, enhanced by the end of the Cold War—i.e., a sudden surge of globalization across a vast international space of formerly closed boundaries—as well as the crumbling of Apartheid all favored ‘neo-liberal’ ideas of pluralism, multiculturalism, diversity and globalism. 9/11 significantly reversed that trend. While Middle Easterners and Muslims became the primary targets of anti-foreign, anti-pluralist sentiment, long-standing disgruntlement with increasing cultural relativism and the alleged breakdown of Western values in an ostensibly post-racist, post-colonialist world revitalized neo-conservative sentiment.³¹ Within this environment, multiculturalism, already long resisted at many turns since its rise in the mid-twentieth century, became increasingly challenged, even declared a ‘crisis’ reflecting the alleged failure of neo-liberal policy. Anti-immigration rhetoric has garnered growing support while denials of race as a valid construct and the accompanying shift to a focus on culture have served to cover over a resurgent racist discourse. ‘Displaced’ white Euro-American societies have reasserted their need to protect and defend themselves and their Western civilization via increasing political as well as cultural ‘securitization’. These developments constitute, as Alana Lentin and Gavan Titley title their edited volume, *Crises of Multiculturalism: Racism in a Neoliberal Age*.³² Within the U.S. in particular, the Obama presidency provoked white racist reaction while the campaign and election of Donald Trump was both a product of and, in the eyes of many who voted for him, a significant endorsement of such reactionary trends. At the far right, white nationalist and ‘alt-right’ leaders espousing anti-multiculturalist rhetoric supported Trump for his hardline stance on immigration and refugees, particularly in connection to Mexicans and Muslims.³³

Indeed, Jay Reeves noted in June 2016 how “Klan leaders said they feel that U.S. politics are going their way, as a nationalist, us-against-them mentality deepens across the nation. Stopping or limiting immigration—a desire of the Klan dating back to the 1920s—is more of a cause than ever.”³⁴ Connected to but going beyond controversies over immigration, it was no coincidence that, following the U.S. presidential election in November 2016, the “‘Trump effect’ led to [a] hate crime

surge.” This accompanied graffiti, in one case painted on a wall displaying the swastika sign amid the declaration “Make America White Again.”³⁵ Echoing that sentiment, the Loyal White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan claim divine authority in their shared racist vision “to help restore America to a White Christian nation.”³⁶ A number of other KKK groups across Europe and North America espouse similar agendas, including the Imperial Knights of the UK Church of the KKK and the European White Knights of the Burning Cross. Likewise, White Aryan Resistance headed by Tom Metzger espouses “the benefits of racial separation, highlighting the dangers of multiculturalism and promoting racial identity and a territorial imperative.”³⁷ The latter phrase is tied closely to the Northwest Territorial Imperative promoted by Aryan Nations founded in the early 1970s from their former compound in Hayden Lake, Idaho.³⁸

Leonard Zeskind has provided one of the most detailed studies to-date of the history behind this phenomenon in *Blood and Politics: The History of the White Nationalist Movement from the Margins to the Mainstream* (2009). In it he ties together neo-Nazi skinheads, Holocaust deniers, Christian Identity churches, the renewal of the Ku Klux Klan, and more. He identifies opposition to foreign (i.e., non-white) immigration as a primary aim of all these organizations in the post-Cold War era, with accompanying concern over whites losing their majority status in the face of globalizing trends.³⁹ Earlier, in a 2005 documentary entitled *White Terror*, Daniel Schweizer traced the rise of white “extremists’ networks in Europe, North America and Russia” which promoted, among other things, ideas of segregation and anti-immigration. Some of them also promoted educational agendas which included “training our young people in the basic skills of civilized life and giving them pride in their racial, cultural, and national heritage.” This is the vision of the National Alliance which holds that “[a]ny White person [but] no person with a non-White spouse or a non-White dependent...may be a member.”⁴⁰ The close link between (what is presumably Western Euro-American) civilization and racial pride should be noted. Much like the white racist rhetoric of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, these various groups consistently reference not only Blacks and Muslims, but Jews and Asians.⁴¹

Against this backdrop, Ricardo Duchesne, an associate professor of sociology at the University of New Brunswick in Canada, has taken up the cause of “defending the rise of western culture against its multicultural critics.”⁴² He thus invested ten years of research into his magnum opus on *The Uniqueness of Western Civilization* (2011) with the

primary aim of countering “the multicultural effort to ‘provincialize’ the history of Western civilization.”⁴³ Earlier in a 2005 chapter titled “Centres and Margins: the Fall of Universal World History and the Rise of Multicultural World History,” Duchesne explained that

this emphasis on the interactions of communities and cultures in the past has produced indispensable insights about the worldwide impact of not only modern but premodern forces and movements. The trend toward a more even-handed evaluation of non-European voices and the history of women and minority groups also deserves to be celebrated. ...But it is my view that a narrow-minded, anti-Western ideology has taken hold of much of world history writing in recent decades, a new orthodoxy...[which] encourages students to place the intellectual achievements of all cultures on the same moral and rational level, and discourages the so-called ‘triumphalist’ idea that Western civilization has made the major contributions to the ideals of freedom, democracy and reason. ...This discursive shift away from the great themes of freedom and rationality which students learned from traditional Western Civ courses and which world historians still accepted in the 1960s was perhaps the most important event in twentieth-century historiography.⁴⁴

Under attack in all Duchesne’s works were figures such as Franz Boas and Immanuel Wallerstein as well as William H. McNeill, Ross Dunn, Jerry Bentley, Patrick Manning, David Christian “and others who took over the cause of world history in the 1980s.” For Duchesne, “the main question [of history remained] why the great accomplishments in the sciences and arts have been overwhelmingly European.” This, for him, constituted a ‘higher cultural legacy’ in comparison with all other cultures and civilizations within the world historical record. Never mind that he, by his own confession, “risked making arguments about areas of history I know little about,” ‘the uniqueness of the West’ was to be defended at all costs.⁴⁵

Part of this defense, it turns out, includes an anti-immigration stance which bears an uncanny resemblance to white nationalist and racist anti-immigration laws of the interwar period aimed at maintaining a white majority, such as those enacted by the U.S. between 1880 and 1965 (see Chap. 1). Indeed, along with his publication and teaching work, Duchesne is co-founder of the Council of European Canadians (CEC). In its vision statement, the group declares that it “oppose[s] all efforts to deny or weaken the European character of Canada, [that] Canada should

remain majority, not exclusively, European in its ethnic composition and cultural character [because] Canada is a nation created by individuals with an Anglo/French/European heritage, not by individuals from diverse races and cultures.”⁴⁶ For Duchesne, therefore, “[t]he incoming in Vancouver of Asians and Chinese was too fast, too quick. ...within a matter of a few years, a very British city, a beautiful British city, took on a strongly Asian character.” These comments sparked national controversy. In spite of Duchesne being condemned by a number of public officials and university colleagues for racism, his university defended his right to ‘freedom of speech’.⁴⁷ Meanwhile, his own brother made clear that

[a]s a member of the Duchesne family, I totally repudiate my brother’s white supremacist crypto-Nazi positions. We are a family of Puerto Rican, Caribbean heritage. Our father is Puerto Rican, our grandfather was of mixed Afro-Puerto Rican and French descent, our mother was a British citizen of Anglo-Indian descent, born in Calcuta [sic]. Ricky was born and raised in Puerto Rico with us. We are proud of our cosmopolitan, plural ethnic heritage. ...We cannot explain our brother’s absurd racist politics except as a form of the typical self-hatred or wannabe White anxiety provoked by colonial prejudice suffered by Puerto Ricans who have been historically racialized by U.S. colonialism.⁴⁸

Duchesne became a hero, however, to white nationalist and racist groups sharing his commitment to protect and defend predominantly white Western civilization. Thus Kevin MacDonald, one of the founders of *The Occidental Observer* (TOO), which publishes “original content touching on the themes of white identity, white interests, and the culture of the West,”⁴⁹ published an article in another white nationalist mouthpiece, *The Daily Stormer*, entitled: “Council of European Canadians: An Excellent Website in Defense of the [White] People and Culture of the West.” Therein he noted that Duchesne and his work were “well-known to TOO readers.” He understood Duchesne to promote “ethnic homogeneity within Western societies [as] a key antecedent for Western endorsement of moral universalism and individual rights,” thus opposing “the current push for multiculturalism [as] a disaster for European Canadians.”⁵⁰

A number of similar groups have arisen in response to the multicultural surge of globalization. In addressing the issue of “Immigration and the Demographic Transformation,” American Renaissance, founded in 1990, claims that “[t]he single greatest threat facing whites is mass immigration of non-whites into white homelands. If it continues, ...[t]he culture of the

West will not survive the disappearance of the [white] people who created it.” Their “Philosophy of Race Realism” holds that “it is entirely normal for whites (or for people of any other race) to want to be the majority race in their own homeland. If whites permit themselves to become a minority population, they will lose their civilization, their heritage, and even their existence as a distinct people.” The language here echoes not only that of the KKK, but Madison Grant, *The Passing of the Great Race: The Racial Basis of European History* (1916). Accordingly, Christopher De La Viña, in an American Renaissance article titled “White Man: Why Are You Giving Away Your Country?” (2015), recounted how

[a]s a child in public schools and now as a graduate student in history, I have learned one thing to be true about the United States: It is a white country. The founders were white, white men established its core principles and political system, and white men and women built the nation into what it is today. ...America has always been a white country and always should be.⁵¹

From the opposite angle, one of their founders and chief spokespersons, Jared Taylor, in a piece entitled “Africa in Our Midst” (under the topic of ‘Crime and Disorder’), argues that “[w]hen blacks are left entirely to their own devices, Western Civilization—any kind of civilization—disappears.” Blacks thus remain ‘uncivilized’, presumably primitive and barbaric, in his view.⁵²

The New Moderate shares the view that “[w]hite people of European stock have a right to look after their interests, especially in light of current demographic trends in the U.S. and Western Europe.” They lamented, however, that “[u]nfortunately, virtually every ‘white rights’ movement has been laden with racism” (italics in original). While ostensibly disavowing such a racist view themselves, they summarized the perspective of what they called ‘Righty’ in terms very similar to those described by De La Viña, namely that

[w]hite people created Western Civilization and all its wonders. We built everything of note from the Parthenon to the personal computer. We explored the world from top to bottom, delivered most of it from ignorance and savagery, spread the Gospel, advanced the frontiers of science, discovered cures for dreaded diseases, and founded numerous great nations, including, of course, the United States. White people were designed by nature to rule.⁵³

Preserving Western Civilization was a group founded in the mid-2000s by Michael Hart because “our glorious Western civilization is under assault from many directions.” The three main threats identified are: “the massive influx to the United States and Europe of Third-World immigrants who do not share our fundamental political and cultural values, ...the threat from Islam, a militant ideology that is hostile to our society and, in principle, committed to destroying it, [and] the persistent disappointing performance of blacks (which many whites mistakenly blame on themselves), [so that] many whites have guilt feelings that undermine Western morale and deter us from dealing sensibly with the other threats.”⁵⁴ With such ‘threats’ in view, Hart, a Ph.D. in astronomy, has published several white supremacist books, including *Understanding Human History* (2009) and *Restoring America* (2015).⁵⁵ The group does not seem to be very active, however, as its last conference appears to have been in 2009 when the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) reported that “Racists Gather[ed] in Maryland to ‘Preserve’ Western Civilization.” Speakers at the time included “Patricia Richardson, a member of the far-right British National Party (BNP), whose leader, Nick Griffin, has traveled to the United States to speak at a conference convened by American Renaissance. Richardson spoke about the ‘Colonization of Britain,’ which focused on Muslim immigration to that country.” Others were Steve Farron, formerly a professor of Classics at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa; Lino Graglia, a professor of law at the University of Texas in Austin; Henry Harpending, an anthropologist at the University of Utah; and “J. Philippe Rushton, a Canadian professor of psychology, who has, for many years, been one of the primary voices arguing that races differ biologically in intelligence.” Another speaker, Peter Brimelow, founder of the white nationalist VDare which published Hart’s *Restoring America*, “argued that the influx of ‘non-traditional’ immigration is a problem all over the Western world and that the loss of control over the country by ‘white Protestants’ will mean a collapse of the American political system.” The solution, he urged, was “that whites respond by creating an explicitly white nationalist political party.” Richard Spencer was not mentioned, though he is president of the National Policy Institute as well as Washington Summit Publishers, both of which promote white nationalist views, including the publication of Hart’s book *Restoring America*.⁵⁶ The ADL article did, however, reference “white supremacists on forums like *Stormfront* and the *Vanguard News Network*” in connection with the conference and its speakers.⁵⁷

Students for Western Civilization is “based out of Toronto and is composed primarily of students and alumni of Toronto universities,” but invites all “young people across North America” to join them. According to their mission statement, the goals of the organization include: “To organize for and advance the interests of Western peoples” and “To promote and celebrate Western Civilisation.” In order to accomplish these goals, they urge that “York [University] Needs a White Students Union!” This, they insist, “would serve to promote and celebrate the culture of Western Civilisation [and] advance the political interests of Western peoples.”⁵⁸

Youth for Western Civilization was a trans-Atlantic student organization seeking to influence college and university campuses across the Western world. Their Facebook page has been removed and they appeared to have no website presence in 2017.⁵⁹ However, their influence has, as intended, extended beyond campuses into political realms. Thus in October 2016, during Donald Trump’s presidential campaign, David Neiwert reported how “Montana Republicans Warmly Embrace a White Nationalist’s Legislative Candidacy.” Neiwert is referring to Taylor Rose, who “first came to enter the movement in 2011 when his activities on behalf of the white nationalist Youth for Western Civilization were reported by the Center for New Community.”⁶⁰ Rose’s views were well-known to Montana Republicans because he had authored a book in 2012 on the *Return of the Right: How the Political Right Is Taking Back Western Civilization*. The heart of the book aims to expose and counter a “very aggressive and dedicated” neo-liberal utopian “vision to destroy the nation-state, eliminate religion, [and] break down all defined barriers in society [so as] to eliminate western civilization from the face of the earth in the attempt to institute a radical, multicultural, New World Order agenda.” It is a “radical Leftist, post-modern philosophy”—elsewhere called Fabian Socialism—“emanating from Hegelian and Marxist belief systems.” The three key American presidential figures who have promoted this leftist downfall of Western Civilization are Woodrow Wilson and his internationalist League of Nations, Franklin Roosevelt and his socialist New Deal, and Barack Obama. This ‘crisis’ is “the great expression of the consequences of the abandonment of traditionalist, Christian, and Enlightenment principles being applied in the West.” He thus calls for a return to “the traditional institutions of the Western Christian society: God/church, family and country.” His vision for “all members...working together for the common interest of

the nation, not the 'global community'" includes the "[r]ejection of multiculturalism," the concerted effort to "[s]top the Islamization of the Western world," and "[f]ighting for the defense of Western traditions and cultural identity." With regard to the latter, "Westerners must never be afraid to use the terms of 'miracle' and 'exceptionalism' in describing their homelands, ...understanding their own unique place in the history of the world." This is all a "noble crusade" in which "[c]onservatives of the Western Civilization unite together...without apology and without fear." It is a fight against "one world humanist[s]" who establish their vision upon "the corpses of...national and ethnic identity."⁶¹ In summing things up at the end of his first chapter, in a paragraph repeated on the back cover, Rose warns that "Europe is the cradle of Western Civilization. ...Europe's last hope lies in a renaissance of Christianity and a revival of national and ethnic pride to counter the determined will of fanatics of Anatolia, Mesopotamia and Arabia and the suicidal notions of internationalist ideologues." While Rose thus avoids the terms 'white' and 'race', his implicit references couched in terms of ethnic pride in 'ethnic identity', tied as they are to political power in the nation-state, are clear. As a graduate of Jerry Falwell's Liberty University, Rose illustrates the way in which neo-conservative Christianity retains elements of old WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant) notions which also intersect with the white supremacist Christian Identity movement and their Euro-white nationalist revival of Western Civilization.⁶²

Rose, however, was not the only one during the 2016 Trump campaign who voiced Republican support for such a vision. As Nick Visser reported in an article titled "A GOP Congressman Just Made an Argument for White Supremacy on Live TV," "Rep. Steve King (R-Iowa) made an outrageous statement about the contributions of Western civilization—i.e., the one crafted primarily by white people—over 'any other subgroup' during an appearance...on MSNBC."⁶³ Daniel Victor, writing for the *New York Times*, reported the incident in an article titled: "What, Congressman Steve King Asks, Have Nonwhites Done for Civilization?"⁶⁴ King's assertion in July 2016 sparked national, even international debate over the entire question of race and civilization within Western and world history.

The rise of such white nationalist and racist groups vocally advocating a necessary, vital association between Western civilization and white civilization with accompanying arguments for their supremacy in world history coincides with a resurgent trend among Western academic

historians that John Pincince has identified as an “exceptionalist history of the ‘West’” coupled with “a declinist narrative of a once triumphant Western civilization.”⁶⁵ Among these, Pincince discusses two examples: a 2011 study by four scholars—all part of the core leadership of the National Association of Scholars (NAS), all of whom happen to be white⁶⁶—entitled *The Vanishing West: 1964–2010: The Disappearance of Western Civilization from the American Undergraduate Curriculum*, and Niall Ferguson, *Civilization: The West and the Rest* (2011).⁶⁷ Going directly to the sources themselves, *The Vanishing West* counsels that “to revive the study of Western Civilization” (v) “would require synthesizing new scholarship and taking into account the themes of globalization and the claims of ‘world history’” (21), “including knowledge of the West’s interactions with other civilizations and cultures” (vi). But those interactions are viewed, much as in J.M. Roberts’ historiographical interpretation (see above), as “their civilization’s great story, its triumphs, its vicissitudes, and its singular role in transforming the human condition, ...a historical overview of the Western ascent toward freedom, scientific and technology mastery, and world power” (v–vi). In a word, to study Western Civilization is to study “the rise of the West” (v). For those who oppose this approach, “[t]he widespread emphasis on ‘multiculturalism’ is an inadequate answer” (vi). Indeed, advocates of “multiculturalism and diversity” have historically been responsible for the ‘demotion’ of Western Civilization as a form of oppressive “racism, imperialism, sexism, and colonialism” (14–15). While no explicit approval of a white nationalist or racist agenda is expressed, the subtle, persistent critique of multiculturalism juxtaposed against a vision of Western ‘world power’ (cf. supremacy), endorsed by an opening citation from Ibn Warraq, a well-known anti-Muslim Christian apologist,⁶⁸ all share much with white nationalist and racist attempts to revive Western Civilization narratives in recent decades.

As for Niall Ferguson in *Civilization: The West and the Rest* (2011), he argues that “Western civilization’s rise to global dominance is the single most important historical phenomenon of the past five centuries.”⁶⁹ Ferguson’s work was reviewed by Pankaj Mishra in *London Review of Books* (LRB).⁷⁰ Ferguson himself, in a lengthy retort to Mishra, summarized quite accurately the main point of concern:

Mishra begins by insinuating a resemblance between me and the American racial theorist Theodore Lothrop Stoddard. Stoddard, the author of *The*

Rising Tide of Color against White World-Supremacy (1920), was an out-and-out racist, a firm believer in “Aryan” racial superiority, an opponent of unrestricted immigration and a Nazi sympathiser. Mishra describes my book *The Pity of War* as “Stoddardesque”. He goes on to say that my 2003 book *Empire* “belonged recognisably to the tradition of ... ‘white people’s histories’.”⁷¹

Ferguson flatly rejected Mishra’s depiction of him as a racist of any sort, demanding an apology in the process. The two went back and forth in several exchanges. Mishra replied: “Hardly anyone is a racist in the Stoddardian sense today, even if they raise the alarm against Muslim ‘colonisers’ of a ‘senescent’ Europe, or fret about feckless white Americans being outpaced by hard-working Asian-Americans. Ferguson is no racist, in part because he lacks the steady convictions of racialist ideologues like Stoddard.” Indeed, Mishra never explicitly or directly labeled Ferguson a ‘racist’, he simply said his writings were “Stoddardesque.” What he meant by that was made clear in what immediately followed within the review, namely a critique of Ferguson’s pro-Western imperialist and supremacist position which, Hegelian style, leaves Asian, African and other non-Western peoples ‘historyless’:

This wistful vision of an empire on which the sun need never have set had an immediately obvious defect. It grossly underestimated – in fact, ignored altogether – the growing strength of anti-colonial movements across Asia, which, whatever happened in Europe, would have undermined Britain’s dwindling capacity to manage its vast overseas holdings.

In his later reply, Mishra likewise cited Ferguson’s comments in the April 2003 edition of the *New York Times Magazine*—“Let me come clean, I am a fully paid-up member of the neoimperialist gang”—which was published “a few weeks after the shock-and-awe campaign began in Iraq.” To this Mishra added another comment by Ferguson, appearing in *The Guardian* just before his *LRB* review was published, where Ferguson suggested of Native Americans that, “had they been left to their own devices, I don’t think we’d have anything remotely resembling the civilisation we’ve had in North America.” All this, in Mishra’s eyes, constituted Ferguson’s “views on the innate superiority, indeed indispensability, of Western civilization [which] can be easily ascertained from his published writings and statements.” Mishra then added

for good measure: “It says something about the political culture of our age that Ferguson has got away with this disgraced worldview for as long as he has.” Indeed, the question is rightly posed: Do historiographic interpretations of “the innate superiority, indeed indispensability, of Western civilization” not resemble the ‘classic’ white supremacist claims of days gone by, simply sanitized of the old biological racist views?⁷²

All this, combined with post-9/11 Islamophobia, increasing concern over the disproportionate incarceration of Blacks within the U.S. prison system, the spike in white police brutality incidents against Blacks, racist shootings, racist reactions against the Obama presidency, white nationalist and racist support of Donald Trump, white nationalist and racist incidents across Europe and European offshoot nations, and related social tensions, has led universities to hold forums on the issue. For instance, Columbia held an event, “Race, Ethnicity and University Life,” in November 2015. The event “was organized by the Office of University Life to address institutionalized racism in light of nationwide protests regarding the experiences of students of color on college campuses.” One of the topics addressed there by one of the students was how “‘the Core Curriculum,’” which requires six courses on Western and European Civilization, “‘further silences students of color by requiring students to read texts that ignore the existence of marginalized people and their histories. ...We are looking at history through the lens of these powerful, white men.’”⁷³ This view was shared by Eric Hirsch, a sociology professor, during a similar forum on racism held at Providence College (PC) in Rhode Island in February 2016. Hirsch

said he began speaking out at PC about how the Western Civilization curriculum favored “dead white males.” He found it racist that “the core of our curriculum” involved the justification of colonialism, slavery and genocide. Hirsch sees the vote that first denied him tenure as an act of repression prompted by his activism.⁷⁴

Anthony Monteiro—a former professor fired from Temple University’s African American Studies Department for, he believes, his activism on this and related issues⁷⁵—views matters in much the same way. In a March 2015 essay on his *African American Futures* website entitled “The Racist Foundations of Western Civilization and the White

Working Class,” he argues that “Western civilization is inherently racist. Put another way Western Civilization is white civilization.”⁷⁶

Against the backdrop of these (and other) sentiments, students once again voted down, by a margin of 1,992 to 347, a proposed reinstatement of the Western Civilization requirement at Stanford University in May 2016. This was in spite of the attempt by Executive Director of the National Association of Scholars and co-author of *The Vanishing West*, Ashley Thorne, to encourage “[t]he drive to put Western civ back in the college curriculum,” which was the title of her Op-Ed piece published in the *New York Times* in March 2016.⁷⁷ After the vote failed to pass, *The Stanford Review*, which had advanced both this and the earlier 1980s proposal, issued the following statement maintaining its historic position:

While the proposed requirement was arguably different from the previous one, these students resisted choosing the West over other civilizations. Their rhetoric was dominated by the left-wing perception that Western Civilization is wholly oppressive. *The Review* answered this objection by pointing out that we can only critique Western culture’s legacy when we know it, and that the impetus to end slavery and secure equal rights for women and minorities came from Western values.⁷⁸

Drawing from the 1996 work by Sacks and Thiel, *The Diversity Myth: ‘Multiculturalism’ and the Politics of Intolerance at Stanford* (see above), Daphne Patai likewise joined in condemning the vote with a September 2016 article entitled “How Diversity Came to Mean ‘Downgrade the West’.” The article was originally posted on the Minding the Campus: Reforming Our Universities website and then cross-posted on the National Association of Scholars website, the organization which sponsored and published the study on *The Vanishing West* (see above).⁷⁹ Others joined “In Defense of Western Civilization” as well, such as Richard Finger in *The Huffington Post*. After dismissing the criticisms expressed in the forums at Columbia, he made clear his own view on the matter:

For better or worse, Western civilization was built almost solely by white men in Europe; the greatest invention of mankind, condoning freedom of expression and creativity like no others. There I said it. Western civilization is superior. Though this truth can be inconvenient, it makes for no obstacle on any campus of higher learning.⁸⁰

In general response to these overall historical developments, Kehinde Andrews, associate professor of sociology at Birmingham City University (UK), offered these summary thoughts in a video released on *The Guardian* newspaper website on January 2017:

The West was built on racism. It's time we faced that. In schools and at universities we are sold a lie. It is the lie that the three great revolutions of science, industry and politics are solely responsible for the advancement of the West. But in truth, none of this so-called "progress" happened without the genocide in the Americas, the barbaric slavery of African people, and the colonization of most of the world by European powers. The dead white men we are trained to revere created the knowledge that justified this conquest and murder. But the narrow, Eurocentric parade of "dead white men" as the center of knowledge is finally being challenged in our institutions. And this is not a battle about "inclusion" or "diversity". It is not a debate that is simply academic. The knowledge that the establishment is so quick to defend produced the racism that has shaped the unjust world that we live in today.⁸¹

Regardless of what one concludes about this long-standing debate,⁸² these developments within the context of the U.S. are a major reason why—as Ama Mazama has highlighted in both the *Journal of Black Studies* and *The Washington Post*—"Racism in schools is pushing more black families to homeschool their children."⁸³ Meanwhile, in imitation of the anti-immigration (i.e., anti-Syrian refugee) laws in Europe, the new U.S. administration seems bent on returning to the racist-inspired anti-immigration and deportation policies of the 1880–1965 post-Reconstructionist era by issuing a new 'national (and religious) origins' immigration act signed into power by executive order of the newly elected President Donald J. Trump on January 27, 2017. The executive order was titled "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States," with its central justification explained as follows:

The United States cannot, and should not, admit those who do not support the Constitution, or those who would place violent ideologies over American law. In addition, the United States should not admit those who engage in acts of bigotry or hatred (including "honor" killings, other forms of violence against women, or the persecution of those who practice religions different from their own) or those who would oppress Americans of any race, gender, or sexual orientation.⁸⁴

The Muslim focus of this order is clear from not only the language used, but the specific list of seven countries whose citizens were banned from entry, i.e., all Muslim-majority countries. This is in spite of the fact that there is no factual data to support the idea that immigrants or refugees from these particular nations pose more of a threat to the U.S. than multiple other nations which could have been listed. Regardless, according to this rationale, numerous white nationalists, neo-Nazis and fundamentalist Christians, together with perpetrators of domestic violence against women, should potentially, for the safety and well-being of the United States, have their citizenship revoked and be deported. In suggesting this, it should be noted that the concerns identified by the executive order are more than simply 'terrorism'.⁸⁵ They include "acts of bigotry or hatred" and "forms of violence against women," along with persecution or discrimination against others based on religious, racial, or gender identity, or sexual orientation. Indeed, amid national and international pandemonium over this executive order, what escaped the attention of the media and broader public was the fact that two days earlier, Trump had signed another executive order aimed at "Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States." Along, therefore, with restricting entry to the U.S. based on national (and religious) origins, the prior order declared that,

[i]n executing faithfully the immigration laws of the United States, the Secretary of Homeland Security (Secretary) shall prioritize for removal those aliens described by the Congress...in [the stated sections of] the INA [Immigration and Nationality Act]⁸⁶...as well as removable aliens who...[i]n the judgment of an immigration officer, otherwise pose a risk to public safety or national security.⁸⁷

In both of these executive orders, the right to exercise judgment of both intentions and risk provide for highly arbitrary executive decisions to be made by those entrusted with such power. Some see the latter order as "targeting up to 8 million people for deportation," mostly Hispanics and Muslims.⁸⁸ True, a federal judge in New York intervened on behalf of multiple people trapped at airports across the U.S. after Trump's immigration order was met with strong protests around the globe. But he made no ruling on the constitutionality of the order.⁸⁹ Washington State then set out to sue Trump for disrupting their economy and society, with the Washington State Attorney General successfully convincing a federal judge in Seattle to place a national stay on Trump's executive order, calling into question its very constitutionality. The appeal of the Justice Department to rescind the

stay was “denied” by the ninth circuit federal appeals court, who upheld instead the concern for the constitutionality of the order.⁹⁰ Along with these legal moves and mass international protests, multiple statements opposing the legislation were issued across the globe. In spite of this, Trump signed a new executive order on Monday, March 6, 2017, which accomplished the same essential aims as the original order, making only minor revisions in an attempt to avoid the pitfalls of the first one.⁹¹

Whatever the outcome of this debate, one thing is historically clear. It was, no doubt, white nationalism and racism which played a significant role in pushing through the Page Act of 1875, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the Asiatic Barred Zone Immigration Act of 1917, and the Emergency Quota Act of 1921, all culminating in the Immigration, National Origins and Asian Exclusion Acts of 1924.⁹² In conjunction with these externally-oriented immigration acts, all of which were aimed at keeping “undesirable” aliens from entering the United States, “increasing use of deportation supplemented the quota system in reducing the nation’s alien population” in the decades which followed.⁹³ It is no coincidence that Trump’s national (and religious) origins-based immigration and deportation policies, both in their original and revised forms, have paralleled these earlier racist-based policies in close conjunction with a revival of white nationalism and racism across the United States, Canada, Europe and the broader Western world.⁹⁴ Trump’s executive orders effectively reversed L.B. Johnson’s Immigration Act of 1965, which was signed together with Civil Rights legislation in order to intentionally overturn the racist, discriminatory immigration laws of the 1880–1965 era.⁹⁵ They are part of the trends identified by Marisa Abrajano and Zoltan L. Hajnal in their book addressing *White Backlash: Immigration, Race, and American Politics*.⁹⁶

In seeming retaliation for their coverage of these and other issues in his campaign and early presidency, Trump blocked some of the most important American- and European-based world news sources from White House briefings. Following on this “[t]he Associated Press and *Time* magazine both boycotted the gathering.”⁹⁷ Trump’s move raised serious questions about the transparency of the Trump administration and its commitment to upholding Western democratic values and ideals.⁹⁸

Among numerous other issues emerging from the historical overview provided in both chapters of this opening section, eight points can be

made regarding the lingering problem of the relation between Western Civilization and white civilization:

1. Western Civilization narratives originally took shape within a historic context when white racist thinking was accepted and predominant (late 1800s, early 1900s).
2. Whether 'racist' or not, there has been a long-standing, historic tie between white civilization and Western civilization in original and early Western Civilization and world history narratives (late 1700s to mid-1900s).
3. White racist interpretations of Western Civilization and world history were produced during the heyday of white racist ideology (mid-1800s to mid-1900s).
4. There has been a resurgence of white nationalist and racist promotion of 'Western Civilization' over the past 2–3 decades as a response to (neo-)liberal pluralist and multiculturalist ideologies and policies, especially in the post-Cold War era as evidenced in the work of American Renaissance, Preserving Western Civilization, Youth for Western Civilization, Students for Western Civilization, *The Occidental Observer*, Ricardo Duchesne and the Council of European Canadians, and others.
5. Academic and political efforts to revive the teaching of Western Civilization in colleges and universities do not explicitly identify nor necessarily even intend their agendas as 'white nationalist' or 'racist', but they nonetheless coincide historically with and have much in common by way of themes and concerns with parallel white nationalist and racist attempts to revive and promote Western Civilization in recent decades.
6. There remains an implicit, even if unintended, connection between white civilization and Western civilization in some (though not all) Western Civilization texts (and presumably courses) over the past several decades, especially those emphasizing internal over external factors of influence and development. These are both perceived by non-white, non-Western peoples as being inherently racist (i.e., histories of 'dead white men') and raise the legitimate question of whether, if not racist, then at least racial connotations, implications, or associations can legitimately be discerned within them, however naïve, innocent, or unintentional such connotations or implications may be.

7. There is a legitimate research question of what racial relation exists between the authorship and/or promotion of Western Civilization narratives and 'white' peoples. This is not to automatically insinuate white nationalism or racism on the part of all white people who advocate the revival of Western Civilization, but it raises a legitimate historical and sociological inquiry. Though there are certainly non-white advocates to be found (such as Ibn Warraq, Dinesh D'Souza and others), their work raises the historic problem of the 'white Western civilizing mission' which aimed to convert Native Americans and other non-white, non-Western peoples to what continued to be viewed, at its sources and foundations, as white Western civilization.⁹⁹ Thus, figures such as the Cherokee advocate of Western Civilization, Elias Boudinot, or the Lakota (Sioux) advocate, Charles Eastman, or the advocate of Russian civilization, Shokan Ualikhanuhli, were all viewed as prized 'converts' and proofs of the superiority of white Western civilization, not as demonstrations of the dissociation between white and Western civilization.¹⁰⁰ While most are eager to deny any and all associations of 'whiteness' in the allegedly 'post-racial' (cf. post-Nazi, post-Civil Rights, post-Apartheid) era, the lingering historical and implicit relationship remains problematic. Genuine transcendence of the problem requires not merely conversion of non-white, non-Western peoples to the alleged superior ways of white Western civilization, but Western Civilization narratives which clearly and authentically showcase and demonstrate non-white, non-Western contributions to, as primary sources of, what is defined as Western Civilization (cf. the UNESCO vision for world history discussed above).
8. In tandem with the 'new world histories', a number of Western Civilization narratives have, in fact, responded to this half-century of debate by adopting a more global, cross-cultural, multicultural, transnational, and/or transregional approach. They place Western Civ within broader world historical context by emphasizing non-white, non-Western contributions. This has been most notably illustrated in the *Columbia Project on Asia in the Core Curriculum: Asia in Western and World History*.¹⁰¹ In a word, such approaches have moved away from Eurocentric and (white) nationalist or racist interpretations. They recognize that all civilizations contain both positive and negative legacies and features; that the issue

is not 'either/or', as if only one civilization must be made to stand superior over all others within the world historical record, that approaches which 'demote the West' from this privileged position should not simplistically, automatically be condemned as promoting an 'anti-Western cultural relativism'. Each civilization can be recognized for both its strengths and weaknesses as well as its contributions to world heritage, including universal human values and ideals.

All of this remains part of an ongoing debate in which various competing religions, cultures, ethnic groups, races, nations, civilizations, genders and others each—as contested constructs—claim to be the fountainhead of beliefs, values and practices foundational and essential to human civilization which all others should then adopt, whether voluntarily or coercively. While the focus here has been on ethno-racial and socio-political forms of the debate, Christianity's perceived role, as an essential source undergirding and inspiring Western Civilization, surfaces along the way. This is in spite of the fact that Christianity was, in fact, originally a Middle Eastern religion, and thus reflects the way that Western Civilization contains significant influence from Middle Eastern (and other non-white, non-Western) sources historically. An entire book could, in fact, be written focusing on the religio-cultural dimensions of this debate. This is reflected, for example, in the post-9/11 resurgence of the debate over Islamic influence on Western Civilization. Thus, Nayef R.F. Al-Rodhan has edited a volume titled *The Role of the Arab-Islamic World in the Rise of the West: Implications for Contemporary Trans-Cultural Relations* (2012).¹⁰² The mass of evidence compiled in Al-Rodhan's edited volume challenges works like *The Victory of Reason: How Christianity Led to Freedom, Capitalism and Western Success* published in 2005 by professor of historical sociology at Baylor University, Rodney Stark. In response to claims such as those made in Al-Rodhan's volume, Stark followed this work in 2014 with *How the West Won: The Neglected Story of the Triumph of Modernity*.¹⁰³ Meanwhile, reviving some of the early 20th-century Catholic interpretations of Christopher Dawson, Thomas E. Woods, Jr. seeks to show *How the Catholic Church Built Western Civilization* (2005).¹⁰⁴ And even before 9/11, Abdulaziz Sachedina, a professor at the University of Virginia, was attempting to demonstrate *The Islamic Roots of Democratic Pluralism* (2001).¹⁰⁵ Whatever form they take though, the depiction of these debates as a simplistic dichotomy—i.e., whether there will or will not be a 'clash of civilizations'—is misleading at best. The question is far more

complex, namely whether all the diverse groups of the world will live in conflict, conversion or co-existence? And even here the range of options should be viewed more as a continuum on a sliding scale, with all three in effect simultaneously around the globe and throughout history in varying balance and degree.

But white nationalists and racists, in tandem with academic and political advocates of traditional Western Civilizational superiority, are not the only ones who voice opposition to the multicultural global connections approach of the new world histories. Such world histories, mostly emanating from the West—particularly one of the world's remaining superpowers, the U.S.—are rejected by subaltern and post-colonialist critics for, rather ironically, their (perceived) Eurocentric and nationalist agendas.¹⁰⁶ From the subaltern and post-colonialist vantage, the attempt to promote multiculturalism and pluralism as ethical norms based in some kind of natural law evidenced through globalization represents a distinctly Euro-American and Euro-Slavic strategy to retain dominance in global affairs in the post-Cold War period. Not only are the imperialist roots of globalization glossed over,¹⁰⁷ but there is lack of appreciation for the multiple angles from which globalization is viewed and thus interpreted, by virtue of its uneven rates and extent of spread across differing regions of the globe.¹⁰⁸ Multiculturalism and pluralism are realities which have been forced upon many of the Western imperial powers by virtue of having subjugated so many non-Western peoples under their colonial rule only to find it necessary to integrate them as full citizens in the aftermath of their crumbled racist empires. That they now expect all peoples and nations across the globe to embrace these same conditions is presumptuous at best, especially given that Western understandings of multiculturalism and pluralism are again conditioned by their own unique historical contexts. This raises important questions of how to translate and appropriate these (and other) concepts across linguistic-cultural boundaries, a feat certainly possible, but by no means simple.¹⁰⁹ We must also ask whether it is simply coincidental that multiculturalist and pluralist rhetoric has, among other purposes, served since the 1960s to undercut the power of anti-colonial movements, most of which have been carried out as 'national(ist)' independence movements? Meanwhile, such rhetoric also provides a means, whether intentionally or unintentionally, to justify ongoing Western penetration (cf. access via multicultural and pluralistic openness) and thus dominance of non-Western peoples and nations—economically, politically, culturally and otherwise.

Under the influence of Frantz Fanon's ideas regarding 'black consciousness' within decolonization struggles, Malcolm X in the U.S. and Steven Biko in the South African context spoke poignantly to these issues. As Malcolm X saw it:

The so-called liberal element of the white power structure never wants to see nationalists involved in anything that has to do with civil rights. And I'll tell you why. Any other Black people who get involved are involved within the rules that are laid down by the white liberals. And as long as they are involved within those rules, then that means they're only going to go as far as the liberal element of the power structure will endorse their activity. But when the nationalistic-minded Blacks get involved, then we do what our analysis tells us is necessary to be done, whether the white liberal or anybody else likes it or not. So, they don't want us involved.¹¹⁰

Steven Biko made much the same point: "True to their image, the white liberals always knew what was good for the blacks and told them so. ... Thus in adopting the line of nonracial approach, the liberals are playing their old game. They are claiming a 'monopoly on intelligence and moral judgment' and setting the pattern and pace for the realisation of the black man's aspirations."¹¹¹ In all these references, 'Blacks' can easily be interchanged with 'non-Whites' and 'non-Westerners'. These are unsettling points which many (predominantly white?) Western scholars must come to terms with, particularly those who are hopeful of what new world histories can potentially accomplish along these lines.

A closely related matter which needs greater critical attention in new world histories is the ongoing debate over ethnicity and nationhood, including (ethno)nationalism, and how these concepts relate to ideas of race, culture, religion and civilization as well as economy, gender and the like. As with W.H. McNeill, there appears to be too much uncritical adoption of the Western modernist assertion that ethnicity and nations as well as their corresponding (ethno)nationalisms are European constructs closely tied to modernity (cf. the work of E. Gellner, B. Anderson and E.J. Hobsbawm¹¹²) and then disseminated across the globe via European imperialism. McNeill, for example, in *Polyethnicity and National Unity in World History* (1985), framed his entire interpretation of world history around his presumption of the Western modernist view, placing "The Triumph of Nationalism, 1750–1920" in the center

of a three-chapter work which then climaxed, in chapter three, with “Reassertion of the Polyethnic Norm since 1920.” He, thus, employs a Western modernist reformulation of a liberal cosmopolitan argument which originally gained momentum in the post-World War I aftermath, appearing for example in H.G. Wells’ *Outline of History* (1919).¹¹³ McNeill uses standard Western civilizational comparative dichotomy to persuade readers that “the historical record shows that ethnic homogeneity was a barbarian trait; civilized societies mingled peoples of diverse backgrounds into ethnically plural and hierarchically ordered polities.”¹¹⁴ While such a simplistic interpretation may serve socio-political agendas, it fails to do justice to the complexity of the subject in world history. As Anthony Smith has amply demonstrated, historians and other scholars who are anticipating the eventual demise of ethnic and national identities and their *historically recurring* (ethno)nationalisms are bound to be disappointed,¹¹⁵ and (world) historical interpretations which construct their narratives around such uncritical hopes are, at best, on shaky ground. Indeed, as Smith points out in his study, *The Nation in History: Historiographical Debates about Ethnicity and Nationalism*, “[t]hese are the very dimensions of nationalism that even so eminent a world historian as William McNeill overlooks.”¹¹⁶ To the point: “For at least 150 years liberals and socialists confidently expected the demise of ethnic, racial, and national ties and the unification of the world through international trade and mass communication. These expectations have not been realized. Instead, we are witnessing a series of explosive ethnic revivals across the globe.”¹¹⁷ It is unfortunate that, although a chapter by Charles Tilly on “States, State Formation, and War” was included in the *Oxford Handbook of World History*, no chapter was devoted specifically to such a central subject of debate and consequence for world history as ethnicity, nations and nationalism. Much work remains for new world historians in this specific field.

Numerous other issues could of course be raised in treating the historical, social and political challenges and opportunities facing grand narrative and new world histories. They are covered sufficiently, however, in the literature referenced within these opening chapters. Let the above therefore suffice as, not comprehensive, but nonetheless essential historical background for understanding twenty-first-century narratives of world history, including those featured within this volume.

NOTES

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2. Lynn Hunt, *Writing History in the Global Era* (New York: W.W. Norton, Inc., 2015), p. 47.
3. Gilbert Allardyce, "Toward World History: American Historians and the Coming of the World History Course," *Journal of World History*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1990): 28–35.
4. W.H. McNeill, *The Rise of the West: A History of the Human Community* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), "The Rise of the West after Twenty-five Years," *Journal of World History*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1990): 1–21, and W.H. McNeill and J.R. McNeill, *The Human Web: A Bird's-Eye View of World History* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2003).
5. Glenn Ricketts, Peter W. Wood, Stephen H. Balch, and Ashley Thorne, *The Vanishing West: 1964–2010: The Disappearance of Western Civilization from the American Undergraduate Curriculum* (Princeton, NJ: National Association of Scholars, 2011).
6. Malcolm X, *Malcolm X on Afro-American History*, ed. Betty Shabazz, 3rd edn (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1990), p. 19.
7. I use both 'white nationalist' and 'racist' in close connection, though not as interchangeable synonyms with one another. This recognizes that 'white nationalists' typically deny that they are 'racist', while many others consider them to be inherently 'racist' in their ideology as well as practice.
8. Robert Young, *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West* (New York and London: Routledge, 1990), p. 1, citing Hélène Cixous and Catherine Clément, *The Newly Born Woman*, tr. Betsy Wing (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986), p. 70.
9. Gilbert Allardyce, "The Rise and Fall of the Western Civilization Course," *American Historical Review*, 87/3 (June, 1982): 719.
10. Ibid., p. 717.
11. Malcolm X, *Malcolm X on Afro-American History*, pp. 19, 24.
12. "Text of report from Committee on Reform and Renewal of Liberal Education at Stanford recommending new Western Culture course requirement, Honors in Liberal Studies option," *The Stanford Daily*, Vol. 168, No. 62, 21 January 1976, p. 4. (URL: <http://stanford-dailyarchive.com/cgi-bin/stanford?a=d&d=stanford19760121-01.2.23&srpos=1&e=-1976---1990--en-50--1-byDA-txt-txIN-%22Western+Civilization%22-----#>); see also Kathy Trafton, "ASSU Senate votes down Western Civ resolution," *The Stanford Daily*,

- Vol. 170, Issue 45, 30 November 1976 (URL: <http://stanford-dailyarchive.com/cgi-bin/stanford?a=d&d=stanford19761130-01.2.6&srpos=12&e=-1976---1991--en-50--1-byDA-txt-txIN-%22Western+Civilization%22----->; both last accessed: Jan 11, 2017).
13. Judith Brown, George Dekker, Bill King, William Chace, Carlos Camargo, J. Martin Evans, Ronald Rebholz, Carl Degler, Barbara Gelpi and Renato Rosaldo, "Statements Delivered to the Meeting of the [Stanford] Faculty Senate on 4 February, 1988," *Minerva*, Vol. 27, No. 2/3 (June 1989): p. 312. Cf. Mary Louise Pratt, "Humanities for the Future: Reflections on the Western Culture Debate at Stanford," in *The Politics of Liberal Education*, ed. Darryl Gless and Barbara Herrnstein Smith (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991), pp. 13–32.
 14. King et al., "Statements Delivered to the Meeting of the [Stanford] Faculty Senate," p. 301.
 15. Malcolm X, *Malcolm X on Afro-American History*, p. 30.
 16. George Reisman, "Education and the Racist Road to Barbarism" (The Jefferson School of Philosophy, Economics, and Psychology, 1992). URL: <http://www.capitalism.net/Education%20and%20Racism.htm>; last accessed: Jan 8, 2017.
 17. Gelpi et al., "Statements Delivered to the Meeting of the [Stanford] Faculty Senate," p. 314.
 18. Herbert Lindenberger, "On the Sacrality of Reading Lists: The Western Culture Debate at Stanford University," in *The History in Literature: On Value, Genre, Institutions* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990). (Available at: <http://www.pbs.org/shattering/lindenberger.html>; last accessed: Dec 28, 2016).
 19. See points five and seven of the eight concluding points later in the chapter.
 20. William J. Bennett, *To Reclaim a Legacy: A Report on the Humanities in Higher Education* (Washington D.C.: National Endowment for the Humanities, 1984), p. 30. See also: Lloyd Kramer, Donald Reid, and William L. Barney, eds., *Learning History in America: Schools, Cultures, and Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1994). Thanks to Peter Knupfer for the latter reference.
 21. Terry Eastland and William J. Bennett, *Counting by Race: Equality from the Founding Fathers to Bakke and Weber* (New York: Basic Books, 1979). Cf. W.A. Alstyne, "Making Sense of Desegregation and Affirmative Action," *Texas Law Review*, Vol 57 (1979): 1489–1498, which reviews Eastland and Bennett's book alongside a related volume.
 22. "White House Condemns Bennett's Remark," *New York Times*, Oct 1, 2006 (URL: <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/10/01/politics/white-house-condemns-bennetts-remark.html>) and Jim Rutenberg

- and Mike Macintire, "To Black Audience, Mayor Denounces Racial Comment," *New York Times*, Oct 3, 2006 (URL: <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/10/03/nyregion/metrocampaigns/to-black-audience-mayor-denounces-racial-comment.html>; both last accessed: Jan 14, 2017).
23. Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind: How Higher Education Has Failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today's Students* (New York: Simon Schuster, 1987), p. 94. See also Roger Kimball, *Tenured Radicals: How Politics Has Corrupted Higher Education* (New York: HarperCollins, 1990).
 24. Andrew Hartman, *A War for the Soul of America: A History of the Culture Wars* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2015), pp. 228–229.
 25. David Gates and Tony Clifton, "Say Goodnight, Socrates: Stanford University and the Decline of the West," *Newsweek*, U.S. edition, February 1, 1988, p. 46.
 26. Bernard Knox, *The Oldest Dead White European Males and Other Reflections on the Classics* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1993), p. 12. Thanks to Jared Secord for drawing my attention to this book.
 27. David O. Sacks and Peter A. Thiel, *The Diversity Myth: 'Multiculturalism' and Political Intolerance on Campus* (Oakland, CA: Independent Institute, 1998), pp. 1–2. See also idem., *The Diversity Myth: 'Multiculturalism' and the Politics of Intolerance at Stanford* (Oakland, CA: Independent Institute, 1996).
 28. Gary B. Nash, Charlotte Crabtree and Ross E. Dunn, *History on Trial: Culture Wars and the Teaching of the Past* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997); ref. to U.S. Senate vote taken from p. x.
 29. Victor Davis Hanson and John Heath, *Who Killed Homer? The Demise of Classical Education and the Recovery of Greek Wisdom* (New York: Free Press, 1998), p. xxiii. Another proponent of Western Civ from the same period was Michael F. Doyle, "'Hispano': Western Civilization in the Global Curriculum," *Perspectives on History*, May 1998 (URL: <https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/may-1998/hispano-western-civilization-in-the-global-curriculum>; last accessed: Jan 4, 2017). The article was originally published in late 1997 in a local journal.
 30. All quotations from J.M. Roberts, *A History of the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 916–919. The same precise phrasing was retained in his 2005 revision which is still available in audio format. Apparently not comfortable with such language, O.A. Westad, who took over revisions of the volume after Roberts' death in 2003, either significantly revised or, in some cases, dropped altogether Robert's racist phrasing, at least in the 2013 edition. Following Roberts however,

- Westad continued to espouse the idea that the world's "master ideas and institutions...always turn out to be derived from the Western European tradition" (J.M. Roberts and O.M. Westad, *The History of the World*, 6th edn, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, p. 1179).
31. Cf. P. Novick, "The Defense of the West," in *That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 281–319, which highlights a similar mid-20th-century reaction to 'cultural relativism'.
 32. Alana Lentin and Gavan Titley, eds., *The Crises of Multiculturalism: Racism in a Neoliberal Age* (London: Zed Books, 2011). Thanks to Robbie Shilliam for this reference.
 33. Andrew Kaczynski and Chris Massie, "White Nationalists See Advocate in Steve Bannon Who Will hold Trump to his Campaign Promises," *CNN Politics*, Nov 15, 2016 (URL: <http://www.cnn.com/2016/11/14/politics/white-nationalists-on-bannon/>; last accessed: Jan 10, 2017); cf. however Reena Flores, "Steve Bannon Speaks out on White Nationalism, Donald Trump Agenda," *CBS News*, Nov 19, 2016 (URL: <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/steve-bannon-on-white-nationalism-donald-trumps-agenda/>; also see/listen to the interview of Richard Spencer with Kelly McEvers, "'We're Not Going Away': Alt-Right Leader on Voice in Trump Administration," *NPR: All Things Considered*, Nov 17, 2016 (URL: <http://www.npr.org/2016/11/17/502476139/were-not-going-away-alt-right-leader-on-voice-in-trump-administration>; both last accessed: Jan 22, 2017). From the other side of the political spectrum, see Steve Phillips, *Brown Is the New White: How the Demographic Revolution Has Created a New American Majority* (New York: The New Press, 2016). In a challenge to the whole notion of 'blackness' as a racial construct, see Michelle Wright, *Physics of Blackness: Beyond the Middle Passage Epistemology* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015). Thanks to Robert Eddy for both these latter references.
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36. Loyal White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan homepage (URL: <http://www.kkkknights.com/>; last accessed: May 14, 2017).
37. White Aryan Resistance (WAR) website (URL: <http://www.resist.com/About/index.html>; last accessed: May 14, 2017).
38. See esp. Meagan Day, "Welcome to Hayden Lake, Where White Supremacists Tried to Build their Homeland: The Troubling Rise of the Aryan Nations Compound," *Timeline.com*, Nov 4, 2016 (URL: <https://timeline.com/white-supremacist-rural-paradise-fb62b74b29e0>; last accessed: May 14, 2017).
39. Leonard Zeskind, *Blood and Politics: The History of the White Nationalist Movement from the Margins to the Mainstream* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 2009). See also Justin Gest, *The New Minority: White Working Class Politics in an Age of Immigration and Inequality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016) and *White Terror*, dir. Daniel Schweizer (Sweden: Cameo Film- und Fernsehproduktion, Dschoint Ventschr Filmproduktion AG, Horizon Films, Little Bear and Making Movies Oy, 2005).
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43. Ricardo Duchesne, *The Uniqueness of Western Civilization* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), p. ix.
44. Ricardo Duchesne, "Centres and Margins: the Fall of Universal World History and the Rise of Multicultural World History," in *World Histories*, ed. Marnie Hughes-Warrington (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 154, 158–59.
45. The first quote in the paragraph is from Duchesne, "Centres and Margins," p. 153; the second and third quotes are from Duchesne, *Uniqueness of Western Civilization*, pp. x–xi.

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51. Christopher De La Viña, "White Man: Why Are You Giving Away Your Country?" *American Renaissance*, Apr 23, 2015 (<https://www.amren.com/features/2015/04/white-man-why-are-you-giving-away-your-country/>; last accessed: Jan 8, 2017).
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- emphasize integration of immigrants and their communities.” This raises the question of which ‘culture’ provides the basis for ‘assimilation’ and ‘integration’, i.e., seemingly the predominant white Christian Euro-American (URL: <http://www.theamericancause.org/index.php?page=about-the-cause>; last accessed: Jan 16, 2017).
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 54. Michael Hart, *Understanding Human History* (Whitefish, MT: Washington Summit Publishers, 2007) and *Restoring America* (Litchfield, CT: VDare, 2015). Cf. Bennett, *To Reclaim a Legacy*.
 55. On home page and “About” of *Preserving Western Civilization* website (URL: <http://www.preservingwesternciv.com/>; last accessed: Feb 06, 2017).
 56. Richard Spencer should not be confused with Robert Spencer, founder of *Jihad Watch*. While concerns for anti-Western Islamic terrorism are legitimate, the website promotes extremist anti-Muslim rhetoric (URL: <https://www.jihadwatch.org/>; last accessed: Jan 22, 2017). Both are considered part of the ‘alt-right’ movement however.
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61. Taylor Rose, *Return of the Right: How the Political Right Is Taking Back Western Civilization* (Tampa, FL: TL Publishing House, 2012), pp. 9–11, 24–25, 39.
62. See esp. Michael Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right: The Origins of the Christian Identity Movement*, 2nd edn (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996). The Christian Identity movements seems to have strong ties to the old Anglo-Israel identity movement emerging out of Britain in the late 1700s (cf. David Baron's 1915 study entitled *The History of the Ten Lost Tribes: Anglo-Israelism Examined*; it has been reissued in numerous editions since that time). On a related, but distinct topic, see Eve Darian-Smith, *Religion, Race, Rights: Landmarks in the History of Modern Anglo-American Law* (Portland, OR: Hart Publishing, 2010), who treats the historical particularity of Anglo-American law in relation to both the white race and Western Christian religion.
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66. See points five and seven of the eight concluding points outlined near the end of this chapter.
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- done in western countries. Christianity had from the start a fundamental (even if at first sight barely visible) bias towards the improvement of the lot of women, because it took for granted that they, like men, had souls of infinite value in the eyes of God. On this was to be built the modern freedom of women in societies in the Christian tradition" (*A History of the World*, p. 918).
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