

all, the Synagogue is evolving in the opposite direction. More profound, and more sinister, today in the light of the total sociological development of man, is the general absence of some kind of a dimension of memorative appreciation and understanding, either in artist or in spectator. This, if it existed, would build up the depth of maturity needed for the formation of a real religious art, developing

over a long time period. This may indeed be the explanation why the best artists working in churches in the twentieth century tend to be old men; they have succeeded in building up in themselves a maturity of outlook that in past times was formed for them in great measure by the structure and inclination of society. Such men, nowadays, inevitably, stand alone and apart.

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**RACE.** A Christian symposium edited by Clifford S. Hill and David Mathews. London. *Victor Gollancz Ltd*, 1968. 30s.

There are nine essays in this book each dealing with different aspects of the race problem. Dr Tadeuz Stark discusses most lucidly the questions migration raises for jurisprudence; Dr Stafford-Clark has helpful things to say about the roots of prejudice, and there is also a very interesting theological essay by the late Archbishop de Blank. A number of immigrants have written about their experiences, in particular about the culture shock they undergo owing to the discrepancy between expectation and reality.

Part of the problem is that our emotional attitude to what we call race (a term that is very difficult to define apart from certain superficial physical differences that are associated, on a system of averages, with certain constantly changing groups) bears very little relation to the social realities of our time. If the term has any meaning it can only be rendered in biological terms, and from the biological point of view mankind is outgrowing the period of racially separated communities. The cultural problem is more complex, in that certain racial systems are associated with cultural expressions that can be identified historically, or with some sub-culture. In this country we have reached a critical point in this respect, for we can no longer soothe ourselves with the old platitudes about the liberalism of our traditions. The island fortress complex, that deep distrust of the stranger, has recently hardened into an attitude that rejects the stranger immigrant in his full dignity as a human being—and the evidence suggests that the darker the immigrant the stronger is his rejection. The 'Go home, nigger' reaction is, of course, related to the deep insecurity of a people who do not share the ideals of their rulers, and who are motivated by a primitive desire to find a scapegoat. The immigrant, in his turn, bruised and disturbed

by his rejection, finds himself confined to housing areas that were well on their way to becoming slums before he arrived, and his opportunities for employment and promotion restricted by a group prejudice that his individual merit can do little to overcome. He then consoles himself with a nihilistic vision, 'Burn, baby, burn'.

Those of us who are liberals, however true our judgements may be, are for the most part people who live in an area unaffected by the more serious problems, and therefore our exhortations have an unreality that is deeply resented by those who see themselves as the victims of the situation. Liberalism has to prove itself by promoting the radical kind of social change that involves a revolution in housing and education, the kind of change that is impossible without a redistribution of capital and power. Catholics too must reflect on the significance of the fact that many immigrants, feeling themselves unwelcome even in the Christian community, have left such bodies as the Catholic Church, the Church of England or the Free Churches to which they belonged in their countries of origin, and joined Pentecostal sects.

We have in this country reached a point of decision. Can we accept the fact that we are already a plural society? That we could be a society in which the dominant group does not pursue an ideal of integration that demands a sacrifice of identity on the part of minorities? The minority will have to adjust, but in a context in which he is allowed to make his distinctive contribution. This means change, but the kind of change that could help to project our rather sluggish and old-fashioned society into the modern world.

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