

Racism.

“It must be abolished, it should not be there!” we are exhorted by people who do not really know what racism is about. Similar nonsense was proclaimed when the American constitution was tinkered together by quite honourable people that stipulated that “all humans are born equal”. When you’re born without limbs or blind you are handicapped and certainly not the same as someone who is born intact. Anyway it is not the first or the last time that politicians spout idiocies because what these people might have had in mind, “that all people should have equal rights” is not sustainable either. This whole “human rights” business doesn’t make any sense, does a Swiss baby born into a comfortable home have any more rights than an infant born in some very uncomfortable nook in Patagonia? But born, willy nilly, they’ll be and my bet will be on the Swiss one for the most rights.

Racism exists because of the simple fact that people are not the same and they know it. Over the last 10 000 years they have managed to group themselves into clans by some kind of interbreeding and the oldest example we have are the European, Mid- Eastern and Asiatic countries. I remember, as a boy, my Dutch mother saying, yes, but that has been cleaned with the French fashion, meaning that the cleaning job was no good at all. A Norwegian fellow from Trondheim is not like a bloke from Marseille and the different nationalities that settled in New York stuck together in their various locations and still do today.

We are all racist at heart, like likes like and different is suspicious and the tendency is ‘less good than us’.

Romans were better than Gauls, French were better than Russians, British were far superior to anyone else, Germans were the Uebermenschen 80 years ago and the Americans are now starting their decline from being the best people ever. Who will be the next best lot?

Of course there ought to be reasons for these notions of superiority. For the Europeans, they are not difficult to find. Seven hundred years ago the boat building industry began to emerge in Holland and Portugal. In my school days of 80 years ago we learned that in 1380 the conservation of herring had been invented by Dutch fishing boats and that the wealth engendered from this invention allowed this tiny country to beat Spain, its oppressor, 200 years later. Europe invented seagoing ships and used the oceans as a highway to subdue the people in the world. None could withstand them, not even a large, ancient country like China when the Europeans set their mind to colonizing the rest of the world.

Of course, while going about their colonizing business many different kind of people were discovered that did not look like the predominantly white Europeans, from pitch black to light brown and different shades of yellow with non-European facial structures. Without exception, the invaders, were they Spanish, French, Dutch, British or Portuguese considered these newly discovered humans as inferior to themselves. After all, those coloured people were most of the time easy to subdue in warfare as they had not invented ships with cannon and other fire arms. Hence the newly discovered territories soon became possessions.