

## **Race**

Race is an inborn condition, by which we find ourselves, at birth, characterized by certain traits—of skin tone, features (lips, nose, eye color, hair quality)—which remain with the individual through life. The distribution of races through historical time and across vast spaces tends to associate certain prominent races with certain areas—Whites with Europe and America; Hispanics with Spain and South America; Blacks with Africa and the Caribbean; Asians with South East Asia, Japan, and China. There is, however, nothing region-specific about race,

Racial difference has long served as a sensitive criterion of value—it having in various historical settings seemed useful/accurate/profitable to evaluate or judge groups of people by their race. The trigger to these 'racial attitudes' will typically have been or be historical situations; a dominant power feels entitled to look down on the suppressed power as in instances of slavery or military conquest, in which the conqueror and conquered are of different races.

By and large, and given the limits on our knowledge in this regard, where race has been a factor in the inequality between social groups, it has been a factor for conflict. In our own time we have had to endure black-white racial violence during the Civil Rights Movement, during the Fight against Apartheid in South Africa, or during the frequent outbreaks between Hindus and Muslims in India.

Interracial marriage is the most recent experiment in racial development. This long resented social move has spread widely in the United States and Western Europe, where it has by now become a legal and commonplace practice. While not yet a social practice taken for granted, it shows signs of becoming institutional and of positive benefit to many citizens.