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Change in prejudice. Some notes on the minority problem, with references to the West Indies and Latin America

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CHANGE IN PREJUDICE

SOME NOTES ON THE MINORITY PROBLEM, WITH REFERENCES
TO THE WEST INDIES AND LATIN AMERICA.

One can hardly harbour the pretension to master the vast and fast-growing American sociological and anthropological literature on the problem of minorities. Yet it seems possible, on the basis of a number of converging statements, to come to the conclusion that two modes of approach, which might be called the psychological and the sociological, are competing in this literature today. The psychological approach seems to possess the oldest rights, while the sociological point of view is being defended with the *élan* of a recent reaction.

In essence, the difference between both approaches would seem to be that the "psychological" current emphasizes the origin of individual prejudice, trying to explain the presence of prejudice (and therefore of discrimination) by way of concepts like the "Authoritarian Personality", while the "sociological" current, on the other hand, emphasizes the function of power-relations, of relative group-positions, or of social conflict, all of which are seen as determining the prejudice of the members of a society, which is divided in minority and majority.

Carey McWilliams, defender of the latter viewpoint, has this to say: "Race relations are not based on prejudice; prejudice is a by-product of race relations — as influenced by other factors. Current psychological theories of race relations, however, are almost exclusively concerned with prejudice, which is discussed as though it were the cause of discrimination (...). To make a theory of the function of prejudice in the psychic economy of the individual do double duty as a theory of group discrimination is to confuse different, if related, levels of meaning".¹

In their "Minorities in the New World", Wagley and Harris reject the psychological approach on identical grounds; they state that the comparative study of the six minorities they dealt with, shows that

¹ Mc Williams, C., *Brothers under the Skin*, New York, Little, Brown & Co., rev. ed. 1951, 315-317.

it "is most useful to think of minority-majority relations as an ongoing social conflict".²

E. K. Francis also rejects the emphasis, again with similar arguments, on the "interpersonal relations" in the study of minority problems, and is of the opinion, that the really sociological approach needs to accentuate the "group-relations".³

Finally, Herbert Blumer gave a clear synthesis of both approaches in his recent article "Race prejudice as a sense of group position".⁴ There is no doubt, he says, that the extensive literature on race-prejudice is being dominated by the notion that such prejudice has its basis in a feeling or complex of feelings, rooted in the individual. Usually it is described as existing of feelings like antipathy, hostility, hatred, intolerance and aggressiveness. The scholarly research, based on this premise, has two tasks to cope with: in the first place there is the need to identify the feelings that together produce "race-prejudice" — how they fit together, and how they are backed by other psychological elements, e.g. mythic representations. Secondly, there is the need to understand how the complex of feelings is originated; some scholars want to reduce these feelings to inborn dispositions; others lead them back to personality characteristics, as is shown by the construction of the Authoritarian Personality; others, finally, consider the feelings of prejudice as a product of "social experience".

All these explanations have in common that prejudice is being located in the realm of individual feeling. This common trait is easily to be found in the work of psychologists, psychiatrists and social psychologists, as well as in the great majority of the sociological studies in this field. — Unfortunately, Blumer continues, this common conception of race-prejudice neglects and obscures the fact that race prejudice essentially is "a matter of relationships between racial groups."

The existence of race prejudice presupposes automatically, that prejudiced individuals view themselves as belonging to a specific racial group. It also means that they locate others, against whom they are prejudiced, in another racial group than their own. Such an identifi-

² Wagley, Ch. and Harris, M., *Minorities in the New World, Six Case Studies*. New York 1958, Columbia University Press, 255-256.

³ Francis, E. K., *Variables in the Formation of so-called "Minority Groups"*, in: *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. LX, July 1924, nr. 1 pp. 6-14, 6.

⁴ Blumer, H., *Race Prejudice as a Sense of Group Position*, in: *Race Relations, Problems and Theory*, ed: Masouka, J., and Valien, P., Chapel Hill, The Un. of N. Car. Press, 1961, 217-228, 217 and foll.

cation implies the formation of an image of their own and the other's racial group, in terms of the relation of one group to the other. This process of image formation is a collective process. It is the process of becoming conscious of one's social position which, as a product of this phenomenon of collective characterization, forms the basis for race prejudice.

It would seem that the sociological approach, as interpreted by Blumer, offers indeed wider perspectives, especially for the comparative socio-historical study of minorities, than the individual-psychological approach, although the latter must not be discarded as without use for differently formulated problems.⁵

It is clear that the definition of the concept of "minority" is also influenced by the psychological or sociological preference of the author.

A maybe somewhat extreme example of a "psychological" definition is that of Rose: "... the mere fact of being generally hated because of religious, racial or nationality background is what defines a minority group".⁶ The well known definition of Louis Wirth also fits into this category: "... a group of people who, because of their physical or cultural characteristics, are singled out from the others in the society in which they live, for differential and unequal treatment, and who therefore regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination".⁷

While in these definitions stress is laid on the feelings of the dominant group versus the minority, in the "sociological" definitions there is rather an emphasis on the cultural-structural characteristics of the relations between the majority and the minority. Thus, for example, with Schermerhorn, who conceives minorities as "... subgroups within a culture which are distinguishable from the dominant group by reason of differences in physiognomy, language, custom, or culture-patterns (including any combination thereof)"⁸; and also with Wagley and

⁵ It is interesting to note that Blumer's opinions come very close to those which the Dutch sociologist Den Hollander, already in 1946, expressed concerning the general process of image formation. Cf. Den Hollander, A. N. J., *Het andere Volk: een Verkenning van Groepsoordeel en Groepsbeeld*, oratie, 1946.

⁶ Rose, A. and C., *America Divided: Minority Group Relations in the United States*, New York, Knopf, 1948, 3.

⁷ Wirth, L., *The Problem of Minority Groups*, in: Linton, R., ed., *The Science of Man in the World Crisis*, New York, Columbia Un. Press, 1945, 347-372, 347.

⁸ Schermerhorn, R. A., *These our People: Minorities in the American Culture*, Boston, Heath, 1949, 5.

Harris, who view ethnocentrism and endogamy as the most important determinants of the majority-minority relations.⁹

It is interesting to note that in both categories of definitions there is only a difference of accent: the "feelings" of the majority towards the minority may or may not be the central focus, one may prefer to stress the "hatred", the discrimination, of one group against the other, or preference may be shown for a structural description from which the collective feelings can be derived as a secondary characteristic, yet there does not exist any difference of opinion about the kind of feelings of the majority vis-à-vis the minority. Wagley and Harris also speak only of "repressive measures", about "varying degrees of overt and covert hostility", as typical indications of these feelings.¹⁰

And Blumer, who so clearly linked the process of collective and mutual image formation with the "sense of social position" of the respective group, and who even explicitly ascertained the changeability of this image formation,¹¹ nevertheless believes that in the race prejudice of the dominant group four "types of feeling" are always present.

These are: 1) a feeling of superiority, 2) a feeling that the subordinate race is intrinsically different and alien, 3) a feeling of proprietary claim on certain "areas of privilege and advantage", and 4) a fear and suspicion that the subordinate race wants to conquer the privileges of the dominant race.¹²

Blumer's opinion that these types of feeling are always present is surprising, because he is one of the few who understand that the way in which the individual members of a dominant group think and feel about a subordinate group, may be very varied. Indeed, some of them, he says, may be bitter and hostile, with strong antipathies, with an exalted feeling of superiority; others may have philanthropic and protective reactions, mixed with pity; others again will be condescending, and show mild derision, while others yet will be inclined to politeness and correctness without a trace of aggressiveness. All these and still other patterns of feelings can be observed among the individuals of a dominant group. However, the consciousness of the social position of their group gives a common dimension to all these individual patterns. Whether the members are powerful or powerless, reactionary

⁹ Wagley and Harris, *op. cit.*, 258.

¹⁰ *Idem*, 255-256.

¹¹ Blumer, *op. cit.*, 218.

¹² *Idem*. 219.

or progressive, whether they are rich or poor, educated or illiterate, Blumer says, "all are led by virtue of sharing the sense of group position to similar individual positions".¹³

The surprise is that this observation, which seems important and correct, has not been linked by the author in a more subtle way to the four "types of feeling" which he discussed earlier. If one were to assume that at least one of these types of feeling were changeable (namely that of the "fear and suspicion"), one would immediately reach the conclusion that there is a determinate changeability in the configuration of the individual patterns of feelings.

Concretely: suppose that a given minority does not provoke the fear and suspicion that it harbours designs on the prerogatives of the dominant group, would not then, consequentially, the most aggressive, hostile and exalted individual reactions decrease in number and significance, and would not then reactions like condescending benevolence, formal correctness etc., become preponderant in this latter group?

I would like to suggest that this situation indeed presents itself in social reality. While I am in agreement with the basic thoughts of Blumer's exposition, I would like to state that his four "types of feeling" are neither always present, nor unchangeable, and that there exists a relation between the constellation of these types of feeling and the configuration of the individual patterns of feeling in the members of the dominant group in a concrete situation.

The main purpose of this article will be to gain some understanding of the conditions under which the majority will form a subjective conception of the minority, that will not imply the notion of menace. We will also try to see, how a minority of the "non-menacing" type can develop into one of the "menacing" type (in the subjective conception of the dominant group), and vice versa.

Let us first consider how far the existing classifications of minorities can help us with our task.

We can distinguish at least three types of classification of minorities, which might be called the finalistic, the mechanistic, and the situational.

The best known perhaps is that of Wirth, which is based on the aspirations of the minority: the minority can be pluralistic, assimilationist, secessionist or militant.¹⁴ — Simpson and Winger devised a similar classification, based on the objectives of the dominant group. They speak of six possibili-

¹³ Blumer, *op. cit.*, 221.

¹⁴ Wirth, L., *op cit.*, 354-363.

ties: assimilation (forced or permitted), pluralism, legal protection of minorities, population transfer (peaceful transfer or forced migration), continued subjugation, and extermination.¹⁵ — Unfortunately, the objectives of minority and majority are not always in harmony, while it must be considered a disadvantage of this kind of classification that the objectives (if they are formally proclaimed at all) are not always consistently adhered to.

Thus Wagley and Harris observe that "the traditional stated goal of the Jews in the United States has been pluralism, yet there is a marked trend toward assimilation in their actions".¹⁶

An interesting effort to devise a mechanistic classification has been undertaken by E. K. Francis, in which he manipulates four variables (urban, rural, solidaristic, individualistic), which he relates to the parent-society, the host-society, and the minority. By further using Znaniecki's four types of "all-inclusive societies" (tribal, folk, religious and national), he succeeds in constructing an elaborate paradigm, in which the degree of "isomorphism" between minority and host-society seems to determine the fate of minorities.¹⁷ Francis' esthetically attractive classification seems to suffer from a shortage of variables, which causes his differentiation to become too crude, and therefore, his criterion of "isomorphism" to become too arbitrary.

Without denying the relative usefulness of the classifications mentioned, I would suggest that Cox' situational classification of minorities is the most interesting for our purposes.

The author confines himself to the relations between a white majority and a coloured minority. He distinguishes seven situations:¹⁸

"1) Situations in which the colored person is a stranger in a white society, such as a Hindu in the United States or a Negro in many parts of Canada and in Argentina. We shall call this the stranger situation;

2) Situations of original white contact where the culture of the colored group is very simple, such as the conquistadors [*sic*] and Indians in the West Indies, and the Dutch and Hottentots in South Africa — the original contact situation;

3) Situations of colored enslavement in which a small aristocracy of whites exploits large quantities of natural resources, mainly agricultural, with forced colored labor, raised or purchased like capital in a

¹⁵ Simpson, G. E. and Yinger, M. J., *Racial and Cultural Minorities: an Analysis of Prejudice and Discrimination*, New York, Harper, rev. ed. 1958, 27.

¹⁶ Wagley and Harris, *op. cit.*, 286.

¹⁷ Francis, *op. cit.*

¹⁸ Cox, O. C., *Caste, Class and Race*, New York, Doubleday, 1948, 353-354. The author calls these situations "modern", because they have to do with "aggressive whites [who] have sought most conveniently and efficiently to exploit the human and natural resources of the colored peoples" (351).

slave market, such as that in the pre-Civil War South and in Jamaica before 1834 — the slavery situation;

4) Situations in which a small minority of whites in a colored society is bent upon maintaining a ruling-class status, such as the British in the West Indies or the Dutch in the East Indies — the ruling class situation;

5) Situations in which there are large proportions of both colored and white persons seeking to live in the same area, with whites insisting that the society is a "white man's country", as in the United States and South Africa — the bi-partite situation;

6) Situations in which colored-and-white amalgamation is far advanced and in which a white ruling class is not established, as in Brazil — the amalgamative situation;

7) Situations in which a minority of whites has been subdued by a dominantly colored population, as that which occurred in Haiti during the turn of the eighteenth century, or the expulsion of whites from Japan in 1638 — the nationalistic situation."

Cox' classification gains in value if we know to detach ourselves from the dogmatic rigidity that permeates his explanatory remarks. There is no reason to view his "situations" exclusively in terms of white and coloured and the situations are not as "modern" as the author assumes.

Let us now try to reduce Cox' seven situations to two key situations, whereby our attention will be mainly directed to the way in which the dominant group will be inclined to subjectively conceive the minority.

There is in the first place the "nationalistic situation". — As far as there is a realization of the objectives of the minority (as Cox suggests in his examples), this implies then at the same time the end of the minority situation: the white quantitative minority was not "subdued" in Haiti, it was eliminated. If within the subordinated (coloured) group there exists the wish to reach a "nationalistic situation", then the constellation is similar to that of the "ruling class situation".

Cox' discussion of this latter situation shows that he is thinking of colonial multi-racial societies. He commits the error, however, of believing that in such societies all whites always are "metropolitans", who "seldom set their roots in the area".¹⁹ In the British West Indies, which he mentions as an example, there does exist a considerable group of native whites who consider Trinidad, Barbados, Jamaica as their respective homelands. These and other Caribbean societies would better be placed under the heading of the "bi-partite situation", where "large proportions" of different races try to live together in the same area. If Cox considers the Negro group in the United States numerically large enough to speak of a "bi-partite situation"

¹⁹ Cox, *op. cit.* 360.

in that country, there is little reason indeed to consider the number of native whites in the majority of Caribbean countries as insufficient for the prevalence of the same situation there.

In defining the "amalgamative situation" — e.g. Brazil —, Cox suffers from too strong an emphasis on biological data, an emphasis which he attacks so vehemently elsewhere in his book; the definition of who is "white" in Brazil (and in the rest of what I have called the Iberian variant of the Caribbean area), is different than in the United States. The idea that in Brazil "a white ruling class is not established" is, therefore, not acceptable without qualification; this is not to deny, however, that the biological-social process of homogenisation has progressed somewhat more in the latter country than in the United States.²⁰

The "slavery situation" which is considered by Cox as the purest form of established race relations, is rather to be conceived as a phase in the development of the (colonial) "ruling-class" situation, during which phase a juridical-economic system of unfree labour prevails.

Finally, concerning the "original contact situation", Cox recognizes that there is not so much question of a "type" as of a phase in the process of the development of a more or less stable pattern of race relations. It is also difficult to establish how "very simple" the culture of the coloured group must be in order to fit into this category.

All these considerations make it possible to reduce reasonably Cox' classification to a dichotomy: the "stranger-situation" on the one hand (about which we will have more to say), and the "real" minority situation on the other. Historically speaking, this latter situation can ideally be subdivided in different phases, each of which can be denoted with one of Cox' terms. After the "original contact situation" there may follow a colonial period in which the inhabitants of metropolitan origin constitute the "ruling class"; these "metropolitans" may then create a "slavery situation" which, after some generations, may develop into a multi-racial "bi-partite" society; under certain conditions a process of biological-social amalgamation of the native whites and the other groups may get under way; finally, subordinated "nationalistic" groups may produce the elimination of the dominant group. — All these phases tend to have in common the recognition that there is a "real" minority, in the sense given to this concept by the authors whom we quoted before; in all these phases there are further present in the dominant group in greater or lesser degree all of Blumer's "types of feeling", including the "fear and suspicion", the feeling of menace, provoked by the presence of the minority.

²⁰ Cf. Hoetink, H., *De gespleten Samenleving in het Caribisch Gebied*, Assen, Van Gorcum, 1962, (English edition to be published by Oxford Un. Press); also: Hoetink, H., *Colonial Psychology and "Race"*, in: *Journal of Economic History*, December 1961, 629-640.

I consider it one of the merits of Cox' work, that he also paid attention to the "stranger situation". In those cases, he says, where the number of coloured people in the total population is so small, that they "can neither be expected to compete with whites, nor serve any considerable purpose as a labor force", there will usually be little racial antipathy shown toward them, — unless or until they, perhaps, try to penetrate into the higher strata of society, where competition is keener. As examples he mentions the Negro in Canada, the Hindu in the United States (where he is still a "romantic figure"); the American Negro soldiers in Europe were also "racial strangers", and were, like the American aborigines in the times of the Conquista, looked upon with a mixture of curiosity and benevolence.

Cox further points out that the numerical factor is not always decisive in the creation of this situation; if a coloured individual arrives in a society where a negative attitude against him has already been prepared in advance (e.g. in a "white" community in the South of the United States), then even his minimal numerical strength will not function as a guarantee against signs of racial antagonism.²¹

While, on the one hand, Cox correctly ascertains that paucity alone does not always lead to a "stranger situation", he appears, on the other hand, not to be aware of the fact that such paucity not always needs to be a condition for the creation of this situation.

The essential characteristic of this situation is neither the actual strength nor the potential power of the minority, but the subjective conception that the dominant group possesses of this minority. In this conception the factor of the "menace" has been pushed to the background, or is even completely absent. — Although it is certainly plausible to assume that the numerical factor will often play a role in the process of image formation, it is nevertheless conceivable that under specific conditions this factor loses weight in this process: just as one Negro in a "white" community in the Deep South can readily provoke defense reactions, so it is possible to think of situations in which the members of a numerically important group in a society are considered as racial strangers.

Let us, before going into details, try to recapitulate the foregoing.

Contrary to the prevailing opinion, which attributes to the dominant group an exclusively negative attitude towards the minority (antipathy, hatred, collective discrimination, overt and covert hostility), we share

²¹ Cox, *op. cit.*, 354-355.

Blumer's point of view according to which the individuals of this dominant group may have a varied range of feelings vis-à-vis the minority, from aggressive hostility to pitiful philanthropy.

In our opinion (and here we deviate from Blumer's) there are certain minority situations in which the bitterness, the exalted hostility, may prevail in the individual members of the dominant group, whereas in other situations a mild benevolence, a condescending philanthropy, may dominate the feeling of these members. In the former case the collective image formation of the dominant group is being influenced by a notion of fear and suspicion of, and menace by the minority; in the latter situation this notion (which Blumer assumes to be an ever-present "type of feeling") will be less pronounced or even absent.

One could, with Cox, call the members of this latter kind of minority (cultural and/or) "racial strangers". I prefer the term "exotic group" which, by different reasoning, I have proposed elsewhere and defined as a group "deviating in somatic and/or cultural respects, without being conceived subjectively as a menace to the existing social order".²²

Thus we have arrived at a dichotomy of minority groupings, based on the emotional attitude of the dominant group, and can distinguish the "real" minority (which provokes the notion of menace that easily leads to pronounced negative reactions), and the exotic group.

We will now try to show that a given minority can evolve in the course of its existence from "real" minority to exotic group, or vice versa.

To prevent misunderstanding, I would like to point out that our attention here is not directed towards processes like biological and cultural homogenisation as such. Neither are we interested here in the construction of so-called cycles of racial relations, as were designed by Park, Bogardus and others, and in which a certain regularity in the process of accommodation, assimilation and amalgamation is postulated.²³ — We are interested exclusively in the process of change in prejudice, in image-formation, as this can present itself in the course of the history of a given majority-minority relation; our primary objective is to understand the conditions under which such a change is produced.

Earlier we saw that Cox considered the numerical weakness of the minority as the condition for the creation of a "stranger-situation".

²² Hoetink, op. cit. 1962, 228.

²³ Park, R. E., *Race and Culture*, Glencoe, The Free Press, 1949, 150; Bogardus, E. S., *A Race-relations Cycle*, in: *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XXXV, nr. 4, January 1930, 613.

Consequently, a minority could evolve in the course of its existence from an exotic group to a "real" minority, because of a relative numerical growth, just as an evolution in the reserve direction could present itself as a consequence of a relative numerical decrease. These evolutions can indeed be observed in social reality. However, as I indicated earlier, numerical strength is not the only factor which causes changes in the image formation vis-à-vis a minority. Another influential factor seems to be the degree of social integration of the minority, or rather, the degree in which the dominant group views the minority as integrated in the societal whole, in its (the dominant group's) "societal image".

A minority can be a numerical majority and yet keep being conceived as an exotic group because the degree of its actual social integration, c.q. the degree of its "subjective" integration is keeping it outside, or in the margin of, the societal image of the dominant group.²⁴

Often, then, but not always, will numerical changes in the minority-majority relation be linked to changes in the degree of integration of the minority in the societal whole, as subjectively interpreted by the majority.

Let us now direct our attention to some concrete minority situations in the Caribbean area and Latin America, the history of which might be described in terms of one of the indicated evolutions of prejudice.

Of course, it cannot be our intention to give a detailed account of each of these evolutions; that would require a more exhaustive research than which is undertaken here. Our objective is only to indicate how certain concrete minority situations would seem to lend themselves to

²⁴ It is on these grounds that I have ventured to state that, if we conceive the world at large as a developing "society", the minorities of "the World" (which form a quantitative majority), will be viewed by "the West" as exotic groups, as long as they are not subjectively comprised within the societal image of "the West". As soon as these minorities are viewed as integrated "societal" parts, they will be conceived as "real" minorities, and the range of attitudes of the dominant group concerning them will be significantly changed. Cf. Hoetink, op. cit. 1962, 226 and foll. (The terms "the World" and "the West" are used here in the sense attributed to them by A. J. Toynbee, in his *The World and the West*, London, Oxford Un. Press, 1953).

It might be useful to add that the attitudes of the majority vis-à-vis an exotic group are, of course, not to be seen as static; within the indicated range of attitudes, fluctuations will present themselves. In definite periods of crisis, e.g. in the case of a conflict between the "host-society" and the "homeland" of the exotic group, the latter may abruptly become drawn into the "centre" of the societal image of the dominant group, temporarily being subject to bitterly aggressive reactions.

a diachronic study in terms of the evolution between the two polar minority situations: the exotic group and the "real" minority situation.

Thus it might be warranted to view the development of the relation between the Creole sociological majority and the East Indian minority in societies like Surinam and Trinidad as an evolution from an exotic group toward a real minority situation.

In Surinam the East Indians were aliens even in the legal sense of the word from 1873 — when their immigration began — till 1927 — when the Surinam born East Indians were declared to be Dutch subjects. And this was how they felt themselves apparently, for in the beginning they were very reluctant to stay in the country after the end of their contract as plantation labourers. Only when the government offered them parcels of old plantations for lease and lots of the government domain for sale under special conditions, the number of those willing to stay began to increase steadily. "These immigrants did not stay", writes Speckmann, "on account of a growing solidarity with their new country or because of an increased identification with Surinam society, but rather because the official provisions for settlement appealed to their highly opportunist mentality".²⁵

In the thirties when the percentage of East Indians already was more than 25 % of the total population of Surinam,²⁶ they still found themselves in a sociological stranger situation. They were considered to be a group of foreigners. They kept themselves "apart from the political activities of the Creole lower class population".²⁷ It is true that two decennia before, at the time of the so-called Killinger affaire, the newspapers observed, disquietedly (and characteristically) that in the discovered plot were involved, amongst others "some natives and British Indians", but later it became clear that only one of the latter "had been an active participant in the conspiracy".²⁸ In 1933 De Kom in his political activities depended heavily on the Javanese masses which he attracted by spreading rumors that they would be allowed to return without cost to their homeland. One wonders whether the few groups of East Indians who, according to Van Lier's description, participated

²⁵ Speckmann, J. D., *The Indian Group in the Segmented Society of Surinam*, in: *Caribbean Studies*, April 1963, in press.

²⁶ Except the Amerindians and the Bush Negroes.

²⁷ Van Lier, R. A. J., *Samenleving in een Grensgebied*, Den Haag, Nijhoff, 1949, 379.

²⁸ Van Lier, op. cit. 365.

in several of De Kom's activities, were not driven by a similar appeal to their feelings of nostalgia.²⁹

In Speckmann's article, from which we quoted before, the process of increasing integration of the East Indians in Surinamese society is clearly described. This process was not without fluctuations. The shift from plantation labour to small farming caused originally a lessening of their social isolation, for "the East Indian now came more into touch with other population groups".³⁰ However, for several reasons the urge toward urbanisation increased among the Creole groups, and as a consequence thereof one could speak once again of a "concentration of the ethnic groups in separate areas. The country districts became more and more the preserve of the immigrant population".³¹ This geographical segregation became only a little less perfect when during the Second World War the tendency toward urbanisation became more pronounced among the East Indians. The social and economic development after the war, finally, not only led to "an ecological, but also [to] a socio-cultural expansion of the scale",³² by which the process of "westernisation" of the East Indian group took place at an accelerated pace, while at the same time there could be observed a heightening of their level of ambition, projecting itself on the sector of the "free professions and official positions. The Creole group sees this as a threat since it is precisely this sector which has always been a Creole preserve".³³

All this makes clear that by speaking of "the process of increasing integration of the East Indians in Surinam society", as we did above, we run the danger of trespassing the limits of objectivity and of becoming a victim of the image formation of the Creole population group. For, if we leave apart processes of cultural and biological homogenisation, and only direct our attention to the strictly "social" function of the East Indians, it can easily be maintained that they were "integrated" socially practically since their arrival in Surinam. As plantation labourers, as small farmers, they never were an "un-social" group, they always had an acknowledged, useful, and specialized function in Surinam society as a social and economic whole, just as the Creole groups had other integrated functions.

²⁹ Idem, 379.

³⁰ Speckmann, *op. cit.*

³¹ Idem.

³² Idem.

³³ Idem.

What has actually presented itself on the purely "social" level in the last decennia, is an increasing frequency of interaction between East Indians and Creoles on the same socio-economic levels and in the same socio-economic "markets". It is not a greater "integration" (at least not in the conventional sense of the word), but a greater competition that we can observe, and that is conceived ever more clearly by the Creoles as a threat and menace. The use of the term "integration" for this process means a reasoning from within the subjective conception that the Creole group has of "Surinam society". What presented itself was a process whereby the East Indian group has come within the "Creole world", within the Creole societal image, as a menace-provoking element. It is a process of subjective integration of the East Indian group within the social reality as this is conceived by the Creole group, a process which is functionally related to the factually increased social competition. The feeling of menace is maintained and enforced both by this increasing competition and by the fast numerical growth of the East Indian element.

As far as objective processes of integration are concerned, one could as well state that the Creole group has the task to "integrate" itself into the new societal system as this was created since, and because of, the Asiatic immigration, as maintain that the Asiatic population groups have to integrate themselves into the "Surinam society" (of which numerically speaking they comprise more than half). The fact that generally the latter point of view is preferred, is related to the fact that "seniority of territorial occupation (...) for the group that (...) has the advantage, is an important emotional factor in aspiring to impose its own norms and wishes on the others."³⁴

Undoubtedly, soon after the arrival of the East Indians, the Creole group coined unfavourable stereotypes about them.³⁵ It would seem probable, however, that in the range of emotional attitudes of the members of the dominant layers of the Creole segment vis-à-vis the East Indian population group, there has been a gradual shift from more benevolent-condescending to more bitterly aggressive reactions,

³⁴ Lichtveld, L., *Suriname's Nationale Aspiraties*, Amsterdam, N.V. De Arbeiderspers, 1953, 28. It goes without saying that also acculturation ("Surinamisation", the creation of a "truly Surinam culture") and biological homogenisation (the creation of a "typical" Surinam somatic type) are essentially two-way processes which cannot be controlled effectively by any of the participant groups. Cf. Adhin, J. H., *De Culturele Invloed van de Aziatische Bevolkingsgroep op Suriname*, in: *Vox Guyanae*, Nov. 1954-Jan. 1955.

³⁵ Speckmann, op. cit.

in the degree that the East Indians became more integrated into their societal image and were more keenly perceived as a threatening element.

The fact that one used to speak of "Surinamers", excluding the East Indians and Javanese, was a typical indication of the exotic group-character attributed to these groups. Where today this term is still being used with the same exclusivity, we are dealing with wishful thinking, or perhaps with a lag between the present reality of the East Indians as a "real" minority and the former, subjectively still persisting, condition of this group as an exotic one. The situation, then, is analogous to that of the "bi-partite" situation, which Cox erroneously supposes only to exist between coloured and whites, and which I have called the "pseudo-homogenous phase" elsewhere.³⁶

Just as the United States or the Union of South Africa sometimes are called a white man's country's, so would the Surinam Creole group show its understandable but unrealistic wish for immediate cultural and biological homogeneity, if its cultural and somatic definition of a Surinamer would exclude more than half of the present population.

V. S. Naipaul recently has made lucid remarks about the "alienness" of the East Indian Trinidadians.³⁷ He also submitted the labour divisions between the East Indians and Creoles to his ironic analysis ("the lower down the scale one goes, the nicer the divisions of labour become").³⁸ The good humour of this novelist does not keep him from stating, as in an afterthought, that "Trinidad in fact teeters on the brink of racial war".³⁹ If this were correct, one of the causes ought to be sought in the circumstance that exactly that "area of privileges and advantage" which is most rewarding (and that is in post-colonial societies as this one undoubtedly the sector of political key positions which until very recently were occupied by metropolitans), is not subjected to any institutionalised division of labour between the population groups. It is to be feared that such formalised division of power will not be created soon, as long as one of the groups, waving the banner of racial harmony (which never was more than a precarious Pax Britannica) keeps considering itself the lawful inheritor of political dominance, and would like to continue treating the other as the exotic group it once was.

³⁶ Hoetink, *op. cit.* 1962, 190.

³⁷ Naipaul, V. S., *The Middle Passage*, London, Andre Deutsch, 1962, 81.

³⁸ *Idem*, 79.

³⁹ *Idem*, 80.

While Trinidad and Surinam are, as far as the relation between Creole and East Indian is concerned, in a similar position,⁴⁰ in British Guiana we are dealing with a case, where an evolution of the East Indians from exotic group via real minority to sociological majority has presented itself. One must not take the term "evolution" here in a strict sense: not only is a "regression" of the actual majority position of the East Indians possible, but also it goes without saying that a relatively faster population growth and an intense "social integration" on the national level do not automatically lead from a minority to a majority position; in a case like British Guiana factors like differences in "Wirtschaftsgesinnung", in cultural and psychological heritage between Creoles and East Indians, as well as their specific relations to the representatives of the former metropolitan power, play a decisive role, about which the last words have not yet been written.⁴¹

The term "evolution" certainly is more justifiable (because it implies a greater degree of inevitability) if we limit ourselves to the transition from an exotic group to a "real" minority situation.

Where we deal with a constellation in which the exotic group grows faster than the dominant majority, or in which the former already is a quantitative majority, while the dominant group nevertheless conceives it as an exotic group, there the prediction is warranted, that if an objective and subjective "integration" of this minority will have proceeded sufficiently, it will acquire, in the opinion of the majority, the qualification of "real" minority. The term "prediction" is here possible and justified, because, in order to be realized, there only needs to take place a subjective recognition of a structure that objectively already exists or that is in the process of being formed.

As an example of such a predictable evolution we mentioned earlier the one that will change the subjective relation between "the West" and "the World".⁴²

Another example which might meet less emotional resistance from the reader, is the necessary evolution of the Amerindian minorities in the so-called Indo-American countries. Quantitatively these autoch-

⁴⁰ Which goes far to explain their present *rapprochement*.

⁴¹ Bradley speaks of "the frequently noted East Indian capacity for the skillful husbanding of available educational opportunities". (Bradley, C. P., The Party System in British Guiana and the General Election of 1961, in: Caribbean Studies, October 1961, 1).

⁴² See footnote p. 12.

thonous groups may always have constituted a majority, sociologically speaking their position in nearly all of these societies has been, and mostly still is, that of an exotic group, which generally is not conceived as a menace by the dominant "white", and culturally "European" majority.⁴³

On the national level there does exist in the majority of these societies such a rigid social separation between both groups (with the mestizos or ladinos occupying a marginal position between the two) that the Amerindian group only seems to have a peripheral position within the societal image of the Creole "white".

The fact is hardly debatable that an objective social and cultural "integration" of the rural autochthonous masses has not progressed very far.⁴⁴

The lack of subjective integration, manifesting itself in a social inhibition on the part of the dominant group, is nicely reflected in an observation of Métraux who, writing about what he calls a "racial pessimism" of the Creole intelligentsia, says that this pessimism "se manifiesta también en el malestar, o vergüenza, que estas clases dirigentes manifiestan ante la existencia de indígenas en su territorio. Cuando no pueden negarla, tratan por lo menos de disminuir su importancia".⁴⁵

Those intellectuals who, in recent years, have begun to criticize this "racial pessimism" (the so-called "Indigenistas"),⁴⁶ see as their most urgent task "la de integrar las masas aborígenes al resto de la población del país respectivo".⁴⁷

This recent shift of the "pessimistic", inhibitive, to the "optimistic", encouraging attitude of the dominant intelligentsia is reflected in the literature on the Amerindian, in which a romantic idealization of the state of nature makes place for a romantic encouragement of the struggle for emancipation.⁴⁸ The *indígenas* maintain however, at least

⁴³ At least on the national level; as soon as one studies the group relations on lower levels, as anthropologists are wont to, one may meet entirely different group relations.

⁴⁴ Cf. Goode, W. J., Illegitimacy, anomie, and cultural penetration, in: American Sociological Review, Vol. 26, no. 6, Dec. 1961, 910-925.

⁴⁵ Métraux, A., Problemas raciales en América Latina, in: Courier de l'Unesco, Oct. 1960, cit. in: Comás, J., Relaciones inter-raciales en América Latina: 1940-1960, México, 1961, 38.

⁴⁶ As is well known, this movement started early in Mexico, where it has attained the greatest strength.

⁴⁷ Métraux, op. cit., 39.

⁴⁸ Cf. Coulthard's A new Vision of the Indian in Mexican Literature of the Postrevolutionary Period, unpubl. ms.

for the moment, their subjective status as an exotic group. In the degree in which their "emancipation" will be successful, their position as a "real" minority will get to stand out more clearly.

An evolution in the reverse direction, from "real" minority to exotic group, is most likely to take place, when a significant proportional decrease in numerical strength of the minority reflects itself in a qualitative change in the dominant group's attitudes.

In the Caribbean area it might be interesting to investigate whether the non-white population group in Puerto Rico might not serve as an example. The percentage of non-whites in this island (as well as in Cuba) has been cut in half during the last hundred years, according to the available census material.

This is partly due to an accelerated immigration of whites, and partly to a continued absorption of light mulattoes in the group defined as white. This process of "whitening out",⁴⁹ linked to the process of biological mixing between white and Negro on a basis of social inequality, has led to a situation, in which the group of decidedly "dark-skinned" persons already seems to possess the characteristics of an exotic group on the national level.

It would seem likely that this trend will be accelerated, also on lower levels, by the circumstance that the recent economic development of the island tends to increase the chances of upward mobility for the economically lower-class "whiter" group more than for the *dito* darkly skinned, so that the latter might in due time be left in a position of relative socio-economic isolation which formerly was not known to them, and which might facilitate their becoming marginal in the societal image of the dominant group.

It goes without saying that any of the discussed changes in the position of the minority vis-à-vis the majority will reflect itself not only in the attitudes of the dominant group toward the minority, but also in the self-perception of the minority and its attitudes toward the majority.

Speckmann's research on the East Indian's attitudes towards other Surinam population groups clearly shows the aggressive selfassertion

⁴⁹ The term "whitening out" is used by Preston James in his *Latin America*, New York, Odyssey Press, 1942; T. Lynn Smith speaks of a "bleaching process" in his *Brazil, People and Institutions*, Baton Rouge, Louisiana State Un. Press, 1946.

of the erstwhile "racial strangers" towards the dominant Creoles; the latter are accused of wanting to boss them, of suppressing them, of wanting to destroy them culturally and racially, while at the same time they are seen as lazy, untrustworthy etc.; these are no longer utterances of an exotic group which is conscious of its lack of power and marginal position in "Surinam society". — Remarkable is the sympathy of both Creoles and East Indians towards the Javanese who seem to have maintained their quality of exoticism till today.⁵⁰

A curious case of evolution of prejudice, *limited* to the members of the minority, we find in the northeastern part of the Dominican Republic.

The descendants of protestant American Negro freedmen, who emigrated in 1824 to the peninsula of Samaná, and preserved their language and religion during the past hundred and forty years, have always been considered by the dominant group on the national level as exotic, intriguing and without danger, and referred to with condescending sympathy.

However, because of the increasing integration of their formerly isolated peninsula into the national whole during the last three of four decades, this minority has had to revise drastically its range of attitudes toward the national majority.

While at the end of the former century the "societal image" of the Samaná "Americans" did not comprise much more than their own peninsular society in which they formed a quantitatively sufficiently powerful and culturally sufficiently cohesive group to allow themselves a decidedly superior attitude towards the "idle natives" who "have about no schools", the younger generation of today, instead of being proud of their American descendance, I found to worry about the English accent in their Spanish, because they fear the subtle ridicule of the dominant group. The increasing "integration" also tends to accelerate conversion to Catholicism which is now more clearly recognized as socially superior.⁵¹

Here, then, we deal with a case, in which an "expansion of the scale" has brought about a change in the attitudes of the minority towards the majority, while the latter did not need to change its evaluation of

⁵⁰ See the articles of Speckmann and Van Renselaar in this issue.

⁵¹ Cf. Hoetink, H., "Americans" in Samaná, in: *Caribbean Studies*, April 1962, 3-22.

the former. The position of the minority, as conceived by itself, changed from a majority position on the regional level (which was the only level relevant to them) to an exotic group position on the national level (which became the more relevant level to them). Due to the increasing "integration", the minority came to see itself in the same position in which the national majority had always seen it. Given the paucity of the Samana' "Americans" in Dominican society, it is clear that only a process of cultural and biological assimilation will make their exotic group character disappear.⁵²

It would not be difficult to devise a list of "statistically" possible evolutions of prejudice within majorities and minorities, counteractive and convergent, taking into account the objective majority-minority structure as well as the position of each group as it is conceived by itself and the other. Such a list could then be confronted with the variety of cases that can be found in social reality. In this way a classification could be made, not of minorities per se, but of minority-majority structures, on the basis of the objective and subjective relations between both groups, and on the basis of potential evolution(s) that these relations indicate.

It would seem that this would enhance the predictability of these relations in each given case. In this article I have tried to suggest the feasibility of such an approach.

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⁵² Dr. J. J. Parsons was so kind as to inform me that a similar change in attitudes presents itself among the population of the Columbian islands of San Andrés and Providencia. Cf. Parsons, J. J., *San Andrés and Providencia: English-Speaking Islands in the Western Caribbean*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, Un. of California Press, 1956.