

Thoughts on Coming Apart and the
Coming Great Reset



Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer

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Cultural Appropriation - Cleopatra, Santa Claus and Jesus

Markets

[Updated Charts](#)

No change in outlook.

Uh-oh



Cultural Appropriation - Cleopatra, Santa Claus and Jesus

(I want to stipulate at the beginning that I view the whole cultural-appropriation-taboo thing as being yet another of the extraordinarily stupid things we are doing. However, it allows me to create a framework.)

Thinking further about my comments on Cleopatra and race last week, I decided to jump up a level of abstraction or two and see where it took me.

I started with my comment that I did not care whether Cleopatra was black or white. Some blacks are trying to put together stories and trying so hard to find heroes that they reached for a small percentage chance a female Pharaoh that lived 2100 years ago was black. I'm sitting here with so many heroes that I could give up one without thinking and move on.

That's called white supremacy. Simply put, for better and for worse, whites are generally responsible for today's dominant culture in the West in a trail that goes back, with some detours, to the ancient Greeks. Lots and lots of time for heroes.

As I have commented in the past, somebody was going to create a dominant culture, but it did not have to be the whites. The proverbial (man) from Mars visiting Earth

centuries ago would have bet on the Chinese. They built an incredible civilization during a time when the inhabitants of England were basically savages ... and then decided to withdraw from the world. During the Dark and Middle Ages, it would have been the Muslims. They salvaged the learnings of the Greeks and Romans and built another impressive civilization during a time when England was an illiterate backwater. They also made a conscious decision to withdraw. After the Renaissance, when the learnings of the Arabs and Persians, which included the learnings of the Romans and Greeks, were rediscovered by the Europeans, an incredible blossoming of science, technology, arts and medicine took place that is still going on to this day. It did not have to be whites - could have easily been, perhaps should have been, Chinese or Arab - but, as it turns out, it was the whites. White supremacy makes no more sense than yellow supremacy makes in China (although there is an argument that the Han believe they are indeed special) or black supremacy makes in Zimbabwe. History in each of these places is what it is. Yellow rules in China; black rules in Zimbabwe; white rules, or has ruled, in Western Europe and parts of North America. My mind turned to Santa Claus and our first trip to Japan many years ago. The faces of Santa Claus had Japanese features, in spite of the fact that St. Nicholas and the entire tradition were white. Japanese celebrate Christmas, even though they are not Christian. Again, I did not care, one way or the other. The Japanese were taking a European myth and making it their own. Seemed more than reasonable. Everyone, particularly every child, wants a face they can relate to.

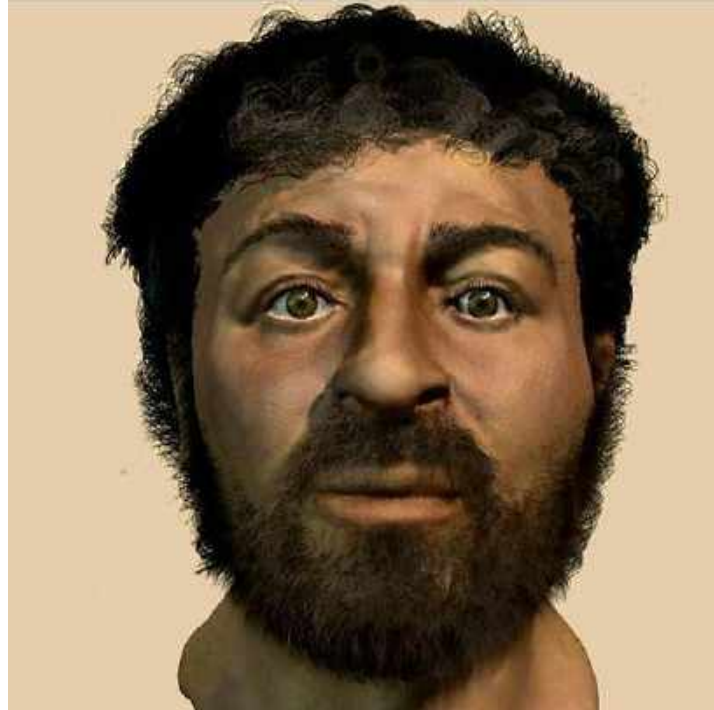
Then, I took the major leap - thinking about Jesus.

There are no descriptions of Jesus anywhere. When the great painters decided to paint, they often painted their conception of the perfection of god-in-the-flesh. Since they were European, that conception would have been white. With some exceptions, Jesus was represented as white.

However, if you think about it, that is highly unlikely. Jesus was a Jew living in the Roman Province of Judea, speaking Aramaic, from about 30 BC to 3 AD. (I have always enjoyed the irony that Jesus was born around the year 30 B(efore)C(hrist). Perhaps an interesting factoid is that he was probably born in the same year Cleopatra died.) What would that person have actually looked like?

Wikipedia puts it this way: "By working with Yossi Nagar, an Israeli anthropologist who was able to prove that the physical characteristics of the bones of Jews which date back to the time of Jesus have similarities to the bones of contemporary Iraqi Jews, Taylor concluded that Jesus had honey/olive skin, brown eyes and brown or black hair." Then, there is speculation based on the very few details we have of his life. *Popular Mechanics* (!) says, "Since Jesus worked outdoors as a carpenter until he was about 30 years old, it is reasonable to assume he was more muscular and physically fit than westernized portraits suggest. His face was probably weather-beaten, which would have made him appear older, as well."

Maybe something like this:



Disorienting, isn't it?

(Beth says they should have used Omar Shariff as the model, but, alas, he's Egyptian and not an Iraqi Jew.)

In the end

some blacks are culturally appropriating Cleopatra to create their myth;
the Japanese are culturally appropriating Santa Claus to create their myth;
and the Europeans and Americans, are culturally appropriating Jesus to create their myth.

The tearing down of statues is, among other things, a rejection of existing myths, and a subject for another time.

One of the profound teachings I took away from Jung is that humans project their inner selves onto the outer world.

The myths we make for ourselves must be relatable to be impactful, and if that means messing with facts, facts will be messed with.

Which does not mean that someone outside of the myth-making process should be messing with facts - are you listening, Google?

(Back to white supremacy for a second. It (the post-Renaissance European culture), with all its achievements and all of its failures, is coming to an end, as all things do - as the rest of the world catches up to the learnings of the white world, just as whites built on the learnings of Arabs and Persians. While China maintains its yellow-ness and Zimbabwe maintains its blackness, ironically, the West is giving up its whiteness because it was successful to the point that everyone wants a piece of it (immigrants do not seem to be demanding to get into China or Zimbabwe in massive numbers - of course blacks from a slave background are a different story - they did not want to be here in the first place, but now that they are here, they also want a piece). Even more ironically and rarer, it has decided to share - to let the interlopers in - to basically enable the revolution against itself. We are now in the midst of a typical spat, with contenders trying to overthrow the king. Not a lot of that going on in either China or Zimbabwe. That all of this is counterproductive is not the point. The point is that we are in yet another transition. And we seem to be making it about as difficult as possible. That seems to be what we do best.)

Short Takes

I remember that chocolate milk was the highlight of my day in elementary school - I guess there is a compulsion to take the fun out of everything. From the *Guardian*

This spring, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) is expected to weigh in on one of the most heated arguments in school nutrition: whether chocolate milk belongs in the cafeteria.

The USDA is eyeing a proposal to allow flavored milk only at high schools starting in the 2025-2026 school year; children in grades K-8 would have access to fat-free or low-fat unflavored milk. The agency reviews national dietary guidelines every five years, and the milk question has generated hundreds of comments from parents concerned about sugar consumption; nutritionists; school workers who believe any milk is better than none; and the dairy industry, which has stoked that belief.

The sweetened drink accounts for more than 70% of milk consumed on campuses. It's so popular that many school nutrition directors fear that, without it on the menu, more kids will ditch school lunch altogether.

Offered without comment -

The British film authorities raised the rating of "Mary Poppins" to PG because it contains racist language. As best I can tell, the only racist word used was "Hottentot" and they are afraid children will be scarred by the use of that word. From Wikipedia: "Hottentot (British and South African English /'hɒtən,tɒt/ HOT-ən-TOT) is a term that was historically used by Europeans to refer to the Khoekhoe, the indigenous nomadic pastoralists in South Africa. ... Use of the

term Hottentot is now considered offensive, the preferred name for the non Bantu speaking indigenous people of the Western Cape area being Khoekhoe (formerly Khoikhoi)."

Wow -

South Korea's fertility rate, already the lowest in the world, dropped by another 8 percent in 2023. New data shows the fertility rate dropped to 0.72, far below the 2.1 needed to maintain the population.

The media has made a big deal of the fact that 13% of Democrats in Michigan voted "uncommitted" in the primary, noting that it was a protest vote against Biden. 11% voted uncommitted when Obama ran, and one of my "laws" of human nature is that 10-20% of a population will believe virtually anything.

But, maybe they know more about tea-leaf-reading than I do.

Their interpretation is that Biden's Gaza policy is unpopular and that continuing with it will put Democrat votes in jeopardy.

However, *The New York Times* dug a little deeper for some interesting data:

It was not surprising to see "uncommitted" beat Mr. Biden in Dearborn and Hamtramck, two of the Michigan cities with the highest concentrations of Arab Americans. With nearly all ballots counted, Dearborn gave 56 percent of its Democratic primary vote to "uncommitted." In Hamtramck, "uncommitted" drew 61 percent of the city's Democratic vote.

Perhaps more worrisome for Mr. Biden was his performance in Ann Arbor, a college town 30 miles to the west.

There, where most students and faculty members at the University of Michigan live, "uncommitted" earned 19 percent of the vote. In East Lansing, home to Michigan State University, "uncommitted" got 15 percent of the vote.

I'm not much of a Paxton fan, but, boy does this have the potential to create positive change

From *The Leading Report*

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton receives huge win with court ruling delivered on Tuesday deeming the \$1.7 trillion omnibus spending package passed in 2022 unconstitutional. This victory marks a pivotal moment in Paxton's challenge against the legislation, highlighting concerns over the bill's approval process.

The court's decision underscores the legal complexities surrounding federal spending and legislative procedures, setting a precedent for future debates and challenges regarding government funding measures. Paxton's success in contesting the omnibus spending package showcases the role of state attorneys

general in upholding constitutional principles and ensuring adherence to legal frameworks within the realm of federal governance.

In December of the previous year, President Joe Biden signed the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023, consolidating the federal budget for the year by combining 12 annual appropriations bills into one piece of legislation. However, Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton contested the constitutionality of the bill's passage in the House, arguing that less than half of its members were physically present to vote, with many voting by proxy. Paxton specifically challenged provisions in the bill that impacted Texas.

Further to my thoughts last week on Cleopatra and Gemini - from *The Bee*, of course



Excited Netflix Writers Turn To Google Gemini For New Show Ideas

The Total Fertility Rate for the US for the 12 months ending in Q3 2023 fell to 1.63

Marianne Williamson is back! She re-started her presidential campaign.

Undeclared in the creation of euphemisms:

whitehouse.gov

WH.GOV



The bill also includes \$1.4 billion for cities and states who are providing critical services to newcomers, and would expedite work permits for people who are in the country and qualify.

It Ain't Easy Being Green

Nothing this week

War, Energy and Food

Now they're REALLY in trouble

The U.S. military called the damage to the U.K.-owned vessel carrying over 40,000 tons of fertilizer struck by Iran-backed Houthi rebels an “environmental disaster.”

Miscellany

Now in my top 10 - very, very nice (and I am going to ruin it by saying, Et, too, Brute?)



This is another of those - I really shouldn't, but I had to ... not personality, not looks, not wit ...



The Bee strikes again

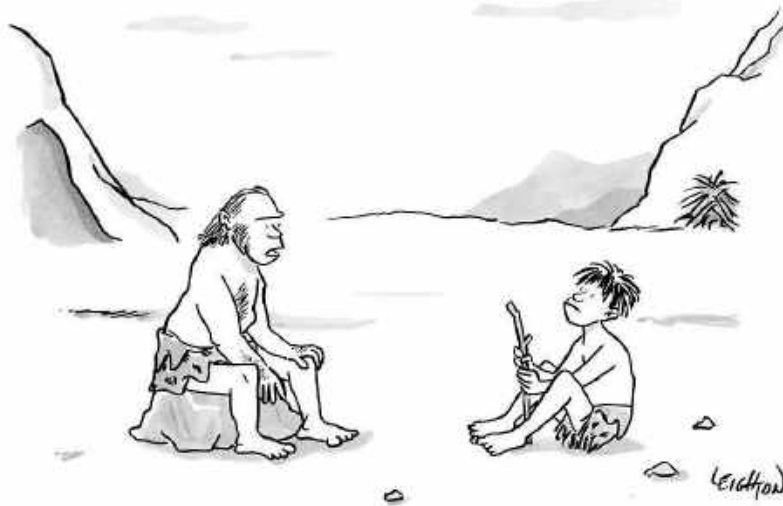


Bomb Squad Called Into New York Times
Offices After Discovery Of Suspicious Chick-
Fil-A Bag

I'm convinced



Ah, the good old days



"When I was your age, things were exactly the way they are now."

Very nice, with some humor (from Barbara Hershey's twitter/X)

