and that we "have a lot to be troubled about". Contemporary forces such as the movement of peoples, political fragmentation and environmental catastrophe are individually and socially corrosive: "Place is the fabric of our lives; memory and identity are stitched through it. Without having somewhere of one's own, a place that is home, freedom is an empty word". Bonnett's brilliant, pertinent, quirky odyssey leads eventually to "Hog's Back Lay-By", where we're introduced to dogging, erotic landscapes and that most aspirational – and least attainable – of places, paradise.

Alessandro's Scafi's necessarily beautiful book *Maps of Paradise* charts the 400-year quest to map the unmappable. Although the biblical Garden of Eden lay outside the inhabited and known world, and was therefore beyond the reach of cartography, to believers it was a place as real as Jerusalem or the islands at the North Pole. No other place caused as much vexation as paradise, nor changed location so many times.

The paradise riddle begins with the world maps – the mappae mundi – common in Western Europe between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries. The aim of the compilers of these egg-shaped, circular or vaguely rectilinear manuscript maps "was nothing less than to portray an orderly physical and human geography, and to make visible and comprehensible the invisible order that guides the course of human events". Medieval mapmakers were operating in two dimensions, time and space. And they had to combine their biblical worldview with geographical knowledge. Layers of time were piled on geographical space, classical cities and ancient tribes jostling with new cities and nations. The border of a long-gone Roman province could cut past contemporary centres of learning and trade like Genoa and Venice. On a mappa mundi, a place derived its cartographic status from the event that occurred there; it is an "event-place". Whereas the coordinates on a Ptolemaic map were mathematically positioned, with each place having an equal value, space on a mappa mundi was elastic and event-places were positioned according to "the rule of contiguity". Map symbols on a modern map are graded in size according to a set of spatial rules; those on a mappa mundi were scaled according to their cultural and historical importance. The Tower of Babel looks enormous, and so do the cities of Jerusalem and Rome. Paradise – and east – was located at the top of the map. "Geography", writes Scafi, "was the servant to history, and world maps were world chronicles." And so paradise was not a place you could navigate to, but a location marking "a critical episode in salvation history and an integral element of the cosmos". Scafi would have us see these medieval event-place maps as the prototypes of modern, digital, interactive maps like Google Earth Historical Imagery that accommodate both space and time.

The cartographic crunch for paradise-mappers occurred in the fifteenth century. As tales of new coasts began to spread through European ports, cartographers struggled to reconcile biblical geography with evidence being brought home on sea charts. At the same time, the recovery of Ptolemy's second-century mathematical coordinates of key locations in the classical world were filling in many of the blank spaces on regional maps. The emergence of mathematical mapmaking gave

The Psalter Map, London, *c*.1265, British Library, London

paradise fewer places to hide. Mapmakers faced the difficulty of finding a location for Eden and its four rivers – an unidentifiable event-place – on maps that featured plotted, contemporary places. As Asia became increasingly mapped and known about in Europe, paradise had to be moved to the lesser-known continent of Africa, where it lodged for a while in Ethiopia. The Venetian monk Fra Mauro went further by locating the Garden of Eden – a circular parkland surrounded by a turreted wall – in one of the four corner-spaces between his circular map and its square frame. Martin Luther sought a more creative solution, and decided that paradise had indeed occupied a specific land, but that land had been wiped out by the Flood, along with its tell-tale rivers. The first edition of Luther's translation of the Bible included a woodcut showing the Garden of Eden set in a radiant world of coasts, mountains and islands. In Calvin's less despairing cartography, the Garden had not been entirely inundated, but survived in fragments that could still be mapped. Mesopotamia's geography offered a convenient fit: it was in the east, and it had rivers, although Calvin did have to re-engineer the Tigris and Euphrates. *Maps of Paradise* is full of superb illustrations, many of them treasures kept in the British Library, who published both this book and *The Art and History of Globes* by Sylvia Sumira.

It is a good moment to revisit the evolution of globes. Maps are locked into two dimensions, however clever the projection or ingenious the digital graphics. But globes are scale models of the real thing and therefore the only true representation of space. The recent appearance of virtual, "three-dimensional" globes as apps is a sign that the geographical sphere is entering a new age.

Sumira's book opens in the sixth century BC with Pythagorean spheres and moves briskly through to the geographical revolution of the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries. Of particular interest is the second chapter, on the making of globes. The author worked for many years on globe conservation at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, and these fascinating pages exude an authentic whiff of papier mâché, plaster and paste. A perfect globe should spin – according to the eighteenth-century specialist Edmund Stone – "like a Ball of polished Marble". To achieve this end, a small aperture would be cut in the globe's shell, through which a bag of lead shot would be inserted and glued to the inner shell. A rattle in an old globe, explains Sumira, is the sound of spilled shot. The dark brown patina that subdues the surface of so many historic globes arises from the natural ageing of the varnish that was originally applied to protect the printed paper from grubby fingers and dust. When new, these globes were as bright and as colourful as a NASA photograph.

The main part of *The Art and History of Globes* showcases sixty globes spanning four centuries of production, beginning with what is thought to be the oldest surviving terrestrial globe, Martin Behaim's terrestrial sphere of 1492, which shows the world as it was in the year Columbus tried to reach Japan by sailing the Atlantic. The most modern globe in the book is a five-shilling, mass-produced British sphere of the late 1800s, marked with telegraph lines and the steam packet route from Suez to Bombay. Between the carrack and the steam packet is an exploratory arc that records shorelines being added to globes by – among others – Ferdinand Magellan, Francis Drake, Thomas Cavendish, William Dampier and Captain James Cook. One of the more evocative place names is found on a globe of 1846 that includes the discoveries of a whaling captain called John Balleny, who came across a group of islands in the South Pacific that are labelled "Dangerous Arch"– Dangerous Archipelago. Sumira's top sixty also includes celestial spheres built for cosmographers and astronomers, self-assembly paper globes and gigantic globes constructed as geopolitical tools for kings, queens and emperors. One of the most fascinating developments in the history of globes occurred long before the 3D geographical sphere went out of fashion. Ever since Mercator developed a sturdy globe stand (you can see it supporting his astonishingly detailed globe of 1541) that allowed spheres to be treated as robust, geographical tools, globe-makers have looked for ways of miniaturizing the model. The tiny, portable globes that became popular from the 1700s allowed users to carry the world in their pocket; to hold the planet in the palm of a hand. This, perhaps, is the universal dream of a topophiliac species: to comprehend a world of infinite complexity. As ever, geography charts the parts others fail to reach.

Western weed

DAVID ARMITAGE

Francisco Bethencourt

RACISMS

From the crusades to the twentieth century
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Racism, like nationalism, seems to be at once ancient and modern. Debates over the history of nationalism pit "primordialists", who trace it back to the Israelites, against "modernists", who see it arising as a political force only after the French and Industrial Revolutions. Primordialist students of racism find it far back in the ancient world among the Greeks; their modernist counterparts argue for origins in the emergent human sciences of the Enlightenment. Few -isms excite more passion about their invention or greater disagreement about their birth. Is there a middle way? Or do we just need a better explanatory framework?

The title of Francisco Bethencourt's masterly new book suggests just such a model for elucidating the history of racism: *Racisms* in the plural not the singular, anatomized in all their contingency rather than assumed to be a singular outgrowth of human nature itself. His subtitle – "From the Crusades to the twentieth century" – also points to a middle way in the Middle Ages. Bethencourt tracks the ramifications of racism across almost a millennium, delving no deeper into the past or any closer to the present.

Much hangs on what he means by racism, of course: not just any form of intolerance based on heritable difference among groups, but more precisely, "prejudice concerning ethnic descent coupled with discriminatory action". With this definition in mind, he confidently locates racism's origins, its proliferation and its slow demise – or, at least, the decline of the formal racism that is "linked to political projects" (though what "political" includes or excludes Bethencourt never quite specifies). As he notes, anti-racism is now the norm across the world, yet informal racism is still very much with us. *Racisms* can at least help to distinguish collective racial discrimination from its purulent place in the hearts and minds of individual racists.

Against the primordialists, Bethencourt argues that systematic discrimination on the basis of descent did not arise before the twelfth century. Against the modernists, he asserts that there was racism before there were theories of race: "classification did not precede action". Racism in his sense – relational, hierarchical, prejudicial and found in policies, not just attitudes – was the creation of Latin Christians in the Mediterranean world. Their heirs and successors carried it across the globe as European expansion penetrated into the Atlantic, Africa and Asia. This Western weed hybridized with native prejudices and hierarchies wherever it landed. It took root most firmly in the Americas, where creole societies

overwhelmed or subsumed native peoples, and where slavery and the plantation system left their most toxic legacies. The western hemisphere remains the region most scarred and stratified by the residues of racism.

The deed came before the word; racial theory only arose after centuries of practical racism. Once "scientific" racism had entered an unholy alliance with blood-and-soil nationalism in the nineteenth century, the conditions were in place for humanity's most heinous project of systematic ethnic exploitation. As Bethencourt reminds us, some 12 million foreigners entered slave labour in Germany between 1939 and 1945: a figure comparable to the number of Africans enslaved over the 350 years of the Atlantic slave trade.

This modern murderousness had relatively modest medieval beginnings. Like Benzion Netanyahu, David Nirenberg and other recent scholars, Bethencourt locates racism's origins in Iberia – his own area of speciality, as a leading historian of the Portuguese empire – in communities where converted Jews and Muslims lived cheek by jowl with Old Christians. An inclusive universalism was the foundation of Christianity – "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus", Paul wrote in Galatians 3:28 – but pressures in the peninsula on resources of status and wealth raised barriers against New Christians. The exclusion of Moriscos (converted Muslims) became "the first crucial case (alongside that of converted Jews) in the Christian community of a persistent internal divide based on the notion of descent", where Christians discriminated against fellow Christians on grounds of ethnicity rather than belief.

This example clarifies Bethencourt's choice of criteria. No theory of race was needed to justify exclusion from ecclesiastical office, for instance. Phenotypic markers like skin colour played no part: converted Jews were physically indistinguishable from their Old Christian neighbours. Discrimination arose from intimacy, not distance. And class played an important role in cementing the economic dominance of low-status members of an in-group against a threateningly adjacent outgroup, as it would later in the American South. The long-term result, in Iberia at least, was a series of purity-of-blood statutes first promulgated in 1449 and not abolished until 1835–70. Not every later instance of racism would have the same features: Bethencourt admits that persecution of the Roma stemmed mostly from their mobility, not their settled proximity. His conception of relational racism still illuminates more than it obscures in the dark history of human prejudice over the *longue durée*.

The bulk of *Racisms* catalogues the inhumanity of Europeans and Euro-Americans in their treatment of those they sought to exclude, oppress, exploit or exterminate. Bethencourt's tone in treating the crimes and follies of humankind is unfailingly cool and analytically sophisticated. His long and detailed book is a syllabus of horrors; in the hands of a less careful historian, it could simply blight one's faith in human nature and lead only to outrage or despair. There are a few bright spots, such as descriptions of the social mobility of Africans in early modern courts or the appointment in 1518 of a black bishop in Congo, but they do little to relieve the gloom. (No other black African bishop held office until the twentieth century.) So comprehensive is Bethencourt's synthesis, and so unsparing is his survey, that experts will find new information and every reader will be appalled at human ingenuity when ethnicity is at stake.

"L'expulsió dels Moriscos"), 1894, by Gabriel Puig Roda

Bethencourt's achievement is to show that racism, in all its forms, was contextual and ultimately reformable, not innate and hence inevitable. The reader's journey to that conclusion is grim but necessary, as Bethencourt circles the globe in search of his examples. He argues that when Jerusalem ceased to be the centre of their mental maps, Europeans could start to structure the world's peoples within novel hierarchies of continents, peoples and civilizations. Depending on the balance of numbers, European colonial societies tolerated race-mixing, set barriers to miscegenation, or managed the problem. The legacies of these strategies prompted the question that initially ignited Bethencourt's study: "How is it that a person can be considered black in the United States, colored in the Caribbean or South Africa, and white in Brazil?"

In search of answers to this conundrum, Bethencourt tacks deftly between cultural and social history. His binocular vision marks *Racisms* out from most previous studies of its subject, which have either examined racism as ideas in the mind or as facts on the ground. Unlike many students of Western racism, Bethencourt pays little attention to its biblical underpinnings: the division of the world into three "races", Hamitic, Semitic and Japhetic (derived from the three sons of Noah), does not even appear in his index, though it pops up occasionally in the text. Practices and perceptions rather than arguments structure much of his story: racism's textual traces attract little of Bethencourt's attention until he reaches the eighteenth century.

Iconography occupies much more space in *Racisms* than intellectual history. (It must be said that Bethencourt's press has not served him well here: *Racisms* is handsomely produced, but its illustrations are murky and visual examples are not always reproduced alongside treatments in the text.) Bethencourt is an acute reader of representations of the four parts of the Earth on Sicilian tombs and Italian fountains, in the frontispieces of atlases and on the ceilings of *palazzi*, to illustrate how imagery propagated hierarchy, sometimes for centuries, as the same representations endlessly cycled through the mechanisms of print culture. And his treatment of eighteenth-century Spanish American *casta* (caste) paintings, with their variegated images of every possible combination of mixed-race ethnicities, convincingly shows their malleability: language, hairstyle and clothing could all change perceptions of ethnicity. Their shifting categories were a long way from later conceptions of immutable racism: more treatment of early racial photographs, like those created on Louis Agassiz's 1865–6 Harvard expedition to Brazil, would have confirmed this point. Yet in regard to visual evidence, as in other areas, Bethencourt's negative findings are as important as his positive results in the search of racism's tangled roots.

Mobility characterized racism as Europeans transported it from continent to continent. Spaniards found natives they called "Moors" in the Americas; later, the British encountered "blacks" and "Indians" in early Australia. Laboratories of racism also existed within Europe long after the Middle Ages: as Bethencourt writes in his account of Carolus Linnaeus, the eighteenth-century primitivist and taxonomer, "Lapland was indeed the Swedish West Indies", its Sami peoples as intriguing to northern ethnographers as the Caribs had been to the European inventors of "cannibalism" from Columbus onwards. Racism was nonetheless unevenly distributed. The Americas were the matrix of post-medieval discrimination, which held greater purchase there than in Africa or, especially, Asia, where European colonialism faced more competition and failed to take root so deeply. Only Oceania escapes Bethencourt's panorama, even though the region was shot through with racialized cartographies by the early nineteenth century, not least in "New Guinea" and "Melanesia".

Bethencourt's long-range view – deep in time, wide in space – puts more familiar turning points in the global history of racism into novel perspective. The anti-slavery movement did little, at least in the medium term, to "diminish prejudices and discriminatory action" more generally, while scientific racism was quite compatible intellectually with anti-slavery, as in the case of Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, a supporter of abolition and yet also the inventor of enduring racial categories such as the "Caucasian". The account of the rise of racial theory in *Racisms* is encyclopedic in its coverage as one thinker follows another, from Linnaeus and Immanuel Kant to Agassiz and Charles Darwin, but their contributions come late in the history of racism, not as its intellectual inspiration.

More ambitiously, Bethencourt draws out racism's purpose in combating egalitarianism in Europe after 1848, in cementing racial inequality in the United States and in promoting European incursions into Asia. He rightly notes the paradox that the expansion of democratic nationalism fomented racism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Little wonder, then, that indigenous peoples across the globe looked back nostalgically to times when they were guaranteed privileges within a *república de Indios* or could petition a monarch for protection against land-hungry settlers and creoles.

When Bethencourt reaches the past hundred years or so, the examples of the Jewish pogroms in Russia, the Armenian genocide and the Nazi racial state amply confirm his hypothesis that political projects motivate racism. After his broad, complex narrative, these modern instances appear not as paradigmatic horrors arising from eternal hatreds, but instead as the culmination of many moments of contingent discrimination. "There is no cumulative and linear racism", he insists: even Iberia, once the cradle of racism itself, had little anti-Semitism in the modern period owing to its small, residual communities.

Race lingers in census categories and self-identifications long after any significant biological basis for it has been exploded. The dream of a post-racial society is far from being achieved anywhere in the world, even in such apparently homogeneous communities as Japan or Iceland. And politically motivated acts of ethnic discrimination and destruction have continued, in Rwanda in 1994 and in Gujarat in 2002. These are among the latest acts in racism's destructive history; if Bethencourt is right, and racism is indeed conjunctural rather than bred in the human bone, they could be among the last. *Racisms* breeds hope that racism is eradicable, at least formally and collectively, even though the durability of racial prejudice tempers that hope. Racism may not be age-old, but nor is it just skin-deep.