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RACISM

A time to live...



19 CANADA

Bones of (friendly) contention

Eskimo children of Baffin Island, between Greenland and mainland Canada, playing a traditional game of skill. A number of seal bones are placed in a mitten from which they must be extracted using a leather thong with a slip-knot noose. Each bone represents a specific object such as a block of ice, a dog or a member of the family. The winner is the player who accumulates the greatest number of bones, with which he can construct, for example, an igloo or a sledge.

Photo © Dominique Darbois, Paris

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Editorial

IT may be asked why it is necessary to pay constant and periodically renewed attention to such an evident form of barbarity as racism. The answer is that, throughout the world, racism is forever appearing in new guises, adding new forms of oppression to the long tally that already exists and adopting new strategies, each more violent than its predecessors; we have a duty to analyse and stand firm against each of these new manifestations.

The "Other", the outsider, is usually perceived as a strange being, either because of his appearance (which is attributed to his race) or because of his social position, his poverty, his way of life, his privileges or his potential. But we are also coming to learn that the "Other" offers us, as though through a mirror, a vision of ourselves which frightens us. Only by overcoming this aggressive fear can we help to conquer the racism it engenders.

Studies show that this fear of the "Other" is acquired and is the result of the interplay of social structures. But it must be stressed that racism in its contemporary forms did not appear fortuitously. It is the product of a historical phenomenon: the economic exploitation

(and its ideological justification) of the labour of colonized peoples.

Pushed to the extreme and institutionalized, this colonial racism has reached its ultimate stage in apartheid, a doctrine which constitutes a danger not only for the peoples of southern Africa but for the peace of the whole world. It is in every sense a crime against humanity.

This is why the struggle against racism is one of the major concerns of liberation movements throughout the world. The emancipation of dominated peoples involves the defence of their cultural identity, which in turn is indissociable from their political, economic and social freedom. Fostering the cultures of the world, respecting their diversity and their equal right to development, is to speed up the spread and interplay of knowledge which will turn back the infamous tide of racism.

In this struggle science cannot remain neutral. Scientists categorically reject any claim that "races" can be defined on the basis of conclusive genetic data. As a result of thousands of years of cross-breeding, genetic differences between individuals or groups of individuals can be much greater than those between the so-

called "races", which have been classified as such on the basis of meaningless criteria. And science refutes even more strongly the notion that there is any link between "racial" hereditary characteristics and cultural traits.

Unesco plays a leading role in this struggle to defend the truth against oppression and prejudice, as it is unequivocally required to do by the terms of the Preamble to and Article 1 of its constitution, adopted in London on 16 November 1945, which solemnly declares that: "The purpose of the Organization is to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms..." of all "... the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion."

COVER: Portrait of the imprisoned African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela, by the Irish artist Louis le Brocquy, for the exhibition Artists Against Apartheid. (See also captions pages 14 and 18).

Photo © Artists of the World Against Apartheid, Paris

① Dogmas of inequality of men and races throughout history

RACE, PREJUDICE AND MYTH

by Michel Leiris

It may be asked what is the origin of the prejudice behind the attempt to classify certain human groups as inferior on the ground that their racial composition is an irremediable handicap.

The first point which emerges from any examination of the data of ethnography and history is that race prejudice is not universal and is of recent origin. Many of the societies in-

MICHEL LEIRIS, French poet, essayist and anthropologist, was formerly Senior Research Fellow at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris. His many published works include an autobiographical tetralogy *La Règle du Jeu*, *Haut Mal*, a collection of poems, and an ethnological study *Afrique Noire*. The present text is an extract from his study "Race and Culture" which appeared in *Race, Science and Society*, a collective work published in 1975 by Unesco and George Allen & Unwin.

vestigated by anthropologists do indeed display group pride, but while the group regards itself as privileged compared with other groups, it makes no "racist" claims and, for instance, is not above entering into temporary alliances with other groups or providing itself with women from them.

Much more than "blood", the unifying elements are common interests and a variety of activities conducted in association. In the majority of cases such groups are not in fact "races"—if very isolated, they may at most be homogeneous offshoots of a race—but are merely societies whose antagonism to other societies, whether traditional or arising from specific questions of interest, is not biological but purely cultural.

The peoples whom the Greeks described as "barbarians" were not regarded by them as racially inferior but as not having attained the same level of civilization as themselves; Alexander himself married two Persian princesses and 10,000 of his soldiers married Hindus. The main interest her subject peoples had for Rome was as a source of tribute and, since she did not pursue the same ends of systematic exploitation of the earth and its population as more recent imperialisms, she had no reason to practise racial discrimination against them.

The Christian faith preached the brotherhood of man and, while all too often it fell short of its own principle in practice, it never evolved a racist ideology. The Crusades were launch-

"Although there are differences of varying degrees between contemporary human societies, the explanation must not be sought in the racial evolution of mankind (...) which has produced variations from what was probably an ancestral stock common to all humanity. The differences in question are cultural variations and cannot be explained either in terms of biological background or even of the influence of geographical setting, impossible though it is to overlook the importance of this last factor..." (Michel Leiris). A superficial reaction to the sight of these four new born babies (right) might well be to describe them as being of different races simply because each has different colour skin; in fact, this criterion has very little biological significance (see caption page 26).





Photo Chasseloup-Laubat © Musée de l'Homme, Paris

The 1978 Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice was adopted by the General Conference of Unesco at its twentieth session. It defines racism as "any theory which involves the claim that racial or ethnic groups are inherently superior or inferior, thus implying that some would be entitled to dominate or eliminate others, presumed to be inferior, or which bases value judgements on racial differentiation." The definition is a broad one since it continues: "racism includes racist ideologies, prejudiced attitudes, discriminatory behaviour, structural arrangements and institutionalized practices resulting in racial inequality as well as the fallacious notion that discriminatory relations between groups are morally and scientifically justifiable." Did racism exist in the world's earliest, more loosely structured societies? Left, ancient rock-paintings of plumed men, at Tefedest, in the Ahaggar Mountains, central Sahara, Algeria.

ed against the "infidels", the Inquisition persecuted heretics and Jews, and Catholics and Protestants exterminated each other, but in every case the motives alleged were religious and not racial.

The picture only begins to change with the opening of the period of colonial expansion by the European peoples, when it becomes necessary to excuse violence and oppression by decreeing the inferiority of those enslaved or robbed of their own land and denying the title of men to the cheated peoples. (Differences in customs and the physical stigma of colour made the task an easy one.)

That the origins of race prejudice are economic and social becomes perfectly clear, if we bear in mind that the first great apostle of racism,

Count de Gobineau, said himself that he wrote his two notorious *Essays* to combat liberalism: the better to defend the threatened interest of the aristocratic caste of Europe, against the rising tide of democracy, he postulated their descent from a so-called superior race which he labelled "Aryan", and for which he postulated a civilizing mission.

We find the same motive yet again in the attempt by anthropologists such as Broca and Vacher de Lapouge of France and the German Ammon to demonstrate by anthropometry that class distinctions reflect differences in race (and hence are part of the natural order). However, the amazing intermingling of human groups which has taken place in Europe as in the rest of the

world since prehistoric times, and the unceasing movements of population occurring in the countries of modern Europe are enough to demonstrate the fatuity of the attempt.

Later, racism took on the virulent quality we know so well and, more particularly in Nazi Germany, appeared in nationalist guise, though still remaining in essence an ideology designed to introduce or perpetuate a system of caste economically and politically favourable to a minority, e.g. by cementing a nation's unity by the idea of itself as a master race, by inculcating in colonial populations the feeling that they are irremediably inferior to the colonizers, by preventing part of the population within a country from rising in the social

This 1944 photo shows a Hungarian Jewish woman and children arriving at Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp where they were to die in the gas chamber. Six million Jews perished in Nazi extermination camps in the Second World War. Unesco's mission to combat racism is set forth in its Constitution, which was adopted in 1945 and declares that "the great and terrible war" which humanity had just endured had been "made possible by the denial of the democratic principles of the dignity, equality and mutual respect of men, and by the propagation, in their place, through ignorance and injustice, of the doctrine of the inequality of men and races".



Photo © Auschwitz Museum

► scale, by eliminating competition in employment or by neutralizing popular discontent by supplying the people with a scapegoat which is also a profitable source of loot.

There is bitter irony in the fact that racism developed parallel with the growth of democracy, which made an appeal to the new-born prestige of science necessary for the calming of consciences uneasy over flagrant violation of the rights of a section of mankind or refusal to recognize those rights.

Racial prejudice is not innate. As Ashley Montagu has noted: "In America, where white and black populations frequently live side by side, it is an indisputable fact that white children do not learn to consider themselves superior to Negro children until they are told that they

are so." When a tendency to racism (in the form either of voluntary endogamy or the more or less aggressive assertion of one's own "race's" virtue) is found in an "out-cast" group, it should be regarded as no more than the normal reaction of the "insulted and injured" against the ostracism or persecution of which they are the victims and not as indicating the universality of racial prejudice.

There are no races of masters as opposed to races of slaves: slavery is not coeval with mankind and only appeared in societies whose technology was sufficiently developed to make slave-owning profitable.

From the sexual point of view, there appears no evidence of any repulsion between race and race, and indeed all the facts so far col-

lected demonstrate that there has been continual cross-breeding between races since the most ancient times.

Race prejudice is no more hereditary than it is spontaneous: it is in the strictest sense a "prejudice", that is, a cultural value judgement with no objective basis. Far from being in the order of things or innate in human nature, it is one of the myths whose origin is much more propaganda by special interests than the tradition of centuries. Since there is an essential connexion between it and the antagonisms arising out of the economic structure of modern societies, its disappearance will go hand in hand with the transformation of their economic structure by the peoples.

■ Michel Leiris

THE HISTORICAL ROOTS

by *Mikhail Vasilyevich Kriukov*

THROUGHOUT the period of history preceding the division of society into classes, men had no idea of the possible innate differences, determined by nature herself, between ethnic groups. In a society in which social inequality and oppression were unknown, conditions did not favour the growth of ideas of ethnic inequality. Besides, primitive man was incapable of imagining the cultural and racial differences that exist within the human race. His "ethnic horizon" was too narrow, limited as it was to a few neighbouring groups who, more often than not, displayed similar economic and cultural patterns and were not notably different in their anthropological appearance.

The main ethnic groups were formed when tribes merged. They appeared in the last stage of the evolution of prehistoric society. It was then that for the first time men's horizons began to extend beyond their former *orbis terrarum*. Their self-awareness was influenced by the existence outside "their" group of many others who were foreign and in most cases differed in language, in their cultural and other peculiarities.

Nevertheless, at this stage of man's history, the predominant criterion in the confrontation between "them"

and "us" was the tribal, not the cultural, one. Provided it recognized the paramount unity of "our" group, any tribe could join it and vice-versa. Moreover, at this period all "foreign" groups taken together were not regarded as a coherent entity, fundamentally opposed to "us".

The emergence of the first class societies, based on slavery and the exploitation of slave labour, led to a notable change in the ethnic awareness of peoples and in their vision of the world. Slavery by its very nature is conducive to the transposition of the idea of social inequality to relations between peoples, and for the first time in human history, society found itself divided into opposing groups. Henceforth, people of unusual physical appearance and strange culture whom one constantly met face to face during expeditions of conquest were considered as *de facto* or potential slaves, that is to say, as inferior beings. Ancient Egyptian wall-paintings and reliefs often depict foreigners whose appearance differs from that of the other inhabitants of the Nile valley and whose postures or positions reflect their status of subjection, with limited rights.

This contrast introduced by the Egyptians between themselves, the chosen ones of the gods, and all other peoples, was directly reflected in their habit of referring to their neighbours as "barbarians".

Herodotus says that "the Egyptians call all those who do not speak their language 'barbarians' ". This may have been true, but it is not impossible that the father of

MIKHAIL VASILYEVICH KRIUKOV, Soviet ethnographer, is a staff member of the Ethnographical Institute of the Academy of Science of the USSR. He has published many scientific studies including *The Ancient Chinese Language and The Chinese Kinship System*. The article published here has been extracted from his contribution to a collective work, *Races and Society* published in Moscow in 1982.

history was attributing to the Egyptians something which was, in fact, of Greek origin.

In Greek, the word "barbarian" originally meant "he who speaks an incomprehensible language". The appearance of new meanings for the word (barbarian in the sense of "rough", "bestial", "uncouth", etc.) is connected with the idea which emerged of fundamental differences between the Greeks and other peoples.

In the fifth century BC, it was already becoming very common for the Greeks to regard the "barbarians" as inferior beings. Euripides for example asserted that bar-

ferent from that worn in the Middle Empire, their customs, food and drink are different, they speak an incomprehensible language... Consequently a wise government treats barbarians as wild animals".

The Confucians believed that the territory on which the Chinese lived was at the centre of the Celestial Empire, a fact which corresponded to a quite definite arrangement of the heavenly bodies. These determined the cosmic forces of "yin" and "yang" which, in turn, gave birth to the qualities and characteristics of human nature.

In the treatise *Discussion about Salt and Iron*, dating



This "exotic" tree whose fruit turns into birds and fish is an illustration from a botanical treatise published in France in 1605. The author, who intended to write a serious scientific study, mistakenly believed far-fetched travellers' tales from distant countries. Perceptions of peoples from distant lands have often been glibly distorted by ethnocentrism, from which no people in history seems to have been exempt. In many geographical works, in the West and elsewhere, the "foreigner" is presented as a peculiar, inferior, scarcely human creature.

Photo © Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

barians were incapable of understanding the meaning of justice "because their intelligence is inferior to that of the Greeks". This concept achieved its most sophisticated form in the philosophical system of Aristotle.

As the ideologist of a State founded on slavery, Aristotle regarded inequality in social rights as a constituent law of the human being. He assumed man to have two parts, the divine and the animal. Depending on whichever of these predominated in him, a man was destined by nature either to command or to obey.

Contrasting those whose vocation was to rule and think to the slaves who were there to carry out orders and to work, Aristotle at the same time assimilated the concepts of "slave" and "barbarian". He declared that "barbarians are accustomed to thinking as little as possible because they are in a permanent state of servitude". For the Greek philosopher, the difference between barbarians and Greeks lay in the fact that "from birth the barbarians are of a more servile nature than the Greeks". Quite consistently with his own ideas, Aristotle recommended his disciple Alexander of Macedon to care for the Greeks as close relations and to treat barbarians like animals or plants.

This attitude to the question of the "barbarians" had its equivalent in the ideas which prevailed in ancient China. In the first century AD, the Han historian Ban Gu wrote: "the barbarians wear their hair loose and fold their coats on the left side. They have human faces, and hearts like those of wild animals. Their costume is dif-

ferent from that worn in the Middle Empire, their customs, food and drink are different, they speak an incomprehensible language... Consequently a wise government treats barbarians as wild animals".

from the first century BC, we read: "In the border provinces men live in mountains and gorges, the cosmic forces in these places are in a state of disharmony, the land cracks because of the cold and a terrible wind sweeps across the salt deserts. There, sand and stone follow each other. The land remains untilled". In another text the Celestial Empire is described as being "at the centre of Heaven and Earth, where the cosmic forces are in complete harmony. The sun and the moon pass to the South and the Polar Star appears in the North. Because of the harmonious breathing of the land, everything here is more true". Hence, the inhabitants of the Celestial Empire and the "barbarians of the world's four regions" have "characteristics which it is impossible to change".

An equally egocentric theory of the *oikumene* (the inhabited world) was, as we know, current amongst the Greeks. They imagined the inhabited world to be like a circle at whose centre, "half way between the rising and the setting of the sun", lay Greece. Delphi, which was situated in the centre of Greece, was "the world's navel".

The idea that "our" people occupied the centre of the inhabited world and that the surrounding peoples were inevitably inferior in some way was also widely held amongst Persians.

According to Herodotus, "the Persians esteem their immediate neighbours the most highly, then come the people who live farther away, and so on. Their esteem for other peoples is a function of distance, the peoples for whom they have the lowest esteem being those who live ►

► the farthest away from them". This attitude to the classification of ethnic groups implies that somewhere far away, on the outskirts of the *oikumene*, people may resemble animals not only internally but in their outer appearance or indeed may differ from normal human beings because of a peculiar arrangement of the various parts of the body.

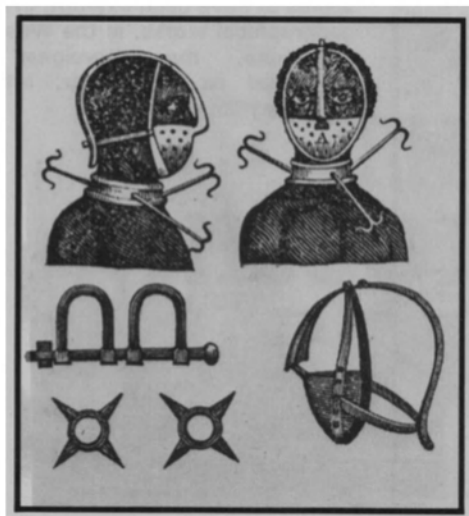
The conviction that distant lands were inhabited by beings who did not look quite human was shared by the authors of a number of geographical works in ancient China. But the introduction of Buddhism changed the idea which the Chinese had of the rest of the world. In the minds of Buddha's disciples, the idea of Chinese racial supremacy was toned down in favour of the idea of a common religion. Since the religious capital of Buddhism was very far from the frontiers of China, the scale of values applied to evaluation of the overall picture of the inhabited world was, as it were, revised.

The episode reported by the Chinese pilgrim Fa-xian in his account of his travels in India in 412-425 is quite illuminating. When asked where he came from, Fa-xian replied that he came "from the land of the Han". This

In his *City of God*, Saint Augustine (354-430) categorically rejects the theory that the monsters who were believed to inhabit the limits of the earth were descended from Noah's sons: "Either the stories about these monsters are pure invention or, if they do exist, they are not men. If they are really men, then they are descended from Adam". With Saint Augustine the idea of the unity of the human race is based upon acceptance of biblical teaching concerning the creation of man.

As a matter of fact, medieval European writers admitted only one fundamental difference between men—there were the Christians and, confronting them, the pagans. It should not, however, be thought that the reign of religious ideology necessarily meant that the peoples of Christendom considered themselves to be fully equal amongst each other.

It is rightly said of the Renaissance that it was the period when man discovered Humanity. Interest in the Greco-Roman scientific heritage led to the spread of many of the ideas expressed by ancient writers. The ethnic horizon of Europeans was also considerably enlarged by the great geographical discoveries. It became



The external slave trade from Africa south of the Sahara between the 15th and the 19th centuries involved, according to some experts, the export of not less than 19 million people. Whatever the exact figure of the population loss suffered by Africa as a result of the slave trade may be it can give only a pale idea of the consequences of this haemorrhage on the cultural and economic development of the country. Left, iron mask, collar and manacles used to prevent slaves escaping.

Photo © Edimedia, Paris

statement astonished the Buddhist monks who exclaimed: "How have people from such a distant land been able to come as far as here?" Thus the Middle Empire was situated on the outskirts of the Buddhist world. And it was not by chance that Fa-xien did not use this term to designate China. For him, the Middle Empire was India.

One of the factors which most influenced the ethnic awareness of the European peoples in the Early Middle Ages was the spread of Christianity. The position of orthodox Christian doctrine regarding differentiation between races and cultures is based on two postulates—the fact that the human race is descended from Adam, and the idea that degeneration was a result of original sin.

The banishment of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden and Abel's murder were followed by the wanderings of Cain, who left his parents in order to found a family of his own. But Adam's younger son continued his father's line. One of the representatives of this line was Noah. He fathered three sons who, after the Flood, founded three separate branches of the human race. From Ham were descended the peoples of Egypt, Ethiopia and Canaan; from Japheth: the Cimmerians, the peoples of Magog, the Ionians and others; from Shem the Elamites, Assyrians, Lydians, Hebrews and others. The peoples who participated in the building of the Tower of Babel were already so different from each other that they were unable to understand each other. At this point in the history of the human race, changes also appeared in the physical types which became less and less like the ideal type, who was Adam.

evident that the differences between human groups were infinitely greater than was hitherto supposed.

The origin of the American Indians, of which not the slightest mention could be found in Holy Scripture, proved to be a particularly difficult question. The desire to reconcile Old Testament teaching and new ethnographic information led to the elaboration of a large number of theories according to which the American Indians were a branch of one or other of the European peoples—Greek, Roman, Carthaginian or even Welsh. This solution to the problem was officially sanctioned by Pope Julius II, who proclaimed in a Bull of 1512 that American Indians, like the rest of mankind, were descended from Adam.

The opinion advanced by the French scholar Isaac de la Peyrère (1594-1676) was radically different. In his treatise, *Praeadamitiae*, which was published in 1655 and created quite a stir, he cast doubts on the explanation of the origin of all the peoples of the world derived from the Old Testament version of man's origin. He did not question the accuracy of the biblical story, but maintained that it reflected events which related only to a limited area. If this point of view were accepted, Adam could be regarded as the ancestor of the Jews, but the American Indians, for example, must have had their own Adam. Thus, the creation of man was not a single, isolated act. Several different places existed on the earth where man appeared. This idea finally gave rise to anti-scientific theories of all kinds which transformed racial differentiation into an absolute.

■ Mikhail Vasilyevich Kriukhov

ETHNOCIDE

For the past few years, increasing concern has been expressed at various international forums over the problem of the loss of cultural identity. This complex process, which has historical, social, political and economic roots, has been termed "ethnocide".

Ethnocide means that an ethnic group is denied the right to enjoy, develop and transmit its own culture and its own language, whether collectively or individually. This involves an extreme form of massive violation of human rights and, in particular, the right of ethnic groups to respect for their cultural identity and the right of all individuals and peoples to be different, to consider themselves as different and to be regarded as such, a right recognized in the Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice adopted by the Unesco General Conference in 1978.

We publish below the conclusions of a meeting of experts on the study of ethno-development and ethnocide in Africa, convened by Unesco and held in Ouagadougou, Upper Volta, from 31 January to 4 February 1983.

AFRICA is becoming increasingly aware of the danger of rapid extinction facing cultures and collective identity throughout the continent, a danger that is particularly acute in the case of certain peoples.

This danger, in the broadest sense, consists in a general encroachment upon the common African substratum.

In southern Africa, this onslaught is of particularly menacing proportions as a result of apartheid and the establishment of Bantustans; the concept of ethnic groups is used to paralyse, divide and destroy the personality and basic structures of an entire people.

In addition, some peoples, most of them nomadic herdsmen or hunters and gatherers, are being subjected to an insidious process that seeks to deny their cultural identity and ultimately their existence as peoples.

These various forms of aggression should be analysed in terms of

ethnocide, and an in-depth study of their causes and consequences is needed.

Although most African societies tolerated pluralism, certain outside influences have contributed to the introduction of practices of economic domination and cultural alienation which continue to this day.

One of these influences was the slave-trade, especially the trans-atlantic slave-trade, which resulted in the decline of certain peoples or the permanent vitiation of their structures.

Colonialism developed throughout virtually the entire continent of Africa an integral, generalized system of ethnocide which struck at every aspect of Africans' daily lives.

Political and legal structures, for example, were superimposed on the existing structures, shattering Africans' traditional organization in order to subject them more completely to outside interests.

Economic organization and the social and human fabric of life, towns and countryside alike, were thus redirected in response to external factors.

These various processes were accompanied by far-reaching changes in value systems, patterns of thought and of transmission of knowledge which give the full measure of colonial ethnocide.

These phenomena subsist in various political, legal, economic, social and cultural forms.

The maintenance of certain political and administrative structures, the persistence of mimesis, and the introduction of institutions and ideologies that are inappropriate to the African situation have hampered the African peoples in assuming control of their lives in any meaningful sense.

Imported systems of law, displacing customary law, have seriously disturbed human, economic and social relationships.

Economic relations, for example, both within communities and with the outside world, have generally been based exclusively on the profit motive, and have thus been destructive of the former social cohesiveness and solidarity.

Education has borrowed extensively from foreign models, thereby helping to reproduce those models and spread their effects around, in a way that is totally at variance with traditional education.

Modernization based exclusively on Western science and technology has eclipsed and discredited the African scientific and technological heritage, especially in the areas in which it is particularly rich, such as art, agriculture, housing, medicine and pharmacology.

The universalist pretensions of this approach also rule out any utilization of the extensive knowledge of the peoples concerned about the environments in which they live.

In an effort to resist this ongoing ethnocide, the international community has adopted legal instruments and structures which time has shown to be inadequate to deal with the seriousness of certain situations.



Photo Michel Claude, Unesco

The magic of the artist lies in his ability to invest the specificities of his own culture with a quality of universality. In so doing he not only proclaims the unique character of his own culture but also offers people of other cultures the means of comprehending it more fully. Above, painting by the contemporary Congolese artist Cyril Bokotaki.

► Similarly, within the various countries, legislative measures have not always yielded the hoped-for results.

It is thus essential to address the issue of the protection of human rights at both the international and national levels with a view to checking the violation of the rights and cultural identities of peoples and securing more effective protection for minorities.

In order for this effort to be fully meaningful, it should be incorporated into comprehensive political, economic, social and cultural strategies.

The restitution of certain powers to communities at the grassroots level, in order *inter alia* to enable them to organize themselves and manage their own environments, is the primary precondition.

In economic and social matters, those communities should also be allowed the possibility to develop their own blueprints for society integrating, among other things, production and consumption processes while fitting harmoniously into the national and inter-African context.

In this connexion, mixed technologies with inputs from African creativity, both traditional and contemporary, have an important role to play.

The use of African languages should be encouraged, especially within the framework of an appropriate educational system to be designed in close liaison with the productive sectors.

Similarly, renewed recognition of the validity of traditional medicine and pharmacology would not only improve the general level of health but would

facilitate the reintegration of communities into their own cultures.

These efforts and these prospects for organic development should enable African communities and peoples, while resisting ethnocidal processes, to participate in and contribute to human progress in general and also to preserve their own values and aspirations.

The African and international intellectual and scientific community is invited to give priority to research and studies that might contribute to those aims for the future.

Political and administrative leaders, international institutions, worldwide and regional, and non-governmental organizations are urged to facilitate, in so far as possible, such strategies and projects as might help to release the creative genius of the African peoples. ■

For all practical social purposes "race" is not so much a biological phenomenon as a social myth. The myth of "race" has created an enormous amount of human and social damage. In recent years it has taken a heavy toll in human lives and caused untold suffering. It still prevents the normal development of millions of human beings and deprives civilization of the effective co-operation of productive minds.

Statement on Race, Unesco, Paris, July 1950

② Racism today

'US' AND 'THEM'

by Albert Memmi

AFTER twenty years of observation, reflection, research and studies "in the field", I am convinced that racism is a rotten plank. I am not speaking only of its moral aspect, but of its very logic. No aspect of racism stands up to examination. The ideas are inconsistent, the arguments dishonest, and the conclusions either doubtful or crazy.

If the enormous quantity of writings in support of racism were to be summarized, they would be found to consist broadly of three assertions—firstly that there are pure races; secondly, that these pure races are biologically superior and consequently psychologically and culturally superior; and thirdly, that these forms of superiority explain and justify their predominance and their socio-historical privileges.

Now, even a cursory examination reveals how fragile each of these propositions is. Man's present biological nature developed, and is still developing, in the course of continuous cross-breeding processes. In this context, therefore, the concept of purity is no more than a metaphor, wishful thinking, fantasy. This is not to say that men do not differ from each other. They do, both culturally and even biologically. But, surprisingly, the most recent scientific research reveals on the contrary that the differences are so fragmented that it is impossible to make a given social group coincide with any one biological profile. Nor is the concept of superiority any more sustainable on a functional level. There is nothing to prove that biological superiority, assuming that it exists, leads to psychological or cultural superiority. Finally, it is difficult to see why any form of natural superiority should involve economic or social advantages. One may so decide, but that is what is called a privilege. In short, contrary to a widely held opinion, there is no scientific theory nor even a clear distinct concept of racism.

However, although it should have been disposed of long ago, the issue continues to provide a subject for endless debate. Why?

It is precisely because racism, being a pseudo-theory and a pseudo-concept, has nothing to do with reason but is a mythical, rationalized projection of a lived, emotional, confused experience. This happens whenever an individual or group comes into contact with another individual or group that is different or unfamiliar; there is a reaction of uneasiness or distrust, with an aggressive gesture of rejection—all of which, incidentally, does not exclude an ambiguous feeling of hope that the encounter may bring some reciprocal advantage.

This is not the place to engage in a detailed description of this very ancient mode of behaviour, which is inscribed in the history of man. Suffice it to say simply that it is based on a combination of fear and competition for survival. In order to survive, man seeks to defend his integrity and his possessions and, on occasions, to appropriate those of his neighbour, whether they be movable or im-

movable property, food, raw materials, territory, women, real or imaginary religious, cultural or symbolical assets. Man is both aggressor and the object of aggression, both terrifying and terrified.

However, this aggressive rejection of another is not yet exactly racism. The racist way of thinking is based on this rejection, and on pre-existing cultural and social facts. It is a pseudo-justification for aggression and profit in the name of differences which are supposed to confer a superiority on the accuser and to render his victim inferior. It is good and beautiful to be white and conversely, it is bad and ugly to be black—hence the rightful privileges.

It is evident that on the one hand racism or, in other words, alleged racial superiority based on alleged biological purity, is no more than an ideological apparatus, one amongst many alibis for domination and expropriation, and that on the other hand it forms part of a more general mechanism which embraces it as a special case.

For this reason, I think it is necessary to point out both this general character of a form of human behaviour which is unfortunately only too common, and the specific character of racism. Otherwise the false problems associated with racism will continue to obscure the permanent drama represented by the aggressive rejection of others. To make the distinction more clear, I have proposed that this terrified, aggressive rejection be designated by a new word, *heterophobia*, and that the term racism be henceforth reserved for that variety of heterophobia which exploits the fear engendered by biological and racial difference in order to justify aggression and privilege. Similarly any operational definition should cover both this wider meaning and this strict meaning of the same form of behaviour. I therefore suggested the following formulation, which has been adopted by the *Encyclopedia Universalis* and which Unesco has done me the honour of using as a basis for its own definition: *Racism is the generalized, permanent exploitation of real or imaginary biological differences, to the advantage of the accuser and to the detriment of his victim, for the purpose of justifying aggression.*

As will be seen, it is sufficient to delete the term "biological" in order to get a definition of heterophobia. Racist attitudes and behaviour are like "swing-wing", or variable geometry aircraft: any kind of difference can be exploited provided it appears to justify the rejection of others and to legitimize any form of advantage.

At the same time, we can perceive what could constitute a single criterion for replying to those closely related questions which embarrass contemporary consciences—what connexion is there between anti-semitism and the slave trade? Can one speak of prejudice against women or young people as forms of racism? Is there also a form of racism affecting the poor and oppressed? etc. To establish the connexion between these forms of behaviour, one has only to ask oneself what advantage a particular aggressor could derive from them at the expense of a particular victim.

Incidentally each of these forms of behaviour could be designated by a term which would indicate its specificity within the general scheme of heterophobia. Thus, *negrophobia* would mean racism with specific reference to black people, *judaophobia* the

ALBERT MEMMI, whose works have been published in some 20 countries, has many qualifications to describe the different manifestations of racism. Notable among his works published in English are *The Colonizer and the Colonized* (Souvenir Press, London, 1974) with a preface by Jean-Paul Sartre, and *The Pillar of Salt* (1955) with a preface by Albert Camus. His most recent book is *Le Racisme* (Gallimard publishers, Paris, 1982).

Available scientific knowledge provides no basis for believing that the groups of mankind differ in their innate capacity for intellectual and emotional development.

Some biological differences between human beings within a single race may be as great as, or greater than, the same biological differences between races.

Vast social changes have occurred that have not been connected in any way with changes in racial type. Historical and sociological studies thus support the view that genetic differences are of little significance in determining the social and cultural differences between different groups of men.

Statement on the Nature of Race and Race Differences,
Unesco, Paris, June 1951

► aggressive rejection of Jews (anti-semitism, which is an excessively broad term, would have to be dropped), *arabophobia* the rejection of Arabs (today resurgent and based, paradoxically, both on the wretched condition of immigrant workers and on fears aroused by the oil crisis).

The lessons of history provide us with the best confirmation. The main characteristics of the victims of present-day racism are sufficiently well dated and sociologically legible. It is clear that racism as a doctrine is of recent origin and that it still has practical applications. In the sixteenth century the Spaniards contrasted Spain's "civilizing mission" in America to the "natural inferiority" and even "perversity" of the Indians, hence the legitimacy of the European conquest and settlement. Thus, the systematic attempt to justify aggression against, and domination of, one group, described as biologically (and psychologically) inferior, by another group, held to be superior, is contemporaneous with the beginnings of colonization.

There is an obvious correlation between the black slave trade, which reached its climax in the seventeenth century, and the first arguments used in support of biological racism. True, the first element of such a demonstration can be found in certain ancient writers. Aristotle favoured a social order based upon slavery, which

he attempted to justify by reason of the natural inferiority of the Barbarians, who were to act as slaves to the Greeks. But these are isolated cases, and where it was present at all, biological stigmatization played only a very secondary rôle. This latter system of argument, which obviously had mercantile advantages, came into its own with the growth of the slave trade.

Anti-semitism is of course very ancient, but it was originally a religious or national issue. It appeared as a racist doctrine only much later, simultaneously with the relative social emancipation of the Jews and their consequent emergence as economic competitors. It is interesting to observe an additional confirmation here. Whenever difficulties of a social nature emerge or become aggravated, there is a reawakening of anti-semitism, as though the anxieties of the peoples among whom they live were crystallized in the Jews. The fact is that they are particularly convenient victims. As negative stereotypes who are already widely scattered and familiar, they can easily be used as scapegoats.

In short, then, it is only relatively recently that attempts have been made to provide a systematic explanation of racism based on an alleged science. Joseph-Arthur Gobineau, who was one of the initiators of racism, already based himself on a comparative analysis of the brain in order to assert that that of the Huron could not contain, even in embryonic form, a mind similar to that of a European. Even scientists of excellent reputation were not far from sharing these opinions. Linnaeus and Georges-Louis Buffon were not free from prejudices which paved the way for a self-styled scientific racism. The authority of Darwin was also invoked, and at the end of the nineteenth century educated Europe was convinced that the human species was divided into superior and inferior races (see Ernest Renan and the anthropologist Paul Broca).

The soil thus prepared was destined to produce some extraordinary harvests. Gobineau was to produce violently anti-Jewish successors in France, but it was in Germany above all that his ideas, combined with a tradition of anti-semitism, led to concentrations, deportations and genocidal extermination of entire populations. In Italy, Fascism sought to justify Italian hegemony over other peoples judged inferior (the Ethiopian campaign). In the Slav countries, pan-slavist movements sought in literature, customs and language alleged proofs of a superiority which led them to approve or even promote bloody actions. The Anglo-Saxon countries did not escape the contagion. As a result of research conducted by the Englishman Francis Galton, experts seriously considered ways to combat the proliferation of other races. In the United States, some people tried to promote a veritable "ethnological crusade", and South Africa based its institutions on Apartheid. (A manner of expressing their "difference" adopted recently, for example, by certain regionalists and certain young nations is not at times without undertones of intolerance and sectarianism).

A comparison of these various doctrines—social and cultural as well as biological—clearly reveals a constant factor, irrespective of their specific characteristics or local circumstances: in the name of a biological or other form of superiority, one human group believes itself entitled to assert itself over another and to have recourse for that purpose even to violence and murder.

Thus we find at the same time the answer to the most recent questions with which people are concerned. Racism was a convenient ideology for rising colonialism, for the black slave trade and for anti-semitism. It can still be useful on a wide scale. The Algerian war, followed by the presence of millions of immigrant workers in France and throughout Europe provided and still provides.



Photo © Edimedia, Paris. Bibliothèque Nationale

The ancient myth of the "noble savage" popularized in the 18th century by Jean-Jacques Rousseau presents a utopian image of the Amerindian as "primitive man" living in a state of nature. Such a conception has clearly inspired this 16th-century depiction of a South American Indian chief who is shown half naked yet with the undeniable air of a "gentleman".



Photo USIS

Dr. Martin Luther King, winner of the 1964 Nobel Prize for Peace, addresses participants in a "Prayer Pilgrimage for Freedom" in front of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C. It was here, on 28 August 1963, five years before he was assassinated, that he uttered these famous words:

So I say to you, my friends, that even though we must face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed—we hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal.

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, sons of former slaves and sons of former slave-owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day, even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by content of their character. I have a dream today!

favourable ground for arabophobia, renewed negrophobia and, more generally, the aggressive rejection of immigrants, which I also suggest be included in the general concept of heterophobia—the complex of fear of others and aggressiveness towards them.

Is there such a thing as "racism" against women? Strictly speaking, obviously no, since women do not constitute either a race or people or even a definite socio-economic group. But heterophobia towards women does exist, and it is more widespread than one might think—fears and aggressive impulses and justification of these forms of behaviour by means of disparaging ideologies which possess the twofold advantage of exorcizing these fears and confirming men in their alleged superiority and their real advantages. Can we also apply the term "racism" to the ostracism of which young people are often victims? It is easy to follow the same line of reasoning and to include this phenomenon under the heading of heterophobia. Young people, especially young men, are probably

felt as an obscurely dangerous force capable of destabilizing society. It is amusing to observe that here as in the case of women, the biological dimension is not entirely absent. A young man or an adolescent can inspire physical apprehension. To a questionnaire sent to me by specialist educators, I felt obliged to reply that persons with motor or mental handicaps could inspire such apprehensions and provide pretexts both for rejections and "assertions" by healthy people. Finally, yes, racism or heterophobia can and does exist amongst deprived persons and former victims, in all groups, including all social classes.

I do not propose to conclude by broaching the subject of possible practical applications. Nevertheless, it is well realized that, unless account is taken of the tenacity and complexity of heterophobia, the fight against racism will, I fear, remain in the realm of pious wishes and good conscience cheaply purchased.

■ Albert Memmi

Action against prejudice, intolerance and racism in the field of education

As part of its Major Programme XII, Unesco aims to:

- make individuals, communities and nations aware of the manifestations of intolerance and racism and to rally them against such things;
- help change the attitudes and behaviour of individuals, groups and nations towards one another by providing them with the means of understanding other cultures better.

Action in the field of education will be carried out on three levels:

1. education policies, planning and structures, in order to prevent discriminatory treatment and the transmission of prejudices, intolerance and spirit of discrimination (racial or ethnic);
2. the training of teachers, in order to make them both more aware of the importance of their role and more

alert to prejudice, intolerance and racism. Exchanges of teachers to familiarize them with different cultural backgrounds might, for example, be organized;

3. textbooks and teaching materials, which sometimes glorify heroes and events in racist terms or, conversely, do not give sufficient prominence to historical figures who have worked in the cause of tolerance and respect for all cultures. Within this context, exchanges of textbooks and teaching material will be encouraged in order to facilitate the revision of their contents and sharpen the critical faculties of teachers and of students.

In this way Unesco is emphasizing the need to inculcate new mental attitudes and thus to counter the evils of racism, since many negative attitudes and prejudices are formed in the early years of childhood and are reinforced during the educational process.

TREASON TRIAL

The
ACCUSED

DECEMBER
1956

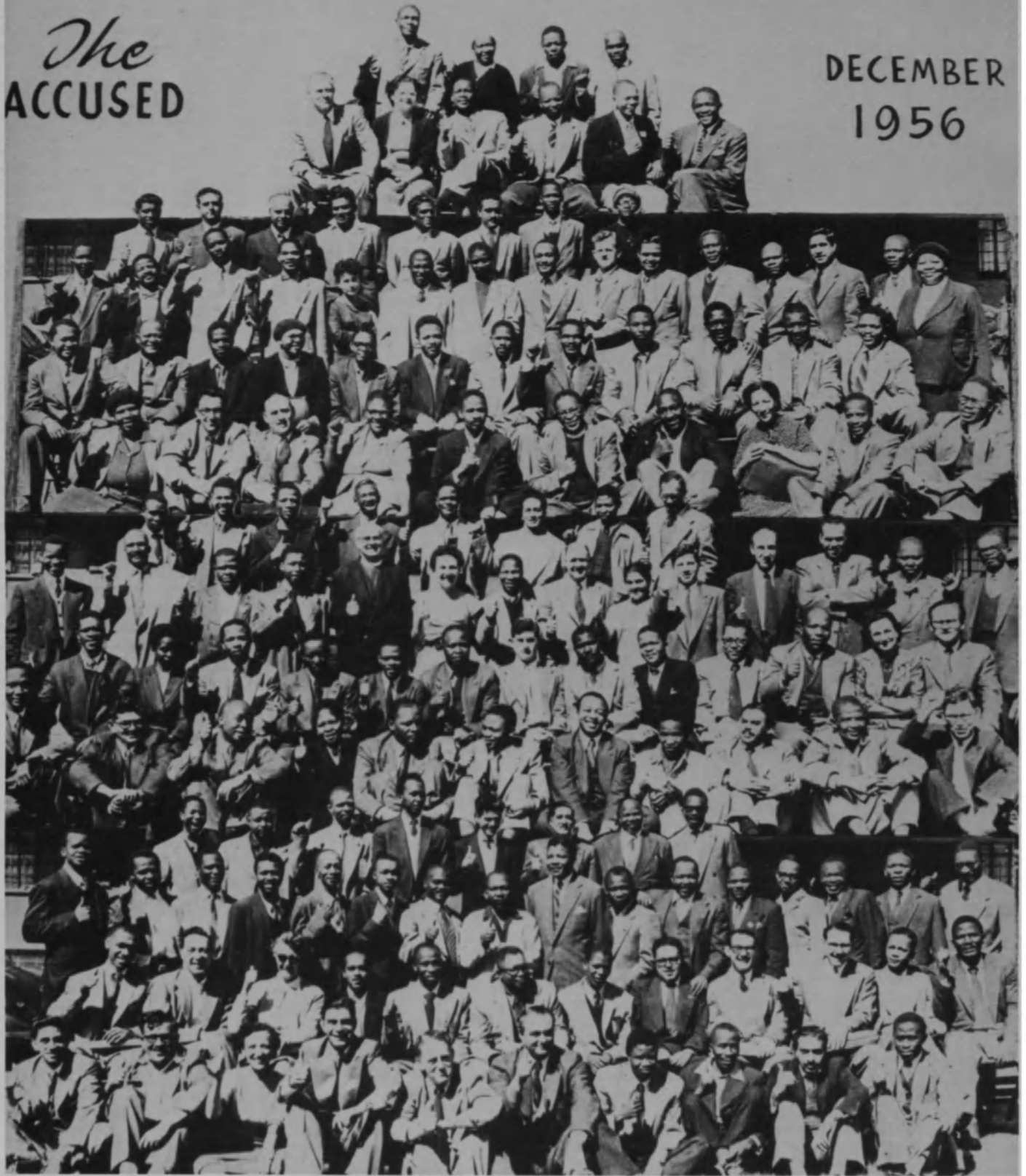


Photo © Eli Wenberg

Throughout 1955 and 1956, the South African police conducted a series of raids on the offices and private homes of hundreds of opponents of apartheid. Documents, letters, pamphlets, even pieces of clothing were seized in preparation for a show trial. Then, early on the morning of 5 December 1956, police descended on the homes of leaders of the Congress Alliance and arrested them. One hundred and fifty-six people—104 Africans, 23 Whites, 21 Indians and 8 Coloureds—were charged with high treason, a capital offence in South Africa. Although the majority of the accused were soon released, almost every day for the next four and a half years, thirty of them had to sit in court and listen to an endless recital of long documents, garbled versions of meetings of the African National Congress and the fabrications of paid informers. The Treason Trial finally ended with the acquittal and discharge of all the accused, a rare event in South Africa where such trials usually result in the imposition of the death penalty, life sentences, or long periods of imprisonment. Above, a group photograph of all the accused. Nelson Mandela, the African National Congress leader, is in the third row from the front, eighth from the right. Mandela was re-arrested in 1962, condemned to life imprisonment and has been incarcerated ever since.

③ Apartheid: the doctrine of a racist State

THE SHAMEFUL RECORD

by Basil Davidson

THE history of *apartheid* is the record of a racism conceived and used by small white minorities in South Africa in order to dominate a large black majority, deprive this majority of its land, and maximize the exploitation of its labour for the benefit of the whites and their foreign partners. As such, it is a record which begins very soon after the arrival of the earliest Dutch settlers at the Cape of Good Hope in 1652: almost from the first, these settlers and all other settlers who followed them from Holland, Britain, France or elsewhere, considered that they had the right to dispossess the African inhabitants in any way and to any degree that could be profitable and convenient.

In no essentials, since those early years, has anything changed in the relationship between "whites" and "blacks" (the latter being taken to include Asians and Coloured of a mixed origin) except the "language of legality" and a vast increase of actual dispossession. Crude forms of outright enslavement have developed, step by step, into the sophisticated laws and regulations of a racism whose instrumental force, for those who apply it and those who have to suffer it, is in everyday reality no different from a legalized servitude.

The squalid politics of an "inter-white" rivalry for the fruits of this instrumental racism may often fill our newspapers, as the Afrikaans-speaking minority plays out a charade of parliamentary conflict with the English-speaking minority; they remain, as in the past, only a mask for the solid unity of interest and intention, between these two white minorities, that joins them in exploitation of the black majority.

There are other masks to be thrust aside. *Apartheid* is sometimes portrayed, up and down the world, as an invention of the Afrikaans-speaking minority—or by its first elected parliamentary majority of 1948—as a means of realizing its own peculiar doctrine of Calvinist belief. But that is to misrepresent the meaning of the system, or, rather, to "theorize" that meaning in terms of a subjectivity

which certainly exists, but which covers an objective meaning of infinitely greater force. This objective meaning differs, in truth, only in degree from any other form of colonial racism, always the instrument of a *mise en valeur*, of "getting out the profits", whether in the British, French or any other colonial system. *Apartheid* is colonial racism carried to an extreme.

These may sound harsh conclusions, but they are what the history of South Africa has to teach us.

Up to 1899 the white politics of all the lands south of the Limpopo river—the lands that form modern South Africa—were largely those of military power used to defeat black resistance. Broadly, those politics were contained within two areas of competition. As soon as the British were established securely at the Cape of Good Hope, following victory over the French fleet at Trafalgar in 1805, they embarked on a long series of what were euphemistically called "frontier wars". Against continuous black resistance, not always defeated, British forces pushed east and north-eastward from their little colony at the Cape, invading and dispossessing one African community after another until their final conquest of the Zulu kingdom in 1879.

The descendants of the Dutch settlers (enlarged by immigration from Holland but still more by unadmitted unions with black women) had meanwhile gone some way towards forming themselves into a distinctive nation, the Afrikaner *volk*, and by this time spoke a variant of Dutch which was already beginning to be a distinctive language, Afrikaans. They were far too weak in numbers and technology to tackle strong African communities such as the Xhosa and the Zulu, whose destruction as independent entities was left to the British, but were strong enough to dispossess a wide range of small African communities. These lived to the west of the areas of British conquest, and were duly enclosed in the Afrikaner (or Boer, a term simply meaning "farmer") republics of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal.

By the 1880s, accordingly, there were four white political units: the two British colonies of the Cape and of Natal, and the two Afrikaner republics in the north and west. All were farming communities, each of them practically without the beginnings of any industrial production, living in a typical colonial fashion by exporting wool and other products of the land in exchange for such manufactured imports as they could afford. Diamonds had been discovered in quantity at ►

BASIL DAVIDSON, British writer and historian, is an authority on African history and current affairs and is at present preparing a series of eight one-hour programmes on African history for British and other national television networks. His many books on Africa include *Liberation of Guiné (1969)*, with a preface by Amílcar Cabral, and *In the Eye of the Storm: Angola's People (1972)*.

► Kimberley as early as 1867, and in 1871 the British duly annexed these diamond fields which became, a little later, the scene of a veritable "diamond rush", with a railway completed from the Cape to Kimberley in 1885. But even this new source of wealth could change little in the general picture. What changed everything, and soon with violent drama, was the proving in 1884-6 of the great goldfields of the Witwatersrand in the Transvaal Republic.

These goldfields promised the wealth of Croesus to those who could exploit them, but, being deep seams with a relatively low gold content per ton of ore, they demanded an intensive capitalization. For reasons imperialist and narrowly economic, major British interests now saw that they must secure political control of a Transvaal governed by farmers who had little or no interest in large-scale capitalist development. After many skirmishes there followed the Anglo-Afrikaner war of 1899, provoked by the British and won by the British, though at a sorry cost in lives, two years later. This victory marked the beginning of modern South Africa.

Having won the war, the British were quick to reassure their Afrikaner opponents that systematic discrimination against the black majority would be written into the foundation of the Union of South Africa (that is, the union of Cape Colony, Natal, Transvaal, and the Orange Free State) which followed in 1910. For thirty-eight years after that, the English-speaking minority generally dominated the all-white parliament of a now-independent Union, but invariably on *apartheid* lines.

This new parliament lost no time in guaranteeing a systematic racism. In 1911, a Native Labour Regulation Act provided for the legalization—much elaborated and tightened up in later years—of an all-embracing discrimination against black wage-earners. In 1913 the parliament went much further. It passed a Land Act which reserved some ninety per cent of the total land surface of the Union for white ownership, and reduced the area available for black ownership to the remaining ten per cent (less at the beginning, today about thirteen per cent). These small areas where Africans could own land were named Native Reserves, and rapidly became what they were intended to be: destitute reservoirs of black labour for the "white areas". Within the latter, some ninety per cent of the land surface, new laws restricted black rights of residence, movement, employment, and even leisure.

In 1923 came the Natives (Urban Areas) Act which was to remain, with the Land Act of 1913, the foundation of all white policy towards blacks, and so remains to this day. Essentially, it was a weapon of physical segregation within the "white areas"; and the policy which was held to justify it was called "separate development". The effective meaning of this policy was defined by the African scholar Z.K. Matthews in 1944, when he described this Act of 1923 as providing for "the separation of black and white, not with the idea of protecting each group in regard to its basic interests, but the separation of the groups in order to facilitate the subordination of one group to the other—the exploitation of one group by the other".

But an official and of course all-white government commission of 1921, two years before the Act became law, had already put the matter more clearly. It laid down the basic principle of white supremacy. This was that "the native [a term invariably meaning the black or non-white inhabitant] should only be allowed to enter urban areas, which are essentially the white man's creation, when he is willing to enter and to minister to the needs of the white man, and he should depart therefrom when he ceases so to minister". What "minister" meant, very precisely, was that the black man should work for the white man at whatever level of wages, and under whatever conditions of work, that the white man might concede. George Bernard Shaw, visiting South Africa soon after, called that country a slave State; and it is really quite hard to think that he was wrong.

This dispensation, ensuring cheap and captive black labour in ninety per cent of the land surface, was further protected by "pass laws" which required—and require today—detailed police supervision of any black employment or shift of residence, and much else besides, and, beyond these "pass laws", by customs and regulations designed to

prevent or punish any black-white "commingling"—except, naturally, whenever convenient to whites, as in the case of black nannies for white children, or black cooks for white ladies.

Such was the system by which the parliament of South Africa ruled the country so long as the English-speaking minority retained control of the laws. In erecting it the British had fully realized their aims in conquering the Afrikaner republics: they had provided an "ideal structure" for the development of a specific capitalism fuelled by British capital, which entered the country increasingly after 1920, and which ensured the English-speaking majority of a uniquely high standard of living while, at the same time, providing a uniquely high rate of profit for investors in Britain.

CONTINUED PAGE 21



Photo © Peter Magubane, International Defence and Aid Fund for South Africa, London

The face of hunger

*I counted ribs on his concertina chest
bones protruding as if chiselled
by a sculptor's hand of famine.*

*He looked with glazed pupils
seeing only a bun on some sky-high shelf.*

*The skin was pale and taut
like a glove on a doctor's hand.*

*His tongue darted in and out
like a chameleon's
snatching a confetti of flies.*

*O! child,
your stomach is a den of lions
roaring day and night.*

Oswald Mbuyiseni Mtshali

UNESCO, THE UNITED NATIONS AND SOUTH AFRICA

THE racial policies of the Government of South Africa have been before the United Nations since the first session of the General Assembly in 1946. India, in that year, brought before the Assembly a complaint that the Government of what was then the Union of South Africa had enacted legislation which discriminated against South Africans of Indian origin. The two Acts specifically aimed at Indians were the so-called Pegging Act which froze Indian land transactions in parts of Natal and the Transvaal and the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act (1946) which extended the provisions of the Pegging Act to the whole of Natal and the Transvaal and which introduced communal—and separate—political rights.

UN protests were ignored by the South African Government. Not only was the Asian Land Tenure Act enforced, in 1948 the National Party came to power with a political platform based on "apartheid" or the separation of races. The Group Areas Act No. 41 of 1950 was designed to enforce this separation in urban areas.

In conformity with its terms, Africans were concentrated in townships at the edge of "white" cities, while Indians were further restricted to specific urban areas. Separation was accompanied by a major campaign of racial classification. The Population Registration Act of 1950, with its later amendments, provided for the classification of the South African population into three main groups: whites, coloured and Africans with the Asians constituting a sub-group in the coloured group.

In the same year two other acts were enacted which were basic to South Africa's apartheid policy: the abolition of the Native Representative Council (created in 1936 by the South African Government and composed of whites and Africans), the Suppression of Communism Act with its far-reaching powers to restrict individuals and organizations and the first stages of a statute designed to deprive the coloured people of the Cape of the common roll franchise they had enjoyed for nearly a century.

The General Assembly of the United Nations replied with Resolution 395 (V) of 2 December 1950. This stated that "a policy of racial segregation (apartheid) is necessarily based on doctrines of racial discrimination". Resolution 395 (V)

was followed by Resolution 551 (VI) of 12 January 1952, 615 (VII) of 5 December 1952, and 719 (VIII) of 11 November 1953. These resolutions were principally designed to obtain from the South African Government a reversal of its Urban Areas Acts as well as an extension of its franchise beyond the white population.

In 1953 the National Party again won the election considerably increasing its majority. The extent of this victory practically destroyed the traditional white opposition parties and groups. The election results also proved that the policy of apartheid had wide support among the white population going beyond the confines of the Afrikaner population.

In 1953 the Bantu Education Act of 1953 was passed. This empowered the Minister to prescribe the medium of instruction in government Bantu schools. This Act marked the collapse of English as the principal medium in some African schools and the introduction of Bantu education as part of the Government's enforced tribalism.

In 1954, the General Assembly "invited" the Government of South Africa to reconsider its position in the light of the principles of the Charter. In 1955, the Assembly "expressed its concern" about the policies of the South African Government. In 1957, the General Assembly "appealed" to the Government to revise its policy.

After the introduction of the Bantu Education Act of 1953, the Government introduced a ceiling on its financial contributions from the general revenues. In 1955/56 this was fixed at an annual amount which was insufficient and substantially undermined the financial basis for the expansion of African education. Taxation was increased for Africans worsening an already unjust tax system. The Native (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act was further amended in 1956 and 1957, the Native Administration Act of 1927 was further amended in 1956. This gave wide powers to the State President with regard to the removal of Africans or their banishment to specific parts of the territory. The Industrial Conciliation Act, 1956, permitted the government to prohibit the replacement of employees of one race by those of another race, to reserve certain types of jobs to persons of a specified race and to fix the number or percentage of persons of a particular race to be employed in particular industries. ▶

► The reaction to General Assembly resolutions was a denial of the right in terms of Article 2 (7) of the General Assembly to discuss the issue. This position of South Africa was coupled with certain proposals as South Africa faced the beginning of the modern period of the anti-colonial revolution in Africa. In 1953, Dr. Malan argued that the removal of Western control would open the way for Communist influence in Africa and objected to any idea of admitting black African States to the British Commonwealth.

Instead, he proposed an "African Charter" which would elaborate a common policy between the Western colonial powers and South Africa with regard to the whole of Africa.

Meanwhile in 1950 Unesco had launched its race programme and begun to publish and disseminate Statements on Race which struck at the heart of South Africa's ideology of apartheid. The Statements, signed by leading scientists, affirmed the equality of races and in particular that inter-marriage had no negative results. In South Africa inter-marriage was specifically prohibited by the Prevention of Immorality Act which was an extension of the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act of 1949.

Unesco also published a number of scientific studies on racism. These were widely circulated in a number of countries. Within South Africa, the Institute of Race Relations was reorganized and expanded in 1955-1956. The Institute gave publicity to and circulated Unesco's statements and booklets. This was in a situation where, as we have seen before, the white opposition had practically collapsed after the 1953 elections. On 5 April 1955 South Africa gave notice of its withdrawal from the Organization giving as its reason "the interference in South African racial problems by means of Unesco publications which are being advertised and distributed in the Union by the South African Institute of Race Relations".

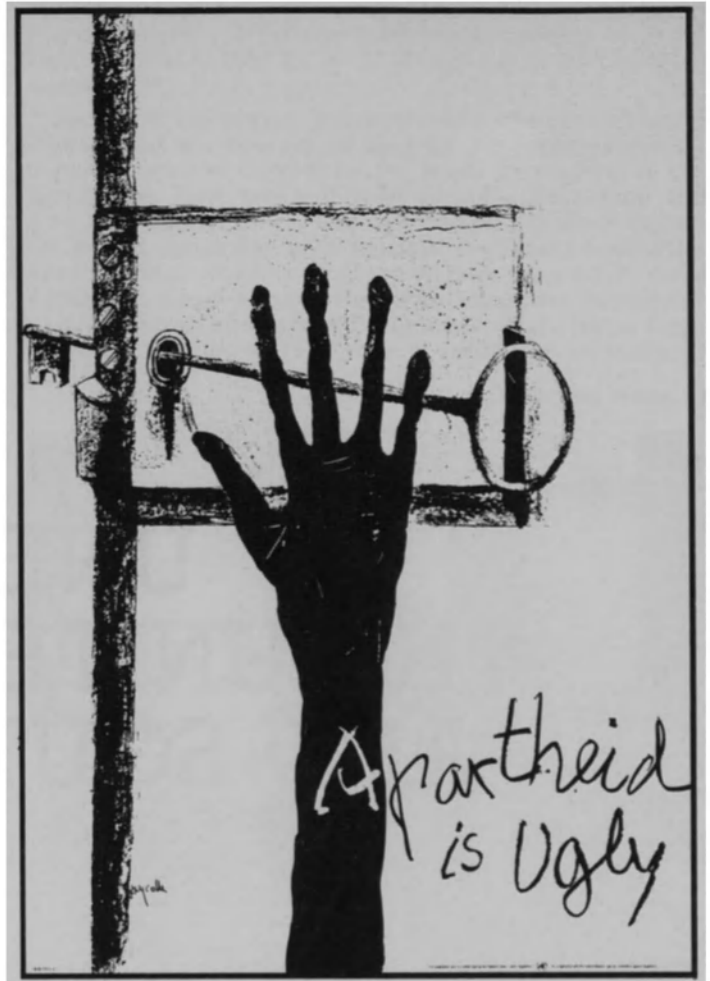
In 1960, a non-violent protest against, in particular, the introduction of compulsory pass laws for women resulted in the massacre at Sharpeville of Africans by the South African police. This action, which shocked the world, occurred in the same year that sixteen newly independent African States were admitted to the United Nations. The UN Security Council, for the first time, considered the apartheid question as a threat to world peace. "Threat to world peace", which implied actions under the Charter, was not passed by the Security Council. However, the Council's resolution of 1 April 1960 deplored the Government's policies and called on it to take steps to bring about racial harmony based on equality.

The UN General Assembly, meeting at the end of 1960, considered a draft resolution which would have introduced sanctions against South Africa. This received a majority of votes but not the two-thirds required for important questions.

There was, however, a change in the attitudes of "Western" countries. These had so far supported the South African arguments of non-interference supposedly based on Article 2 (7) and which had refused the General Assembly's right to discuss the South African question.

White South Africans voted to become a Republic on 31 May 1961. Until then the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was also the Queen of the then Union of South Africa. Sharpeville had, however, sharpened the opposition of African members of the Commonwealth to the maintenance of South Africa within the Commonwealth. The crisis threatened the continuing existence of the Commonwealth itself. In early 1961, at a crucial meeting in London, South Africa was faced with either expulsion or withdrawal. Dr. Verwoerd, then Prime Minister, decided on withdrawal charging Commonwealth interference in South Africa's domestic affairs.

Sharpeville was followed by a veritable reign of terror within South Africa. In reply to a day of mourning called by the African National Congress, the Government arrested some 1,900 of all races and from the African National Congress, the Pan African Congress, the Liberal Party and the Congress Alliance. An additional 20,000 Africans were detained on charges of vagrancy. Chief Luthuli of the African



The anti-apartheid posters above, by the French artists Paul Rebeyrolle (left) and Ernest Pignon-Ernest (right), formed part of the exhibition *Artists Against Apartheid*, held at the Galerie Maeght, Paris, in March 1983 and organized by the UN and the *Committee of Artists of the World Against Apartheid*. Founded in November 1981, the Committee consists of artists from all over the world who support the efforts of the international community to eliminate apartheid. The

National Congress was jailed and then placed under a banning order under the suppression of Communism Act. Both the ANC and the PAC were banned within the country and their principal leaders sent to prison.

After 1960, therefore, on the one hand the international community had increased its condemnation of apartheid and its pressure for change, on the other hand South Africa had embarked on a series of "treason trials" massive arrests, particularly of Africans, and the interdiction of the two major African political parties with the banning and arrest of their principal leaders. 1960 also marked a trek out of South Africa by refugees in order to escape arrest. These refugees, as well as the ANC and PAC, in line with their then position of non-violent protest—modelled after Mahatma Gandhi—reiterated the call for an external boycott of South Africa as a support to internal non-violent action.

At the end of 1962, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution (Resolution 1761 XVII) which received the required two-thirds majority. This resolution contained a list of actions which Member States should take against South Africa and was designed to bring about peaceful change within that country. The list of actions included the breaking off of diplomatic relations, the closing of ports to South African vessels, the boycotting of all South African goods and an embargo on exports to South Africa including all



Photos © Artists of the World Against Apartheid, Paris

Committee is organizing another anti-apartheid exhibition to be held in Paris at the *Fondation Nationale des Arts Plastiques*, from 22 November to 31 December 1983, with the participation of 85 world-renowned painters and sculptors. The exhibition will travel the world and will ultimately form the basis of the Museum of the Artists of the World Against Apartheid which will be presented to the first democratic government to be established in South Africa.

arms and ammunition. In addition, the Security Council was requested to take all appropriate measures, including sanctions, to secure South Africa's compliance with United Nations resolutions. At the same time, a special UN Committee on the Policies of Apartheid was established to review and report on South African developments between General Assembly sessions.

The General Assembly resolution did not however receive the support of South Africa's major trading partners. The question was referred to the Security Council who could alone order mandatory sanctions in terms of Chapter VII of the Charter.

In August 1963, the Security Council met to consider the proposal for sanctions against South Africa. The proposal was not adopted—principally because of the position of South Africa's major trading partners when these were members of the Security Council. However, the Security Council called upon Member States to cease the sale of arms and military equipment to South Africa. Since two Western countries abstained, even this selective boycott could not be adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter. It remained a recommendation. While, however, some countries ceased arms sales to South Africa, and others, those which in their opinion "could be used for enforcing apartheid legislation", the manufacture of arms within South

Africa increased, including in co-operation with public and private firms and with the technical co-operation of some countries. Indeed, by 1982, South Africa announced that it would now become a major arms exporter, while in the nuclear field strategic studies from a number of countries suggest that South Africa may already be an atomic power in spite of the Non-Proliferation Treaty which in any case South Africa has never signed. UN action therefore has failed with regard to the arming of the apartheid State.

From 1960 to 1966 attention also focused on Namibia. On 7 May 1919, South Africa was designated the Mandatory Power in South West Africa following the revelation after 1914 of certain atrocities linked with German colonialism. With the elaboration of the apartheid system, South Africa interpreted certain articles of the League Covenant which regulated the Mandate, as requiring apartheid. In addition, when the Charter of the United Nations was being drafted at the San Francisco Conference in 1945, South Africa had already presented her case for the incorporation of South West Africa with South Africa.

In 1946, the South African Government had requested permission to incorporate Namibia into South Africa. This was rejected by the UN General Assembly on 14 December 1946 in resolution 65 (1). South Africa, however, continued policies of incorporation. In December 1949, the United Nations General Assembly, through resolution 338 (IV) decided to clarify the legal status of Namibia and sought an Advisory Opinion from the International Court of Justice at the Hague. The Court's opinion, handed down on 11 July 1950, unanimously concluded that (a) the Territory was under international mandate and that (b) Chapter XII of the Charter was applicable "in the sense that they provide a means by which the Territory may be brought under the Trusteeship system".

As a result of this the General Assembly reiterated its request that Namibia—then the Territory of South West Africa—be placed under the International Trusteeship System. South Africa refused to comply. In 1953, a permanent UN Committee on South West Africa was established by General Assembly resolution 749 A (VIII).

In 1961 after years of calling upon South Africa, the General Assembly decided "to call the attention of the Security Council to the situation in respect of South West Africa which, if allowed to continue, will in the General Assembly's view endanger international peace and security". In addition resolution 1705 (XVI) established a special training programme for indigenous inhabitants of South West Africa.

In 1960, Ethiopia and Liberia instituted proceedings against South Africa in the International Court of the Hague. Both countries argued that South Africa was imposing apartheid within Namibia contrary to responsibilities under the Mandate. The legal arguments lasted from 1960 to 1966. In a surprise decision in 1966 the International Court judged that, while not pronouncing on the substance of the case, Ethiopia and Liberia had no legal right or interest in the question of South Africa's Mandate.

The Court's decision had three results. First it served to boost South African morale. Second, and more important, it confirmed the views of SWAPO—the African liberation movement within Namibia—that armed confrontation with South Africa was now inescapable. Thirdly, it threw the question back to the United Nations.

By 27 October 1966, by 114 votes to 2 (Portugal, South Africa) and with 3 abstentions (France, Malawi, United Kingdom), the General Assembly adopted resolution 2145 (XXI). This resolution declared that South Africa had failed to fulfil its obligations in respect of the Mandated Territory.

The resolution decided "that the Mandate conferred upon His Britannic Majesty to be exercised on his behalf by the Government of the Union of South Africa is therefore terminated, that South Africa has no right to administer the Territory, and that henceforth South West Africa comes under the direct responsibility of the United Nations".

Security Council resolution 269 (1969) by 13 votes to nil and 2 abstentions (France and the United Kingdom), took note and accepted the General Assembly resolution. It:

- "Called upon the Government of South Africa to withdraw its administration from the Territory immediately and in any case before 4 October 1969; Called upon all States to refrain from all dealings with the Government of South Africa purporting to act on behalf of the territory of Namibia; Requested all States to increase their moral and material assistance to the people of Namibia in their struggle against foreign occupation."

South Africa refused the legitimacy of UN supervision.

Security Council resolutions increased. In the meantime however the Namibian case was again taken to the International Court. On 21 June 1971, the International Court decided that the continued presence of South Africa in Namibia being illegal, South Africa was under an obligation to withdraw its administration from Namibia. While UN action was continuing the Specialized Agencies were not immune to the effects of the apartheid question. In some cases conflict was the result of the very presence of South Africa in these organizations: i.e. International Labour Organisation (ILO), World Health Organization (WHO), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). African regional co-operation, for example, could not be completely regional where South Africa was in open confrontation with the free countries of the continent and in an alliance with Portugal—then engaged in a colonial war in Angola, Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique as well as with White-dominated then Rhodesia.

NAMIBIA

The struggle of the Namibian people against the régime of apartheid is a shining example to us all. That struggle is mustering all its energy and is creating around it a great movement of solidarity, in Africa and worldwide, which broadly reflects its aspirations and is enlisting many different forms of moral and material support.

It has culminated in the international consensus which is now taking shape around the objective of Namibian self-determination, and which has, in particular, found expression in the resolutions of the General Assembly and of the Security Council of the United Nations, concerning the right to independence of the people of Namibia, the procedures for its access to national sovereignty and the recognized international legitimacy of SWAPO [South West African Peoples Organization] as the authentic representative of the Namibian people.

Unesco wishes once again to pledge its full support for the struggle of the Namibian people, led by SWAPO, until all its fundamental objectives have been achieved.

Unesco has been one of the most active agencies of the United Nations system in organizing campaigns against racism and apartheid, and one of the very first to give practical support to the liberation movements of southern Africa. As such, it first of all admitted Namibia as an Associate Member, and later, in 1978, as a full Member, enjoying the same rights as all the States that have already acquired their sovereignty. The Organization is at the same time continuing to co-operate fruitfully with SWAPO, and is implementing several programmes connected with education, communication and the promotion of human rights.

Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow
Director-General of Unesco

(Extract from address at the opening of the *International Conference in Solidarity with the Struggle of the People of Namibia*, Paris, 11 September 1980)

This alliance was not simply a passive one. It included a fair amount of at least logistic military support, as well as attempts to establish a White-ruled Southern African "Confederation" and common market. Worse, apartheid directly affected wide areas under the concern of the specialized agencies: lack of bargaining powers for African trade unions affected ILO as did job reservation policies; separate and gravely unequal medical services and widespread African nutritional diseases affected WHO; the deliberate sabotage of African agriculture affected FAO.

As we have seen, South Africa left Unesco in 1955. Unesco therefore escaped the conflict caused by the very presence of South Africa. It did not however remain unaffected by apartheid policies.

In 1963, the General Assembly invited the Specialized Agencies to assist the Special Committee set up to report on apartheid, in the fulfilment of its mandate. In conformity with this, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, on 20 April 1965, requested Unesco "to prepare a study on the effects of apartheid in the fields of education, science and culture". This request was accepted by the Executive Board of Unesco which further accepted that this study should be extended to information.

The report, completed in 1966 and revised in 1970 (again in the course of revision) showed that apartheid had far-reaching effects in education, science, culture and information. Not only were the United Nations Charter, the Constitution of Unesco and the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights violated, apartheid had grave consequences that went beyond simple violation. "It is a policy of deliberate inequality built into the educational system, expressed in scientific and cultural activities, and underlined in the regulations governing access to information". Apartheid was not only an inadmissible answer to racial and group conflict but was itself the major source of this conflict. "This is most serious in relationships between whites and non-whites, but the very heightening of group awareness, which is part of the aims of the apartheid system, should *per se* intensify hostilities between Afrikaans and English-speaking South Africans, and, by the separation of Africans into self-contained tribal units, create a tribal nationalism leading to increased inter-tribal rivalry.

The Government of South Africa moved quickly. It prepared a "reply" and after some legislative debate banned the Unesco Report specifically.

Action has continued and indeed intensified. This is not surprising. Apartheid struck at the roots of all that Unesco stood for. Each study commissioned by Unesco illustrated this. History had been deliberately falsified: this was the conclusion of Cornevin's *L'apartheid: pouvoir et falsification historique*. Textbooks became the means whereby racism was deliberately and often subtly conveyed. This was the conclusion of *History in Black and White*: an analysis of South African textbooks. Social science research was perverted, field notes confiscated, social scientists banned. These were the conclusions of *Apartheid and Social Research*. The mass media at home and abroad was subverted. This was the conclusion of a look at news agencies and South Africa. Academics were hunted outside the borders of the Republic—this was the conclusion of a meeting at Maputo, Mozambique, three days after which the distinguished social scientist Ruth First was assassinated by a letter bomb.

There was no way Unesco could escape the struggle. In speech after speech the Director-General has warned of the enormity of a situation which is no longer simple racial discrimination. It is a policy of deliberate oppression geared to reinforcing white political domination, increasing white profits by the use of cheap, mobile, directed African labour, establishing an ideology in which racism is used to refuse education, to deny Africans, Asians and coloureds access to science and technology, an ideology which subverts, constrains and fabricates so-called African cultures.

Unesco, with its mission of constructing peace in the minds of men and constructing a world in which the co-operation of all peoples releases the best of man's spirit of tolerance and of creation remains in direct opposition to apartheid, and to its new name "separate development". ■

In 1948 the English-speaking minority lost control of parliament, and were never to regain it. That control passed to the Purified Afrikaner National Party then led by Dr. D.F. Malan; and "separate development" was followed by *apartheid*. The complexities behind this change were many, but a few central points may be useful.

The Afrikaners had remained, substantially, a farming community for whom the burgeoning towns had long become an object both of hatred and of envy: of understandable hatred in that large numbers of "poor whites" from the rural and largely Afrikaner areas were driven into the towns by their poverty, and there subjected to low wages, bad conditions of work, and English-speaking contempt; and of equally understandable envy in that the towns were the manifest and rapidly growing sources of white wealth, command of which was in English-speaking hands.

Meanwhile the Second World War had done much to exacerbate English-Afrikaner hostility. Nearly all the leaders of the Purified National Party had openly hoped and worked for a Nazi victory; and some of them had been gaoled for pro-Nazi sabotage. Their electoral triumph of 1948 was therefore accompanied by a determination to succeed where Hitler had failed: and put an end, once and for all, to English-speaking supremacy.

Yet the Second World War had another effect. It unleashed new currents of black liberation: or, at least, of black hopes that the anti-racist nature developed by the War might be made to have its influence here as well. And at that time, even if the tides of black nationalism elsewhere had still to reveal their strength, such hopes could seem by no means unrealistic. *Apartheid* was therefore introduced, after 1948, as a means of reinforcing the discrimination of earlier years.

The blacks were to be kept as subservient labour while the long boom of the white economy, begun in the 1930s, vastly enlarged during the Second World War, and prolonged thereafter, was further strengthened by methods of State-capitalism which, at the same time, gave Afrikaner businessmen and politicians their *entrée* to economic power and personal wealth. And this was when, during the 1950s, the old dominance of British investment gave way to much greater new investment from the USA, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, and later Japan, and when South Africa, from being a merely British investors' fief, became a "honey-pot" of international dimensions.

The system in substance in no way changed because *apartheid* followed "separate development". Apart from cosmetic improvements to the face that the régime tries to show a critical world, it has become clearer than ever that racist discrimination has in fact evolved into an inseparable feature of this particular form of capitalism. Well-intentioned persons may still wish to believe that *apartheid* will gradually "eliminate itself" as the economy continues to expand, and as the demand for skilled black labour comes increasingly into conflict with the "colour bars" of discrimination. The history of this State has proved the contrary.

With every fresh expansion of the white economy since the 1930s, the screws of discrimination have been tightened further. The wage-payment level of "colour bars" has been raised: these "bars" still remain potently in force. And this, again, is the lesson of everything that has happened during the 1970s and early 1980s: all too tragically, the system has shown that it contains within itself no essential self-correcting mechanism. Without its racism, it cannot function.

The non-white communities—African, Asian, and Coloured by origin or definition—had long hoped and worked for peaceful change, and were influenced in this by the Gandhian Congress tradition as well as by a belief that the sheer injustice of the system—even, in some respects, the sheer absurdity of the system—must eventually bring it to an end. This hope of change by passive resistance, as noted above, flourished after the victory of 1945 over Nazi-Fascism, tantamount as this was, or was thought to be, to a victory over racism everywhere.

Even the advent to power of the Afrikaner "Nationalists" (of the Purified National Party) in 1948 failed to quench this

optimism. It culminated early in the 1950s with a countrywide campaign of passive resistance to the pass laws undertaken by all the non-white communities, with the African National Congress in the van. But then all hope of peaceful change died, and died violently.

Laws were at once passed by the "Nationalist" government to punish any such passive resistance by lashing with whips, imprisonment, or both. Laws were passed to identify any black protest, however peaceful or otherwise legal in nature, with a "Communism" which was equated, however ludicrously, with some kind of foreign-promoted attempt to overturn the State. Laws were passed to give the police a free hand in arrest, detention without trial, and behaviour towards all "suspected persons"; and death in prison of such persons has become almost a common feature of the system.

Laws were passed to enlarge the provisions of the 1923 Act on physical segregation into a veritable juggernaut of persecution: by the early 1980s, more than three million black persons—men, women and children—had been uprooted from their homes—often the homes of their remote ancestors—and "re-settled" in areas designated for "black residence". By no means rarely, such areas were or are empty bush devoid of the least urban facility or means of employment. Laws were passed to "elevate" the old Native Reserves—overcrowded, overgrazed, mere rural slums—into "Bantu Homelands", and to label these as "independent States": another mockery of words which, however, failed to fool even those who applied them.

With all this, South Africa appeared to have reached the ultimate possible extension of the laws of discrimination which had brought the Union of South Africa to birth in 1910. In this Republic of South Africa, all "safety valves" were now sealed off, so that explosion had become the only possible alternative to continued submission. And in 1980, through its action-wing, Umkonto wa Sizwe, the African National Congress of South Africa duly embarked on the beginnings of a war of resistance.

It had taken long to mature. Only at the outset of the 1960s, despairing of any good result from non-violent resistance and with all passive resisters facing severe penalties or even death, had black leaders such as Nelson Mandela and a handful of white sympathizers turned to a campaign of sabotage; but this failed through intimidation and betrayal. Mandela and his companions were sent to prison for life; others took refuge abroad.

But into the silence that followed, onwards from 1970, there came new pressures for change: effective organization by black workers in the manufacturing industries; a renewal of anti-*apartheid* agitation by black students segregated within "tribal colleges" (for Zulu, Sotho, Xhosa, and so on); the rise of a movement of self-encouragement named Black Consciousness (whose best-known spokesman, Steve Biko, rapidly met his death in a white prison); and finally, taking fire from the victories of black liberation in Mozambique and Angola, the massive and heroic "school strikes" of 1976 in Soweto and other black towns.

All these initiatives have been met by the same repression as before (save that some small concessions have been made to black trade unionism, in the hope that these may weaken or confuse black political understanding and organization). Reckless police shooting into unarmed crowds is now a common practice; and the number of school students shot dead by the police during 1976 was certainly not less than three hundred, and possibly many more. Polite words to the outside world are accompanied, by the régime, with a militarization of the State and an ever greater ruthlessness towards all persons, of whatever community, who may threaten effective protest.

By 1981 the South African régime was virtually at war with Angola and Mozambique as well as in its colony of Namibia, and was threatening invasive action against the newly-independent republic of Zimbabwe. But this régime was also at war, in everything save the name of war and its formal declaration, within its own frontiers.

Today, that war continues.

④ Racism, naked and unavowed

MALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING-GLASS

by Tahar Ben Jelloun

NATURE has created differences; society has turned them into inequalities. A comprehensive apparatus of justification has been fashioned in the course of time and brandished like a shield against the truth of nature and culture. Its constant feature has been and still is the evaluation of other people according to their skin; the conclusion is drawn from the skin, which clothes and covers the human being, not that there is a diversity of values but that there is a hierarchy in the quality of beings. In other words, an attempt is made to reach their innermost being and degrade it with a look if not to reject them outright.

Slavery has often functioned on this negation. But if this domination of man by man has been abolished in law (and some States did not abolish slavery until the 1960s!), feeling contempt for others on the grounds that they belong to a certain group or religion, the subjective basis and foundation of racism, is still very much a part of the mental landscape. Thanks to the economic crisis, it is even making increasing headway. It continues and diversifies its operations. Thus colonial dispossession succeeded the slave trade, and today, long after independence, it still continues—"at home", as Sartre said. Migration was a corollary of colonial occupation of which it is now the sequel, if not its ambiguous and less manifest form.

In addition to the political and economic problems raised by immigration in Europe, there is the less visible but cardinal cultural problem. It arises both in the host society, which avoids it, and in the immigrant community which does

not know how to express, preserve, and above all transmit its culture to its children.

Everyday racism, which militates on behalf of hatred with words and sometimes with weapons, is characterized by an attitude of systematic rejection rooted not so much in irrational impulse as in a profound uneasiness caused by the presence of another person who cannot be reduced to the condition of a mute, resigned and invisible unit of labour. Ultimately, this vision is paradoxical: the other person is not seen, there is no desire to see him, still less to look at him; and yet it is accepted that he is there—a nuisance who bears the responsibility for everything that goes wrong. Absent or present, he will be suspect.

When racism is not an ideology, as in South Africa or Nazi Germany, it is a habit, a kind of blind tradition which ranges from Jew to Black, from Asian to Arab. It is behaviour which may be encapsulated in a paradox: it is profoundly skin-deep. It is deeply rooted in mental attitudes, yet superficial where attempts to justify it are concerned. The racist individual is conditioned; he reacts to the very presence of the foreign body, which is immediately noticed because it is different. But behind this physical reaction a mass of more or less confused ideas, images and stereotypes lurks in the unconscious of the racist, ready to pour out in order to justify the act of rejection.

In April 1981, Unesco held a meeting in Athens at which scientists from different disciplines and countries came to "scientifically ruin" racism. An "Appeal to the peoples of the world and to all individuals everywhere" was issued by the participants. The Appeal affirms that "the difference between the genetic structures of two individuals belonging to the same race can be far greater than the differences between the average genetic structures of two population groups. This finding makes it impossible to arrive at any objective and stable

Greek migrant workers en route for Venice where they will take the train for a destination in the Federal Republic of Germany. According to a report by the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) there were 4,629,779 migrants in the Federal Republic of Germany in 1981, 900,906 in Switzerland, and 4,223,928 in France.

Photo ILO, Geneva

Migrant workers wait in line at the reception and housing centre at the Cornavin railway station, Geneva. Recourse to migrant workers is not a new phenomenon. What is new, however, is the scale on which it occurs and the great number of countries involved. There are cases where newcomers integrate into host countries without too much difficulty, but the arrival of immigrants too often leads to a hardening of prejudice and to actual discrimination.

Photo ILO, Geneva

Even when there is legal recognition of the immigrants' equal economic, social, trade union and political rights, including the right to vote, their voice is generally not heard and they are often the victims of discrimination in housing and education. Right, members of a family of migrants in Marseilles, France.

Photo A. Nogues © Sygma, Paris

TAHAR BEN JELLOUN, Moroccan writer and journalist, has divided his time between France and his native country since 1971. Among his published works are: *La Plus Haute des Solitudes* (essay) 1977, *Les Amandiers Sont Morts de Leurs Blessures* (poems), and *La Prière des Absents* (1981) and *L'Ecrivain Public* 1983 (novels).



definition of the different races... Those engaged in scientific activity bear a major responsibility for the social future of their contemporaries. Where racism is concerned, this responsibility involves political and ethical choices."

Anti-racist vigilance should not underestimate or ignore any sphere: racism smoulders in the mind of the aristocrat as well as in the habits of the workman. Wherever it may be found, the racism which feeds certain mentalities is, fundamentally, a mirror that disturbs: the Other person, the foreigner, transmits back to the host society an image in which that society recognizes itself but which it rejects because it is an image which highlights its contradictions and underscores its malaise and its inadequacies.

Thus racism is primarily the expression of one's own inadequacies which one projects onto someone else who belongs to a different category (class, race, nationality, age-group, social situation, etc.). When fragments of images composed of the foreigner's everyday culture (his language, his skin, his style of cooking, his music, and his religion) strike this mirror, the person at the receiving end feels dispossessed or at least threatened as to his status and identity.

Hatred of others begins with self-hatred. Racism, whether virulent or latent, is a procession of misfortune.

The second point concerns the community which is the victim of exclusion. There, the image of the self has been devalued. It is ailing; it has been so far rejected and dismantled that it is difficult to live with, it is ill accepted.

A person who has been obliged to leave his land and family in order to earn his living and provide for the future of his children is generally a fragile being. He feels insecure, for he knows that he is not fully accepted in terms of his own culture and his own difference. The prevailing hostility saps his confidence and leads him to doubt the perception of his own image. The working being is amputated of his other, essential, cultural dimension. For him exile is a form of mutilation, a violent experience which reduces him to an economic mode of expression and deprives him of the fundamental values woven into his history and civilization.

This disturbing experience causes the immigrant to interiorize the gloomy, troubled image transmitted to him by racism. In this situation, how can he live in terms of his own culture which has been reduced to half-formed bits and pieces? It tends to become a desiccated caricature of the culture from which it springs, and this opens the door to another form of fanaticism and intolerance. He retreats into himself and cultivates a nostalgic, quasi-neurotic attachment to his original culture which has not travelled well. He is faced with a problem which he did not encounter in his own country: the problem of roots. This question of identity is brutally raised by the children who are born in the land of exile; this is a serious existential problem for if it is not answered it may ▶

▶ alienate these children from their parents. They will be removed from their families and will seek other landmarks, elsewhere.

The children in turn reject the image of the father who has been devalued, battered by hostility and poverty. They neither want to be like him nor to follow the path he has taken. They also know that they belong to the blocked generation whose future is uncertain and whose identity is troubled and confused. They are victims of a twofold racism: that which strikes the whole community and that which closes the doors of life against them because no one was expecting them and they fit into no one's plans. They are absent from the land of their fathers—the mother who forgets her grandchildren; they are unwelcome in the place where they were born. These adolescents do not know where to go nor what image to create for themselves to escape from poverty and exclusion. They improvise a culture with whatever is at hand. Although they are citizens of the host country, they are scarcely accepted. The identity card does not obliterate the face.

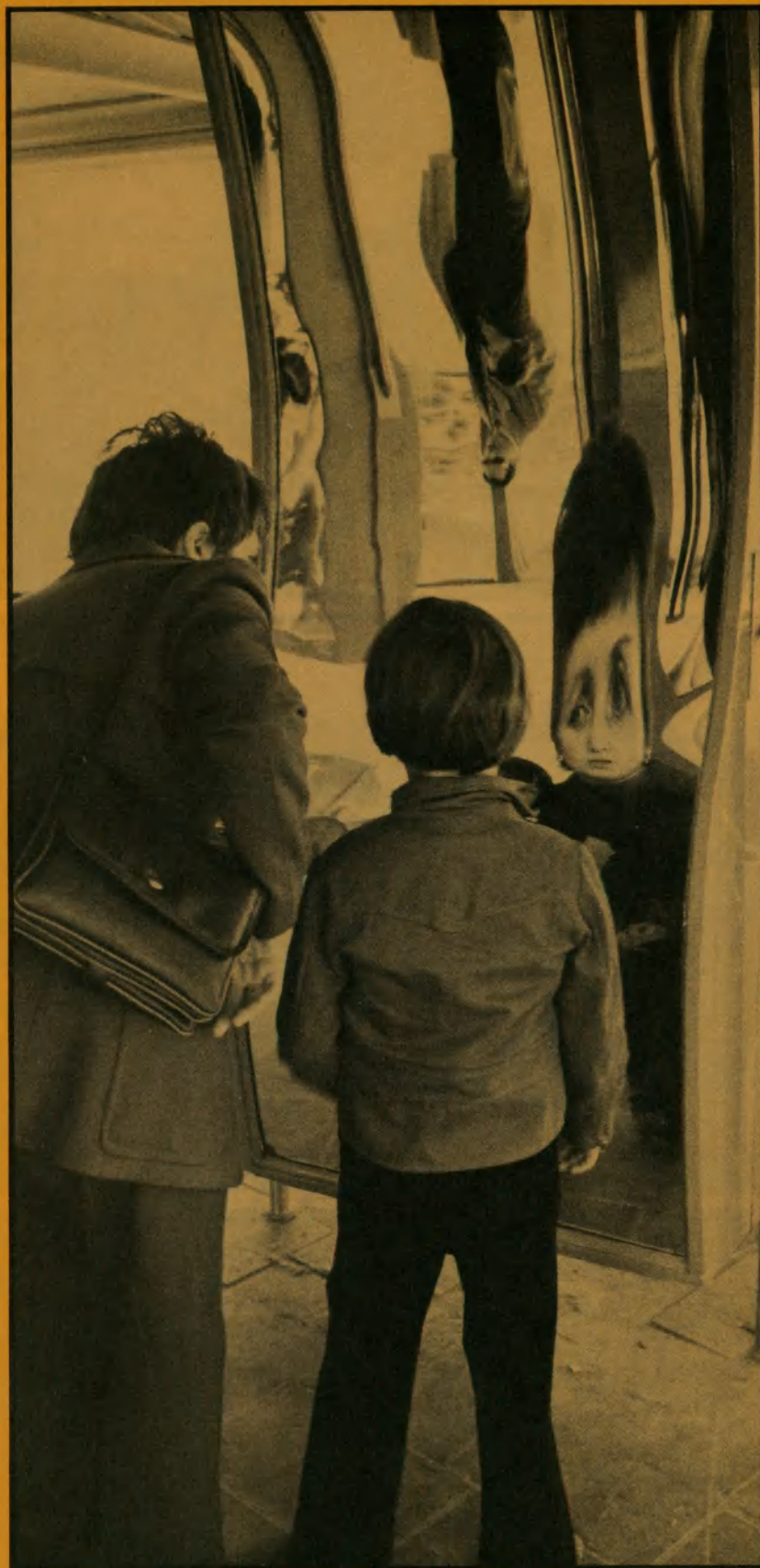
This clouding of the identity, this dislocation of selfhood would be less serious, or at any rate could be overcome, if other events and ways of thinking were not becoming prevalent in the Western world. In the 1980s denigration of the Third World, its cultures and religions, especially Islam, is in the air. For some a hotchpotch of ideas and impressions takes the place of structured thought: Arab, Muslim, African, etc. are all shunted into the same siding of contempt. This racism immediately rejects, without analysis, and without reason, everything that originates from or bears traces of this wretched, ill-developed and above all ill-loved Third World.

The Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges wrote in *Fictions*: "I thought that a man could perhaps be the enemy of other men, of other moments of other men, but not of a country; not of the fireflies, the words, the gardens, the streams and the sunsets." This is a perverse and widespread form of violence. It only takes a few TV images, a few prejudices softened by laughter, a few pseudo-scientific untruths uttered with gravity and underwritten by well-known people for this vision of the world to become accepted and for racism to become an unconscious, natural and everyday practice.

At the end of his book *Au Pêril de la Science*, the French geneticist Albert Jacquard notes that "our society secretes racism. Most often unconsciously we make this poison which destroys our very selves; we insist 'I am not a racist, but...'"

A civilization which does not take a hard look at those of its mechanisms which are left to the vicissitudes of brutality is a waning civilization which in the course of time mingles with the barbarism of this poison it has allowed to spread, either through lack of vigilance or through arrogance and a feeling of superiority.

■ Tahar Ben Jelloun



"The other person, the foreigner, transmits back to the host society an image in which that society recognizes itself but which it rejects because it is an image which highlights its contradictions and underscores its malaise and its inadequacies", writes Tahar Ben Jelloun. But racism, like this distorting mirror in a Paris children's playground, is not only a phenomenon which disturbs, it caricatures all perception of what is foreign or simply different.

Photo Kay Lawson © Rapho, Paris

⑤ Racism and science

MYTHS UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

by *Albert Jacquard*

MAN is a creature endowed with the fabulous power of self-construction, the ability to participate in his own creation; but the price of this capacity is investment with its opposite: that of self-destruction. The latter may take violent forms—even the collective suicide of the species has now become possible, because of the existence of nuclear weapons. But it also manifests itself in mean, shifty, surreptitious types of behaviour, among which racism is surely the most widespread.

Scorn for others because they belong to a different group is by no means a recent phenomenon, but it is one which during the present century has developed along new lines, with the assertion that “recent discoveries of modern science” and “biologically proven models” justify the classification of human populations in hierarchical order.

If scientific progress had indeed led to such conclusions, we would be obliged to take them into account, irrespective of our moral, philosophical or religious opinions. But what science tells us today, notably where the most relevant discipline—genetics—is concerned, is the exact opposite: to claim, on biological grounds, that certain individuals within a given group, or certain groups, naturally constitute an élite is totally to misunderstand the message of biology.

Awareness that scientists should be given the opportunity of stating their views on the subject, unequivocally and before the widest possible audience, led Unesco to organize in Athens, in the spring of 1981, a symposium where

ALBERT JACQUARD is a French geneticist who teaches at the Universities of Paris VI and Geneva. He is head of the genetics department of France's National Institute of Demographic Studies (INED) in Paris. He is the author of a number of works including *Genetics of Human Populations*, 1978.

representatives of various disciplines could set out their most recent findings, and where racist arguments could be countered in a reasoned, dispassionate manner.

Twenty-two scientists were thus able to spend a week discussing the issues involved in a totally frank and open atmosphere, bringing from a wide spectrum of countries that included Lebanon, Tunisia, Morocco, Israel, Mexico, France, Ivory Coast, Norway, the USA and the USSR, contributions in the fields of anthropology, ethnology, psychology, genetics, sociology, history, mathematics, law and philosophy.

The diversity of cultures and disciplines represented strengthened, rather than weakened, the intensity of the debates; the genuine interdisciplinarity which characterized the exchange of views enabled each participant to understand the ideas communicated by the others and to share with them his own questionings and commentaries.

Racism was successively examined in relation to the following branches of learning: genetics; psychology and neurobiology; sociology; anthropology and ethnology; history and prehistory.

At the conclusion of the Symposium, the participating scientists, together with the representatives of Unesco, drew up a joint Appeal, the terms of which were discussed at length and unanimously approved (see the *Unesco Courier*, May 1981).

Genetics and racism. Advances in the field of genetics have made it possible to determine with accuracy the content of the biological heritage of human populations; whereas, during the past centuries, attempts at racial definition were based on observable, external features such as skin colour, hair texture, and cranial structure, examination ►

Racism has historical roots. It has not been a universal phenomenon. Many contemporary societies and cultures show little trace of it. It was not evident for long periods in world history. Many forms of racism have arisen out of the conditions of conquest, out of the justification of Negro slavery and its aftermath of racial inequality in the West, and out of the colonial relationship. Among other examples is that of anti-semitism, which has played a particular role in history, with Jews being the chosen scapegoat to take the blame for problems and crises met by many societies.

Statement on Race and Racial Prejudice,
Unesco, Paris, September 1967

► of these characteristics has now been replaced by the investigation of the genetic structures which determine them.

The overall frequency with which various genes are encountered in the members of a given group constitutes the genetic structure of that group. The differences between the structures of two populations can be synthesized by establishing a "distance" calculated from frequencies observed in each group. The definition of races thus involves grouping together populations between which genetic distances are small, and attributing to different races populations between which genetic distances are wide.

Where the human species is concerned, however, this procedure proves fruitless. Migratory movements have taken place on such a scale, and the isolation of individual groups has been so short-lived that differentiations between groups have not reached a level which makes it possible to trace boundaries between separate, relatively homogeneous populations. The variability of the human species, which is considerable, is not to be explained in terms of the differences between the average genetic distances between various groups, but in terms of the differences to be found in individual members of the same group. According to findings published by Richard Lewontin in 1974, the average genetic distance between two individuals increases by only 7 or 8 per cent when they belong to two different nations, and by only 15 per cent when they belong to two different "races".

Consequently, the type of grouping described above can only be arbitrary. For the geneticist the concept of race corresponds to no stable or objective reality where humankind is concerned.

Genetics also provides us with an argument to set against the second proposition of racist theory: that races can not only be defined, but can also be classified by order of superiority.

In fact, investigation of mechanisms of selection reveals that their effect is not to retain the "best" and to eliminate what is less satisfactory, but rather to preserve the coexistence of a great variety of characteristics. Wealth, in biological terms, is not synonymous with "good" genes, but with genetic diversity: the "best" group is that which has conserved the widest variety of genes, irrespective of the composition of that variety.

From this point of view, therefore, it is obviously impossible to invoke biological arguments to justify some sort of "natural" hierarchy of individuals or populations.

Psychology, neurology and racism. When psychology became "scientific" in the mid-nineteenth century, it set itself the task of comparing the intellectual performances of individuals and groups. This analysis of differences was quickly replaced by attempts to establish relationships of superiority and inferiority. Techniques of testing were devised whereby human beings were classified in relation to an implicitly accepted norm, the average behaviour of modern Western society. As a general rule, the results of such tests are presented in numerical form, as the Intelligence Quotient, or IQ. This measurement is widely used, but it is rarely interpreted in a way which takes into account the limits of its significance.

The mere fact of expressing the IQ in numerical form creates the illusion that it measures a magnitude with an independent existence. In reality, however, comparisons between individuals of different cultures or between groups which are made using IQ are, by virtue of the definition of IQ itself, devoid of any real meaning.

Misunderstandings about the IQ are particularly dangerous when they are related to the problem of "innate and acquired" characteristics. Abuse of the concept of heritability, devised by geneticists, has led certain psychologists to attribute variations in IQ between individuals or groups to a combination of genetic and environmental factors (the ratio being generally of the order of 80 per cent for the former and 20 per cent for the latter). In fact, none of the conditions necessary to validate the measurements of heritability are here present; the figures advanced are thus not even inaccurate, they are meaningless.

Sociology and racism. Racism should not be considered as the inevitable product of a necessary sequence of cause and effect. More particularly, it is false to see racism as a mere consequence of economic phenomena, when it is in fact an interaction in which racial animosity and the quest for a scapegoat combine and focus on a minority the aggressivity engendered by failures and setbacks of all kinds, notably economic.

It is not objective economic situations that encourage racism, but the subjective interpretations of those situations. The manner in which a situation is perceived is of greater consequence than the situation itself. The process is thus one in which political action plays a decisive role, and where the media, by virtue of the notions to which they give currency and the manner in which they present the facts, also play a decisive part. The invocation of a "threshold of tolerance" is a good example of the use of a mechanism presented as natural, in order to justify the rejection of minorities. In fact, such thresholds cannot be measured, and correspond to nothing that can be objectively defined.

The situation of those who are oppressed because of their "race" is not the outcome of an inevitable malediction; it is

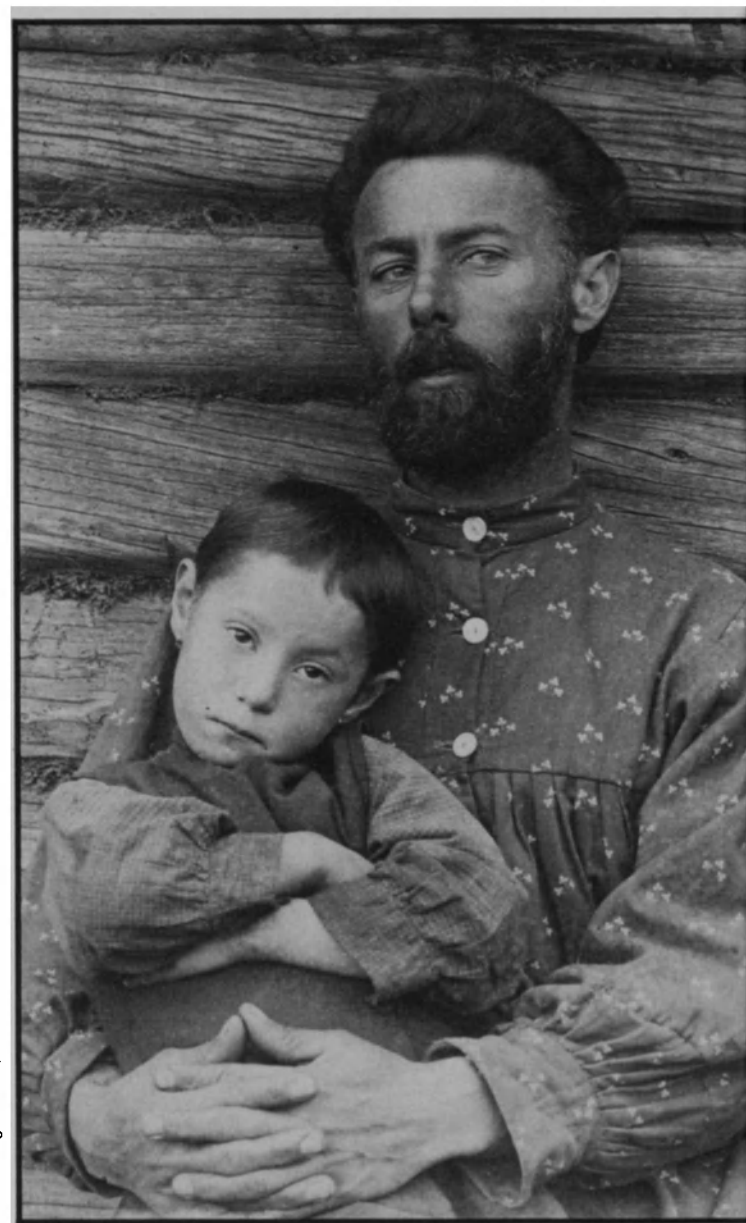


Photo © Roger Viollet, Paris

In the last thirty years the classification of the human species into a small number of major "races" has been increasingly contested by scientists as imprecise, arbitrary, and of little or no biological significance. One obstacle to the establishment of such a classification is revealed by the inconsistencies that arise when different kinds of criteria are used, such as blood group systems on the one hand, and anthropometric data on the other. The Ainu of northern Japan (top right) have a white skin and according to traditional racial classifications were con-

simply an observable state of affairs which cannot be justified in any way.

The often distorted propagation of certain arguments advanced by sociobiologists can prove extremely dangerous. Sociobiology deals with the causes and circumstances, including those of a genetic nature, which determine the organization of animal societies, ranging from termites to primates. The extrapolation of its findings to humankind is obviously risky and should only be undertaken with the greatest care. For example, the assertion that most human behaviour is genetically conditioned rests on no serious evidence. Little caution is shown by certain journalists who claim that theories which are still the subject of debate are "scientifically proved"; other writers conceal dogmatic attitudes behind what they claim is scientific evidence.

Anthropology, ethnology and racism. Anthropology sets out to make a global study of man, integrating the physical, genetic, cultural and historical points of view. In all these domains, individuals differ from each other, and anthropology endeavoured, over a long period, to take these differences into account in preparing classifications and where possible in tracing the outlines of more or less homogeneous groups,



Photo Simmonnet © Atlas Photo, Paris



or "races". The latter were thus defined as the product of a division of humanity according to transmissible physical characteristics. But this analysis is of doubtful value because of the importance of the genetic exchanges occurring between groups, the intensity of which has varied in different ages and regions. Such exchanges have increased during the past few centuries, and consequently groups which might have been defined as "races" in the past have disappeared, giving place to other, provisional regroupings.

But the essential contribution of anthropology is to show that the feelings of superiority found in most human groups is related to their culture, and not to their biological heritage; their sentiments are ethnocentric, and not racist. Racism, as a belief in the natural superiority of a given group, is of comparatively recent origin. It developed parallel to the colonial expansion of the European powers, finding scientific justification in a mistaken extrapolation of the theories of Darwin, social Darwinism. Reaching its height during the period of Nazism, it has subsequently declined appreciably, despite the rearguard actions of certain groups (which appear notably in *The Mankind Quarterly*), or individuals, such as the psychologist Arthur Jensen.

Anthropologists have reacted forcefully; for example, an important study by R. Sinha, of India, has shown that "there is no innate difference in intellectual capacities between the different racial groups".

In the last analysis, the problem with which we are confronted is not one of justifying or invalidating racist attitudes, but rather that of understanding why such attitudes persist, despite a total absence of justification.

History, prehistory and racism. Over the centuries, racist theories have developed in response to the requirements of dominant groups. Not infrequently, they have embodied contradictory premisses. The eighteenth century, for example, saw the simultaneous adoption of the myth of the "noble savage" as opposed to the "wicked sophisticate", and the uninhibited practice of slavery, while, at the present time, when the findings of science are demolishing the very foundations of racism, there are those who consistently invoke science in their attempts to promote its resurgence.

Historical studies enable us to compare the mechanisms which determine the evolution of a racist society (which inevitably drifts into a state of tension between dominant and dominated groups and in which the range of alternatives grows steadily smaller), and those which govern the development of a progressive, pluralist society (open to interchange and to all the different forms of creativity which become possible thanks to a permanent ferment of ideas and action).

The resurgence of racism presents a challenge to which we must respond by a steadfast call for the social diversification which it is in our power to achieve: diversification through science and technology, through culture, through recourse to our origins and through freedom available to all.

■ Albert Jacquard

Photo © Thierry Secretan/Cosmos, Paris

sidered to belong to the white race. In terms of blood grouping, however, they are much closer to the so-called "yellow" Oriental populations. Many "scientific" race classifications have given rise to a misleading idea of "physical types". Blond-haired "blacks", above right, frequently found among Australian aboriginal groups are one example of the futility of racial archetypes of this kind. Vogul populations of Siberia, above left, differ in many ways from the "yellow" or Mongoloid races to which they were assigned by classical anthropology.

⑥ The way ahead

THE CULTURAL COUNTER-ATTACK

by Maria do Céu Carmo Reis

UNITY
IN
DIVERSITY
...THE
WORLD
IN
MINIATURE



ALGERIA. "The young bride"; material draped round a bone framework; the arms are made of padded wood. Height 23 cm.



VIETNAM. Hollowed out gourd suggesting the human form. Used during propitiatory ceremonies. Height 24 cm.



SENEGAL. Corn-cob doll decorated with cowrie shells, glass beads and pieces of metal; carried by young girls at harvest festivals. Height 21.5 cm.

Photo J. Oster © Musée de l'Homme, Paris

Photo Lemzaouda © Musée de l'Homme, Paris

Photo Lemzaouda © Musée de l'Homme, Paris

THE logic of the relations between societies, whether they are conflictual or complementary, is governed by the interests of the societies concerned. When these encounters between societies are determined by the need to dominate, resulting in social inequality, exploitation, and war, the social practices and ideological theories set forth and ritualized by those in power assume a racist character. The extent of the phenomenon is determined by historical circumstances. Thus the fact that colonial conquest and occupation have been so widespread in

MARIA DO CEU CARMO REIS Angolan sociologist, has worked at the Centre for Angolan Studies, Algeria, and taught at the Higher Institute of Social Service, Portugal. She is at present preparing her Doctorate under the guidance of professor Georges Balandier at the School of Advanced Studies in the Social Services, Paris.

modern times has given the ideology of racism an overriding legitimacy, whilst simultaneously creating the conditions for its negation.

The earliest reactions against racism, still only fragmentary and unilateral, occur within the context of ethnological reflections on other peoples who are viewed as "exotic". Such attitudes were expressed by the eighteenth-century French school of political philosophy of which Montesquieu and Diderot were leading figures, and in which the foundations of a critical ethnology can be perceived. At the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, along with the first stirrings of nationalist movements came demands from black peoples which found their fullest expression in a profusion of universalist movements of political thought such as pan-Africanism and cultural movements such as negritude. But

it was not until the end of the Second World War that the struggle against racism became universal both in theory and in practice. This was due to the convergence of a number of factors.

The self-proclaimed "civilized" West was astonished by its own barbarity: Nazism and Jewish genocide raised the question of racism in deeper and wider terms than before. The colonized peoples considered the right to independence the central factor of the historical process. Soon Black Americans were claiming a national identity on the basis of their ethno-historical difference. As a result of this dynamic process, social practices have emerged, have achieved at certain times and in certain places an organic unity between "the criticism of arms" and "the arms of criticism", and have revealed the full significance of the struggle against racism.



TURKEY. Doll made of material draped round a wooden framework. Height 33 cm.

JAPAN. "Anesawanyngyo" (Elder Sister); paper doll with painted clay face; traditional hairstyle. Height 17 cm.

SYRIA. Sheep's leg-bone with face sculpted in light relief emphasized with black paint; Roman era.

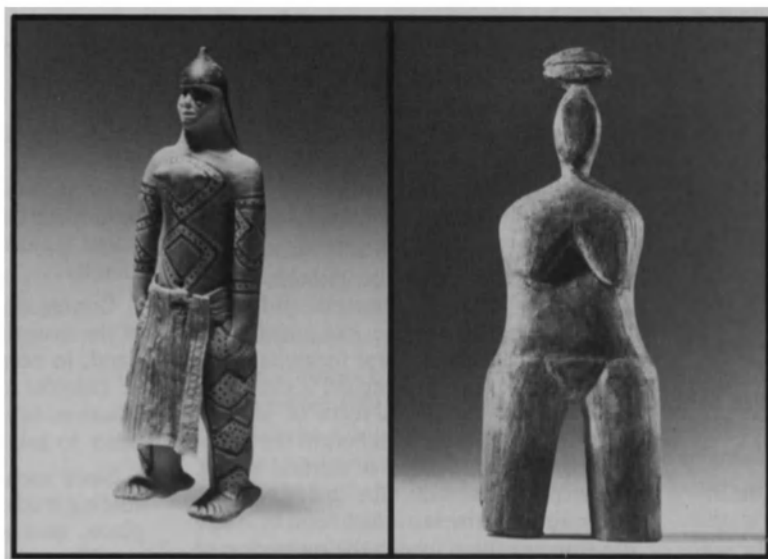
MALI. Wax doll with white beads for the eyes and hair ornaments and a cotton skirt. Height 13.5 cm.

Photo Lemzaouda © Musée de l'Homme, Paris

Photo Lemzaouda © Musée de l'Homme, Paris

Photo J Oster © Musée de l'Homme, Paris

Photo Lemzaouda © Musée de l'Homme, Paris



BRAZIL. Terra-cotta doll with body-painting. The apron is made of bark. Height 17.5 cm.

GREENLAND. Armless wooden figurine with typical feminine hair-style. Height 10.8 cm.

Photo Lemzaouda © Musée de l'Homme, Paris

Photo Lemzaouda © Musée de l'Homme, Paris

The West, which had just emerged from a devastating war, was primarily concerned with the problems of social and economic reconstruction and above all with the problem of peace. One important task that lay ahead was that of establishing institutions which would enable culture, science, education and the dialogue between nations to play their proper role in a quest for world-wide coexistence which would spring from the unity and multiplicity of cultures. Organizations with a universal mission such as Unesco were created. Over the years Unesco has set forth telling analyses of racism on the basis of scientific propositions and in the name of culture. These include the "Statement on Race" (1950), the "Statement on the Nature of Race and Race Differences" (1951), the "Statement on Race and Racial Prejudice" of 1967, and a Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice which was set

forth in 1978. Unesco thus provided tools for the shaping of policies which could bring this social evil to an end.

The dynamic of the struggle against racism was not linear. Changes were indeed taking place in Western societies, but these societies first had to face the loss of their vast colonial empires, then far-reaching social movements (the alternative culture in the United States, feminist movements in different parts of the world) which would raise in both theoretical and practical terms the question of the complex and hidden content of racism. The rejection of all that is different (ethnic minorities, women, the old, the young) stimulated these movements to ask questions about the role of culture and of certain components of the social fabric which, in a sense, structure the patterns of thinking, the habits and the behaviour in which social practices are rooted. These questions

have largely focused on socialization. As a dynamic means of transmitting cultural values, education has a prominent role in this uninterrupted process whereby the individual becomes a social being.

In all societies this transmission, far from being an innocuous process, obeys a logic according to which the social mechanisms necessary for preserving the status quo are reproduced. To examine the question of education is to examine its functions and goals, to analyse how it meets its objectives. It also means contributing to the process whereby political action and scientific reflection are brought closer together. But in addition it means trying to understand how the individual becomes an actor in the racist drama not only in terms of economic and social conditions but in terms of the psychological and historical conditions in which his ego is structured. ►

► By widening the critical field of racism, social movements have underscored the fact that, within the boundaries of a single nation, cultural unity is actually cultural multiplicity and that consequently the processes whereby people identify with a culture are neither homogeneous nor monolithic. They have also stressed the fact that in certain historical conditions identity often conceals a desire to dominate (as, for example, in the institutional framework of the relations between men and women). In these cases the logic of protest highlights difference and makes it a necessary element in new cultural forms. In this context the struggle against racism makes a specific demand: it takes the form of *the assertion of the right to be different*.

National independence movements have set the concept of culture against the concept of race. This approach has become a fundamental element in resistance to colonialism, taking a variety of forms (political, economic, or armed) depending on the interplay of historical circumstances. Analysis of contemporary texts and documents is illuminating. Thus Amílcar Cabral (1921-1973), leader of the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde, analysed in these terms the problem of cultural resistance in a changing society which is becoming the subject of its own history:

“A people which liberates itself from foreign domination will only be really free if, without complexes and without underestimating the importance of the positive contributions of the oppressor’s culture and of other cultures, it takes the high road of its own culture which draws sustenance from the living reality of its environment and rejects harmful influences and any kind of subjection to foreign cultures. Therefore, it can be seen that if imperialist domination has a vital need for practices of cultural oppression, national liberation is necessarily an act of culture.”

In China, Mao Ze Dong defined the importance of the “cultural front” in this passage on “fronts of combat”:

“We are struggling for the liberation of the Chinese people on many different fronts; two of them are the front of the pen and the front of the sword, in other words the cultural front and the military front. To vanquish the enemy, we must first of all rely on the army which carries the gun. But this army alone is insufficient; we also need an army of culture, indispensable to unite our ranks and to conquer the enemy.”

In Algeria, the Congress of La Soummam (1956), in embryonic and deliberately reticent form, and the Tripoli Programme (1962) more explicitly, both treated the question of culture and the role of intellectuals in the framework of an Islamic language and thought. The Tripoli Programme went so far as to define the new culture which should be, it says, “national, revolutionary and scientific”.

Whatever turns these revolutions have taken, it must be noted that these analyses all share an acceptance of culture as a key element in the liberation process which

transcends the different presuppositions underlying them, the different battle-grounds from which they came, and any possible contradictions between the goals at which they aim. They also introduce a new set of problems, those of cultural identity.

Individuals, groups and societies are producers of works and cultural values through which they recognize themselves; this gives them an awareness of belonging to a culture and of attachment to it. The link thus forged between the individual and the group is expressed in language, in what is held to be sacred, in techniques, in

In this way it is proved that beings considered inferior from a racial point of view are capable of making history, in other words of thinking and acting on the real world by transforming it; building new nations, creating new States, weaving new social relationships, acting on the world stage. This has been the practical response to theories of race and racial inequality. It is a response which shows that, in the context of the independence struggle, the combat against racism is waged through the *affirmation of the right to identity*.

If in different times and places the struggle against racism enhances the recognition

All peoples of the world possess equal faculties for attaining the highest level in intellectual, technical, social, economic, cultural and political development.

The differences between the achievements of the different peoples are entirely attributable to geographical, historical, political, economic, social and cultural factors. Such differences can in no case serve as a pretext for any rank-ordered classification of nations or peoples.

Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice, Unesco, Paris, 1978

social organization, in oral and written traditions, etc. Each society communicates with others through this set of cultural characteristics which makes it unique.

Thus it is through the affirmation of a cultural identity that the individual can achieve a better understanding of the denial of racism by the struggle for independence. “The cultural formulation of nationalism”, in this struggle, is expressed in the affirmation of a form of identity which restores to the members of the society their role as producers of cultural works. Their products will take many forms, depending on the historical context. Here are some of these forms: the mustering of men for a parting of the ways which appeals to the historical memory but which above all restructures the social arena (the community dissolved by colonization rebuilds itself in a different fashion) and the political arena (the individual becomes a citizen again and challenges the dominant power through the organization); the emergence of a new intellectual whose work contributes to an understanding of the contradictions of history (through political texts, speeches which incite to action, the theorization of revolutionary practice, the implementation of revolutionary theories); the creation of new social relationships in which individuals and groups take creativity and sociability as the yardstick of the effectiveness of political action (the conjunction of human capacities, desires and needs); and the establishment of new networks of communication in which the language despised by the colonizer again becomes the favoured medium of social and political intercourse.

of cultural identity and/or cultural difference, and counts on different kinds of political, social and institutional support, it nevertheless always appeals to a single constant: culture and its paradigm, cultural identity.

Consequently, to reflect on the meaning of the struggle against racism is, on the one hand, to note the upheavals it has caused in patterns of thought, in symbols and practices of social criticism, and on the other to ask new questions.

Since each of these struggles is an unfolding truth, in a given time and a given place, account must be taken of each specific society. Every society always harbours conflicts between hierarchies because it is differentiated in its economic, political and social structure. Furthermore, it often expresses a political culture which generates systems of power in which the State dominates the social body, and in which the civil society cannot assert itself as a subject of creativity.

History teaches us that theory and practice of whatever kind are not consumed in the arena of a revolution, and that behind each ruling unit and manipulated by it are concealed symbols, codes and myths which attribute to the individual (the leader) and to the function a nature which is more than human.

In this context it is impossible to dissociate the struggle against racism from the combat for power and cultural democracy. This means that in their thinking and in their action individuals and groups involved in change must challenge “blind necessity”.

■ Maria do Céu Carmo Reis

MIXED METAMORPHOSIS

by Roberto Fernández Retamar

IN an article published in the August/September 1977 issue of the *Unesco Courier*, the great Brazilian novelist Jorge Amado wrote :

“Brazil is a country of racial mixture. This is an obvious and incontrovertible fact. The Brazilian experiment is of immense importance in the search for a solution to the terrible racial problem that afflicts the world. For in Brazil the most diverse races have constantly been mingled. What Brazilian could honestly claim to be of ‘pure’ descent in a country where Iberians, Slavs, Anglo-Saxons and others have become inextricably mixed with black and Amerindian peoples and with Arabs, Jews and Japanese?”

These remarks are equally valid for the Antilles (with the important addition of the Chinese and Indian input) whose societies developed upon the framework of the plantation economy and slave labour. In neither case is mixing primarily racial; it is above all a cultural mixing which, going much deeper than the linguistic pluralism introduced by the various colonial powers, includes a *lingua franca* of joyful music, convergent mythologies, and a rhythm and a style of life springing from many sources yet with a character all its own. We Brazilians and Antilleans, therefore, can and must present ourselves to the world as examples of the integration of mixed cultures. This is what prompted the Brazilian scholar Gilberto Freyre to quip that in his country football was “more ‘Brazilianly’ dionysian than ‘Britishly’ apollonian”.

The rich, dramatic history of the region from the time when, at the end of the fifteenth century, the Europeans began to arrive and make it, in the words of the Dominican writer Juan Bosch, “a frontier of empire”, until today, has formed the substratum of this

mixing of the peoples who settled there voluntarily or, more often, under duress and in widely varying conditions.

Can it be assumed, then, that cultural syncretism, so widespread and indeed so inevitable between us, will result in the disappearance of racism? It would be wonderful if we could answer yes to this question, but we cannot. It has been said that, apart from some very isolated communities such as certain Inuit (Eskimo) groups in the extreme north and certain Amazonian Indian tribes, there are no really “pure” races or cultures in the western hemisphere. In other words, here, as in almost every part of the globe today, intermingling of peoples is the norm; yet racism has until now survived, in some notorious cases at a level which is an affront to human dignity.

The extremely dubious concept of “race” emerged in the early days of capitalism as a justification for the colonial depredations without which, and above all without the terrible scourge of slavery, as the Trinidadian Eric Williams has pointed out, capitalism as we know it would not exist. The word “race” itself, with the meaning it took on at that time, did not exist in any language and, significantly, had to be borrowed from zoological terminology. In its new meaning, cultural differences, often enormous, were ignored and an artificial homogeneity was proclaimed, which caused the Cuban writer José Martí to declare irritably that “there is no racial hatred because there are no races”, and the Martinican Frantz Fanon to assert that “the negro” was invented by the colonizers.

Of course, there are somatic differences of genetic origin which manifest themselves, either visibly or not, in a predisposition of resistance to ►

ROBERTO FERNÁNDEZ RETAMAR, Cuban poet and essayist, is a professor at Havana University and director of the magazine *Casa de las Américas*. His essays and anthologies of his poems have been translated into a number of languages.

► certain diseases, etc. But that is all. Race does not determine culture, because it does not determine anything fundamental. Cultures are created by man irrespective of race, and if, as sometimes happens, there is a relationship between them, what this relationship implies is that cultures modify races and not the other way round.

According to the French anthropologist, Claude Lévi-Strauss, "all cultures leave their mark on the body". There is daily proof of this. One need only walk through the cities of a still lively prestigious culture to see that women, who are much more imaginative than men in this as in many other matters, have a habit of piercing their ears in order to hang all kinds of objects from them, of painting their lips, cheeks, eyelashes and fingernails ("they paint themselves in order to hide themselves", said the French poet, Paul Eluard), dress their hair in a variety of shapes, remove the hair from various parts of their bodies, etc. Of course these cities may be New York, Paris or London, and the culture in question is Western culture—a syncretic culture if ever there was one. Facts of this kind show that one can be of mixed culture quite apart from racial integration. The process by which one arrives at this give-and-take which is an essential element of all cultural cross-fertilizations has been felicitously described by the Cuban writer Fernando Ortiz as *transculturation*.

If racial prejudice began as an alleged justification for colonialism, then the intermingling of races or cultures alone will not put an end to it; what is required is the eradication of its original cause, namely, all forms of colonialism, neo-colonialism, imperialism, and oppression. As long as one country "belongs" to another, as long as some men exploit others, no matter how intense the cross-breeding or how entertaining the carnival in Rio or Trinidad, the living *humus* of racial prejudice will continue to reproduce itself.

There are even certain dangers in the idea that cultural cross-fertilization will of itself cause racial prejudice to disappear. We should like to underline two

of these dangers. First of all, there is the danger of creating, in one way or another, the impression that, paradoxically, race can be identified with culture. This implies acceptance of the theory that, apart from its relatively unimportant biological condition, race also has an historical incidence—a theory which prevailed from the days of Gobineau to those of Hitler.

Secondly, to propose racial integration as a solution for racial prejudice belongs, in the final analysis, to the realm of illusions like negritude. We know that this term, whose success is due to a famous poem written by Aimé Césaire of Martinique, ended by creating a new mystification. However, before it was called by this name, negritude had a number of undeniably positive aspects, such as the exaltation of the negro by men like the Jamaican Marcus Garvey. It would therefore be unfair to deny all that we owe to claims of this kind, insofar as they imposed respect and admiration for one of our essential roots. But because of its subsequent adulteration, the concept finally lost authority. The vicissitudes of what started as a noble purpose and finally became a hostile weapon were accurately recounted in a recent book, *Bonjour et Adieu à la Négritude*, by the Haitian poet René Depestre.

What really halts racial prejudice is the frankly anticolonialist and anti-oppressive attitude of men like the Puerto Rican Ramón E. Betances, who has made the great figures of Haiti's history known to a wider public and is an apostle of his country's independence; Anténor Firmin of Haiti, who in his work, *De l'Égalité des Races Humaines*, published in 1885, declared that "the anti-philosophical, pseudo-scientific doctrine of racial inequality rests exclusively on the idea of the exploitation of man by man"; the Cuban José Martí, whose struggle is well known and who wrote in 1894 that "man has no special rights because he belongs to one race or another. Let us speak of man, and already we speak of all rights. Man is more than white, more than mulatto, more than negro", or Frantz Fanon of Martinique who twenty years after his death, is still in the vanguard of a struggle.

Integration, both racial and cultural, is certainly an indispensable step on the road to the eradication of racialism, but it is not enough. We do not deny the enormous importance of integration. What we do deny is that it can be regarded as a *deus ex machina* for achieving this eradication. Decisive steps towards putting an end to racialism can be seen above all in events such as the extraordinary Haitian Revolution, which opened the way for the independence of our America; or the constitution of nations in the struggle for independence, as in the case of Cuba and the Dominican Republic during the second half of the 19th century, from which emerged leaders like Gregorio Luperón and Antonio Maceo who were senior citizens of their respective countries and of the world before they were white, negro or mulatto.

This vital aim has rarely been given more beautiful expression than in the immortal poem *Madera de Eban* ("Ebony"), by the Haitian Jacques Roumain:

Africa I have remembered you,
Africa, you are within me
like the splinter in the wound
like the protective fetish in the heart
of the village... *However,*
I only want to belong to your race
peasant workers of all lands.

It is in this spirit of fraternal struggle that man (in the Antilles and throughout the world) is moving forward towards unity without losing his plurality, which we prefer to call his richness and which will express itself in the most varied colours, rhythms, music and dreams. By force of habit, the term "white" is applied indiscriminately to pale-skinned, blonde-haired, clear-eyed Nordics and to olive-skinned, black-haired, dark-eyed Mediterranean men. A superior stage will be reached when even the very word "race" will be forgotten or restored to its zoological origin, and from one end of the world to the other, as if it were the most natural thing, we shall repeat the still arresting words of José Martí: "Our fatherland is humanity."

■ Roberto Fernández Retamar

The paradox of the human race is that its unity and its progress are dependent upon the diversity of the individuals and groups of which it is composed. The cord that binds all branches of mankind together, our common humanity, is too strong to be broken yet yielding enough to allow each group or culture the liberty to make its own contribution to the universal edifice. Right, the central pillar and framework of a house of the Djerma people of western Niger.



UNESCO NEWSROOM

The Second World Conference to Combat Racism

In accordance with a decision taken by the General Assembly of the United Nations at its 35th session, the Second World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination was held in Geneva from 1 to 13 August 1983. The work of the Conference centred on the adoption of ways and means of ensuring complete and universal application of United Nations resolutions relating to racism, racial discrimination and apartheid. The Conference adopted a Declaration recommending the proclamation of a 2nd Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, as well as a Programme of Action. The Declaration was adopted by a vote of 101 in favour to 12 against, with 3 abstentions; the Programme of Action by a vote of 104 in favour to none against, with 10 abstentions. The Declaration reaffirms that "any doctrine of racial superiority is scientifically false, morally condemnable, socially unjust and dangerous, and has no justification whatsoever..."; that apartheid, as "an institutionalized form of racism is a totally abhorrent affront to the conscience and dignity of mankind, a crime against humanity and a threat to international peace and security"; and that "in South Africa the most extreme form of racism has led to a form of exploitation and degradation which is in clear contradiction to the principle of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as provided for in the Charter of the United Nations."

Unesco and the World Food Programme mark two decades of cooperation

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the World Food Programme (WFP) by the UN and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN. Initially created to provide aid using surplus food stocks in some of the richer countries, the WFP today devotes the

bulk of its efforts (commitments amounted to some \$800 million in 1982) to using food for development through food-for-work projects in the rural areas of the developing world. Unesco has been cooperating with the WFP ever since its inception, notably on school feeding programmes, food-for-work school construction programmes, and food-for-work projects which support the rescue or restoration of cultural monuments and sites.

A World Competition for Young Architects

On the occasion of International Youth Year, proclaimed by the United Nations for 1985, Unesco, in collaboration with the International Union of Architects and with the assistance of Japan Airlines, is organizing a world competition on the theme "Tomorrow's Habitat" in which students in schools of architecture and young architects under the age of 35 are invited to participate. Preliminary national competitions are being held as of September 1983, with candidates being required to submit projects in the form of drawings, photographs and diagrams, on two boards each measuring 700 mm by 1000 mm. National competition organizers will send 5 selected entries from their country to Unesco HQ before 30 April 1984. An international jury will meet in May 1984 to choose the 10 best projects. Each of the 10 prizewinners will be required to build a model of his or her project to be exhibited at the Unesco stand at the International Exposition Tsukuba '85 in Japan which is expected to receive some 20 million visitors in 6 months. A two-week trip to Tokyo and Tsukuba Expo '85 will be awarded to the prizewinners. The competition will receive coverage in a forthcoming issue of the *Unesco Courier*. For further details please contact your Unesco National Commission or 'World Competition for Young Architects', Unesco, Office of Public Information, 7 Place de Fontenay, 75700 Paris, France.

Unesco celebrates Karl Jaspers centenary

The centenary of the birth of the philosopher Karl Jaspers was celebrated at a ceremony held at Unesco's Paris HQ on 17 June 1983 and attended by intellectuals representing all the world regions. In an address, the Director-General of Unesco, Mr. Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow pointed out that in the 1950s Jaspers had clearly seen that the world faced a choice between the extinction of all life on earth and the moral and political conversion of humanity to a new way of thinking, acting and living together. He also cited the admirable statement by Jaspers which echoes the underlying premise of Unesco's Constitution: "To make oneself accessible to all that is historically different, without becoming unfaithful to one's own historicity... To accept the inevitable combat with what is historically different, but constantly to elevate this combat to a level at which it becomes fraternal, one in which the adversaries join together in the truth which arises in community." Is not this the secret of all true solidarity? Mr. M'Bow asked. M. Franz Blankart of the International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies, Professor H.G. Gadamer of the University of Heidelberg, and Madame Jeanne Hirsch, president of the Karl Jaspers Foundation, also took part in the ceremony.

Correction

A reader from the People's Republic of China has written to draw our attention to an error in the caption on the back cover of our December 1982 issue which featured portraits of women belonging to 16 of China's 55 national minorities. The portrait bottom right showed a woman of the Kazak and not, as indicated in the caption, the Uighur group. Many thanks to our reader for spotting this mistake.

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The great Cuban painter Wifredo Lam (1902-1982) was born in the heart of a region with a long history of intermingling of peoples and cultures. By his birth Lam inherited the four basic elements of the Caribbean ethnic intermix (African, Indian, European and Chinese) and in his work he succeeded in combining his Antillean artistic heritage with cubism, surrealism and the best of the European *avant-garde*. Wifredo Lam played his part in the struggle against racism by illustrating, in his life and in his art, the fertile contributions peoples and cultures can bring to each other.

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