

On behalf of the race

by María Cegarra Cegarra

We may believe in races and in ethnic groups as human differences which must be *tolerated*. We also categorize people we meet and know, in these kinds of 'labels', such as (apart from race) gender, religion, culture, age, sexual orientation, food habits, clothes style, etc.

All those things are the first characteristics we notice in someone when getting to know him or her. And as far as I am concerned, we prejudge and classify people without even knowing them, whatsoever they could bring to our lives, which seems to me really ignorant.

Furthermore, when we show off about being 'tolerant' with different races to ours, by saying this, we presume that there is something wrong, annoying or unpleasant about these biological and genetic characteristics —genetics!, who notices any difference when speaking to a brown-eyed or curly-haired person? Thus, according to my way of thinking, the idea of being tolerated is already racist against nonwhite people; as well as the idea of thinking that someone who 'tolerates homosexual people' seems a good or modern guy, is actually homophobic.

Racism is a belief which has caused too many genocides, and which has claimed too many lives, as Jewish extermination or the Rwanda genocide. But what is even more absurd is the number of perpetrators who have obeyed frivolous racist leaders and killed on behalf of the race.

It is well known that racist ideology based on biological determinism has its origins in Linneo's work, followed by Buffon's racial classifications during (both) the XVIII century. Their main axiom was that a human being has different civilization abilities depending on his/her 'race', which turned out to mean that Broca Aryan Nordic race had the aforesaid ability.

Thus, racism was not established by Hitler during the thirties. As a matter of fact, the belief of considering white people superior to other 'races', begun in 1492, when some greedy and arrogant dictators decided to colonize the New World. At that time, racism, mixophobia (or miscegenation rejection), caste system, and a brutal form of slavery started to expand like cancer, in the shape of the ancient imperialism. After that, blood purity and mixophobia were highly present in the following colonial contexts, and held by the political and religious elite overall, in order to keep their status quo.

To sum up, I will add that the social obsession of classifying all the people in groups so as to control them, and to make ourselves feel sure about the world which surrounds us, is very anthropological, however is also a superfluous obstacle in our interpersonal relations and connections. Hence, we should not pay so much attention to these labels, we ought to just open our minds to what is new and different to our life and routine.

Finally, let's not forget what Hannah Arendt wrote: 'race is, politically speaking, not the beginning of humanity but its end, not the origin of peoples but their decay, not the natural birth of man but his unnatural death.'