

author speaks repeatedly (on pp. 3, 7 and 31) of the "Megalithic religion", but calls in other contexts the sanctuary of the *eccestan* and its mysteries "primitive Indo-Germanic" ("urindogermanisch," pp. 62, 63 and 78). In this manner two prehistoric cultures in his work are confounded: the Megalithic culture, which was mainly a creation of the Atlantic (or Dalic) race and had its centre in the maritime part of Western Europe, and the band-ceramic culture, which originated in the eastern part of Central Europe and very probably was the product of the Nordic race.

It is true that Professor Wirth mentions some facts that seem to justify this generalisation, but they can all be explained otherwise. He found the symbols of the Megalithic religion on the band-ceramic of the Tripolje culture (in the region of the Dniepr), from where they were brought by West Indo-Germans of the so-called Kentum group to the löss region of Kan-su, on the north-western border of China. However, these Indo-Germans were the Tocharians (Greek *Tocharoi*; Chinese *Yuee-tji*), who were partly of Atlantic descent and who, according to the German prehistorian Menghin, settled temporarily in the Dniepr region before migrating to East Turkestan. Nor can the tale of the birth of Agni, contained in the *Rig-Veda*, serve as an argument, because the Aryans, who invaded India, came from South Russia, where they must have been in contact with other peoples, among others the Tocharians.

Professor Wirth himself speaks of the Battleaxe people, who conquered the *eccestan* and murdered its prophetess about B.C. 2000 (pp. 10 and 134). It is not to be assumed that these Indo-Germans desecrated a sanctuary of their own religion. Further, it is to be remarked that all the Indo-Germanic peoples, at their appearance in history, adored gods who were mainly masculine and possessed a patriarchal social structure. The case of the Teutons, who conserved — as Professor Wirth rightly points out — many observances and institutions of the Megalithic religion, is not conclusive, as they were partly of Atlantic, partly of Nordic descent. The amalgamation of both religions must have followed the conquest of the north-eastern part of the country of the Megalithic people (the "Hünen-gräbervolk"), and not at the time of the Germanic migration, as the author supposes. In my opinion this misinterpretation spoils much of his following speculations, however interesting and worthy of consideration they may be. Nevertheless this book will be indispensable for all who wish to study the religious concepts of our forbears.

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## THE AFRIKANERS

By John Fisher. Cassell, London, 1969. 34 illustrations. 8 maps, pp. 380. Price £2.50.

This book is one of the first studies of its kind dealing in some depth with the origins and the history of the Afrikaner people. Their beginnings commenced 300 years ago at the Cape as Dutch settlers. Ultimately they rebelled against the Dutch Government, became fiercely independent and migrated north into the Transvaal out of Cape Province. It was there that for the first time they came into contact with the Bantu tribes who had never entered the Cape proper. As a result of their robbing the farms and cattle of the Afrikaners the latter came into conflict with these marauders. Later the Afrikaners found themselves also in conflict with the British in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

As the author quite rightly points out they are little better understood outside South Africa today than in the days of the Boer War. "Then, they were freedom fighters against John Bull's colonialist imperialism.

Then, they were the darlings of Britain's Liberal Party and of her early Socialists, as, today, they are their villains." The author goes on to say:

Few outside South Africa praise separate development yet the Afrikaner can console himself with the thought that there has been fighting between Whites and non-Whites in other territories such as Kenya and Angola where there is (or was) no separate development.

He can argue that the Coloureds in the Cape are now just as grateful for White protection and for regulations that safeguard their civilisation from encroachment by the Bantu, as the Indians in Natal were in 1949 when the Zulus rose and threatened to exterminate them.

He can ask his critics how else they would have proposed to re-house — or even house at all — the Bantu in cities if this were not to be in special housing estates. . . .

He can point to the fact that the Protectorates, since they have become independent, have been able to share in South Africa's prosperity in a way that was never possible in the days when Britain was still "protecting" them and failing to develop their economy. As in the days of yore, the Afrikaners have agreements with friendly non-White chiefs in the neighbouring territories.

Incidentally, it is interesting to know, from the author's account of the settlement of the Dutch at the Cape under Van Riebeeck, that among the Dutch there was certainly at least one Scotsman, Harman Williamson from Edinburgh, who received severe punishment for disobedience in resistance towards his superior officers aboard the yacht *Joutsbloom*. It is unlikely that he was the only Scotsman in the original Dutch settlement. This strand of Scottish blood seems therefore to have run through the Afrikaners from the beginning of their establishment in South Africa which was from 1652.

From the ethnological point of view the author is, in our opinion, quite right in describing the Hottentots as "nomad Mongol-like herds-men," as this is certainly what they are by all normal estimation of their racial traits.

In the first settlement of the time of Van Riebeeck slaves were introduced. The first consignment had been taken off a Portuguese slaver which was taking them from Angola to Brazil. Therefore, although the Bantu never reached the Cape, Negroes were in fact introduced into the Cape by the Dutch themselves as slaves. It should, however, be pointed out that the children of these slaves once baptised were given their freedom. Because of this no Negro *slave* population, as such, arose in the Cape, while at the same time Negroes have never been in such numbers as to constitute any significant population as in the Southern states of America. Cape Province has never been a Negro or Bantu territory.

Of Van Riebeeck we learn (p. 11) that he was of a well-connected family which had been granted a coat of arms as far back as 1388, and that his father had married the daughter of the Burgermeister of Culemborg. His wife was a French Huguenot.

The Huguenots arrived following the repeal of the Edict of Nantes. They were followed by the British who began to settle at the Cape from 1795 onwards. In 1795 a Scottish general, Major-General James Henry Craig, was able to enforce the capitulation of Rustenburg.

To the ethnologist the book has the very common irritating habit of using the word English for British. This is particularly out of place for the British settlement in the Cape, where so many of the generals and other officials were not only Scottish from 1795 onwards, but where many Scottish regiments were employed. In addition, that many of the 1820 settlers were of the same nationality is a well-known fact. Also the author himself points out that Scottish Presbyterian ministers were sent out with

Scottish schoolmasters as a deliberate act of policy because they were closer akin to the Dutch than the English. Accuracy in these matters is highly desirable both from the historical and ethnological point of view. This Scottish element, incidentally, has frequently, as we have already indicated elsewhere, entered into the Afrikaner's stock. The Murrays, in particular, are a greatly honoured section of the Afrikaner Presbyterian or Calvinist tradition.

## THE BLACK DEATH

By Philip Ziegler. Collins, London, 1969. Map. Pp. 319. Price £1.80.

The numbers killed by the Black Death can never be properly ascertained. Claims have varied from half of the population to very much higher, but these figures are, no doubt, exaggerated. Nevertheless it is clear that the estimates of the Scottish chroniclers giving consistently one third of the population indicate that Scotland for some reason suffered less than others. What is, however, of genetic significance is that whereas there is evidence to show that generally the masses suffered worse than the upper classes, in Scotland the statements are emphatic that this was so — as John Fordun says "the meaner sort and common people" were the chief sufferers of the plague (p. 200). It can, therefore, be assumed that this must have been a factor in ensuring the high quality of the Scottish population, for the elimination of a large part of the "meaner sort" would make room for their replacement by people who were without doubt (on average) of better genetic as well as social endowment. Much the same thing must have been true all over Europe, if not elsewhere, along the line of the march of the plague from inner Asia, although in many cases the social incidence of it may not have been so marked as in Scotland.

This is a book and a subject well worthy of study from the point of view of its genetic effects. It might well have been ultimately a factor in the flowering of the Renaissance.

An interesting fact which emerges is the difference between the commonsense observation of the mass of the people that the plague spread on contact, and the fantastic theories of the doctors and scholars of that time. We have here a lesson for our own times when we find sociologists, social historians, and political philosophers at complete variance with the observed facts of the average man.

The author brings out the fact that for several hundred years up to the thirteenth century there had been a population explosion followed at the end of the thirteenth and in the fourteenth century by famine conditions (when there were bad harvests), and a reduction of the peasantry. This was the state of affairs when the bubonic plague struck, carried from Asia by the flea which is carried by several rodents including the black rat. The population conditions, with the maximum population before the Black Death, were not equalled again in many parts of Europe until the twentieth century. The Black Death came as a corrective of the over-population of the world in the middle of the sixteenth century.