

The race question in  
modern science

RACE  
AND  
SOCIETY

by Kenneth L. Little

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# THE RACE QUESTION IN MODERN SCIENCE

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# RACE AND SOCIETY

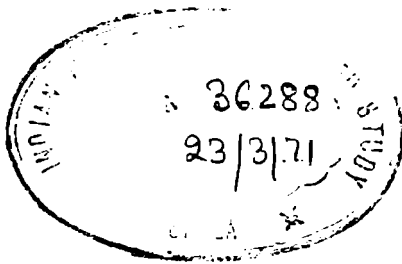
by  
KENNETH L. LITTLE

*Department of Social Anthropology  
University of Edinburgh*

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## INTRODUCTION

In any discussion of race and society, it is essential to have a clear understanding of the terms employed. It is history rather than race which is the main factor in producing the differences between the cultures and cultural attainments of the world's population. The fact that such differences exist is not sufficient reason for believing that there are underlying disparities in innate capacity for intellectual and emotional development.

Why, then, if 'racial superiority' is only a myth and lacks any real substance, does 'race' play such a large part in the affairs of modern life? In many parts of the world racial differences are the basis for discriminatory legislation and social practices which signify a flat denial of the scientific view. Moreover, many people—for instance both in the southern part of the United States and in the Union of South Africa—continue to argue that the Negro is biologically inferior to the white man. Many white Southerners claim that he is quite a different being, and many South Africans that he is unfit to live as a member of a white civilization. Australia prohibits the immigration of coloured races, and in a number of other countries black and white are separated, either by law or by custom. Can it be simply that the various fallacies of race are not yet known and understood by the governments and peoples concerned?

The plain answer, of course, is that superstitious and ill-



informed thinking is not the primary cause of racial prejudice and of the innumerable laws and customs which govern relations between races. Harmony between persons of different racial origin does not depend upon their being properly informed about the latest findings of modern anthropology! If racial amity did so depend, it would be necessary to explain why racial differences are tolerated in one country and not in another; why they are virtually ignored in, say, Brazil or Hawaii, and why so much attention is paid to them in, say South Africa or the United States. Brazil has far fewer schools per head of the population than white South Africa, and until the present century many Hawaiians were illiterate.

The fact is that race itself, in the biological sense, is irrelevant to racial attitudes and thinking. No doubt, there are many people with a deep and unreasoning repugnance to an individual of different colour who cannot bear the thought of any kind of physical contact with him. But this does not mean that they were born with such feelings or that such feelings are instinctive. The more likely explanation is that inhibitions of this kind are acquired, for the most part unconsciously, during early childhood. Children tend to take on the attitudes of those in charge of them at home and in school, and they learn to react emotionally in the same way as those about them. If their parents and friends strongly hold certain beliefs that the members of a particular racial group are unclean, unhealthy, etc., it is not surprising that, growing up in that environment, they come to have the same sort of feeling about that racial group as they do about dirt and disease. In any case, what is much more convincing than any psychological explanation is the fact that although such racial aversions are very common in some places, notably the southern United States and South Africa, they are almost unknown in certain other countries. If feelings of repugnance were innate, it would obviously be very difficult to explain how millions of men and women manage to work and to mix together without the slightest difficulty on this score. It would be even harder to account for the fact that miscegenation frequently goes on even in the face of severe penalties against it. The truth is that people can get along together without attributing peculiar qualities to each other, despite wide differences in complexion and variability in the shape and size of noses and heads.

The last point should help us to realize that it is not the existence of racial differences *per se* which gives rise to the

problem of racial relations, but the fact that such differences are singled out by the members of a given society. What is important, therefore, is not whether groups of individuals *do*, or *do not*, differ in actual biological terms, but the fact that they conceive themselves as racially different. As it happens, there are national and cultural groups in all parts of the world which are not proper races in the anthropological meaning of the term. This does not prevent their members regarding themselves and other similar groups as races. Without this consciousness of group differences, race relations in the strict sense of the word cannot be said to exist, *however* biologically mixed the given society may be. Race relations depend fundamentally upon the recognition and treatment of individuals as the representatives of a given biological, or supposed biological, group; and in the absence of that kind of recognition a relationship between persons of different race is no different from any other kind of relationship occurring in human society.

The problem of race and society is psychologically complicated. Racial attitudes and feelings do not exist *in vacuo*. As they are not biological in origin, they can only be social. This means that they must be the product not only of existing circumstances, but of the kind of contact which the groups concerned have had with each other in the past. This latter point is important because of the varying extent, as between one society and another, to which racial consciousness is fostered. In some countries the fact that people differ from each other in racial appearance passes unnoticed; in others it is a matter of constant attention. In some cases, it gives rise to special laws against intermarriage; in others it has no social consequences. What is the explanation of this paradox—has culture anything to do with the matter? Can it be that conflict in race relations occurs because the groups concerned have different ways of life? There are many people, indeed, who assert that this is the main factor and that there will always be friction so long as racial differences are linked with differences in language and custom among the members of the same society. But the fact is that there are instances of groups with dissimilar cultures getting along amicably with each other, just as there are examples of hostility between races with similar cultures. And there are examples of racial groups with similar cultures living together in amity, just as there are instances of friction between races with dissimilar cultures. A few illustrations will clarify this point.

Jamaica, in the British West Indies, contains a population which is racially mixed in terms of whites, coloured (i.e. people of mixed blood), and blacks, but has a common religion and language, and is governed by a single system of laws. The wealthier and more prominent people are mainly white or near-white; there is a middle class composed mainly of coloured; the labouring and peasant section is mostly black. A great deal of attention is paid to gradations in colour and it is a considerable social and economic asset for an individual to be light in skin. This is because colour differences are largely linked with class differences. But there is no discrimination on grounds of race (as distinct from colour), and race is no bar to any official position on the island. The children attend the same schools, and at any important social gathering there will be persons of black as well as white complexion.

As in Jamaica, whites and Negroes in the southern United States also have the same general habits and customs, speak the same language, and have the same general outlook on life, but there a rigid separation of the races exists in nearly every sphere. Negroes have separate schools, churches, recreational centres, etc., and are not allowed to mix publicly with white people in any form of social activity. Recently, however, the United States Supreme Court has ruled that segregation in public schools is unconstitutional. School segregation is already disappearing in some of the states chiefly affected, and some Southern states universities, too, have admitted Negro students within recent years. Segregation is upheld partly by law and partly by strong social mores on the side of the whites. It is strictly enforced by legal means, by intimidation or even by physical force. Violent action, such as dynamiting a house, may be taken against Negroes who infringe the code of racial etiquette by trying to improve the subordinate status assigned to them.

These are examples of racially dissimilar groups with similar cultures. In South Africa, the groups concerned are culturally as well as racially and ethnically dissimilar. There are the Europeans, who speak English or Afrikaans and are Christians; the Cape Coloured (people of mixed blood), who speak pidgin-English or Afrikaans and are Christians; the Indians, who speak mainly Hindustani and are Hindus or Muslims; and the native Africans, who speak mainly Bantu languages and follow mainly tribal customs and religions. As will be explained below in more detail, these various groups are

socially segregated from each other, and the non-European sections of the population are kept completely subordinate. There is considerable friction and hostility between Europeans and non-Europeans in areas where they meet. In contrast, again, is New Zealand, which also has a racially and culturally mixed population. The majority are people of European descent, mostly British. They are known locally as Pakehas. The minority consists of Maoris, a people of Polynesian descent. The larger part of the Maori population still follows tribal customs, but there is no discrimination. Maoris have full equality under the laws of the Dominion and share the benefits of a social security act in common and equally with white New Zealanders. They are also eligible for, and sit as members of, the House of Representatives. A certain amount of racial mixture goes on, mainly with Pakehas belonging to the lower economic class, and a number of Maoris have settled in the towns. White New Zealanders tend to look down on the latter group, but the more general attitude is tolerant of racial differences, and the average Pakeha takes pride in his Maori compatriots.

An alternative to examining racial attitudes in terms of their cultural context is to compare the *antecedents* of each case with those of others. For example, in the Southern states, it was the institution of plantation slavery which firmly ingrained the notion of Negro subordination in the minds of the white population. In South Africa, it was the social and religious exclusiveness of the early Boer farmers which was largely responsible for native Africans and other non-Europeans being regarded and treated as an 'out-group'. But history is not a conclusive factor. Jamaica also had the institution of Negro slavery, and most of the slaves worked on plantations under conditions similar to those in the Old South. Brazil provides another example. Yet, both in Jamaica and in Brazil, race relations took a very different, and more liberal, course than in the United States. Again, the complete subordination of the coloured races of South Africa, which followed their wars with the European settlers, lacks its counterpart in New Zealand. Wars were also fought there between settlers and the native population less than a hundred years ago, but they have resulted in racial parity, not subjugation.

Thus, at first sight it appears as if cultural and historical considerations throw very little light upon the problem. However, if we extend our review of culture and history beyond

the area of Western civilization in its modern form, we are confronted by a very significant fact. This is the virtual absence of racial relations as we define the term, before the period of European overseas expansion and exploration. In no other civilization, either ancient or modern, do we find the kind of legal and customary recognition of group differences which characterizes the contact of European peoples with other races. In the Muslim world, for example, the important differences today, as in the past, are those of religion. Muslim people are traditionally 'colour-blind', and Islam insists on the equality of believers, whatever their race or colour. According to Koranic law, all members of a conquered population who embrace Islam become the equals of the conquerors in all respects. Racial considerations are also lacking in the Hindu caste system although some writers claim that it originated in racial diversity. They argue that classical Hindu society was divided into four original *varna*, or colours, and explain this as racial differentiation. However, the word *varna* has quite a different meaning from *caste*, and the basis of exclusion in the caste system is not racial. It is religious and ritual, and both excluders and excluded assent to it and play their part in enforcing it. This is unlike any modern form of racial relations regulated by law and by social pressure on the subordinated group.

In other older civilizations, such as those of Egypt and Greece, the relationship between races was that of captor and captive, or master and slave. There is little evidence of aversion or special prescription on the grounds of race or colour. The Egyptians, for example, spoke scornfully of the Negroes to the south of them, and Egyptian artists sometimes caricatured the Negro's thick lips and woolly hair. But the Egyptians looked upon other foreigners, including blue-eyed Libyans, with equal disdain. Like other earlier peoples, the Egyptians mixed freely with their captives, whatever their colour, and some of the Pharaohs showed in their features signs of their partially Negroid ancestry. The Greeks also knew Negroes as slaves, but most of the slave population of Greece were of the same race as their masters, and there was no occasion to associate any physical type with the slave status. In any case, the kind of distinction which the Greeks made between people was cultural, not racial. They looked down on all barbarians but, provided the barbarian took on Hellenistic characteristics, he does not seem to have been subjected to social exclusion on account of his physical ap-

pearance.<sup>1</sup> In Rome, too, the situation was similar. The slave population was drawn from North Africa, Asia Minor, and Western Europe, and it included Nubians and Ethiopians as well as Germans and Britons. Roman citizens thought poorly of the peoples they conquered and spoke disparagingly of them, and of non-Romans in general, irrespective of race. It was considered disgraceful for a Roman soldier to take a barbarian wife, but this was not from any objection to racial differences: it was because such a union disregarded the custom of marriage between citizens. Nevertheless, it is said that nine out of every ten free plebeians at the end of the first century A.D. had foreign blood, and citizenship was given to every free-born man in the empire early in the third century. This conception of common humanity was widened further by the teaching of the Stoics and, above all, by the spread of Christianity.

In the period following the downfall of Rome, the Catholic Church emerged as a powerful political as well as religious institution. The Church fostered the spiritual unity of Christendom, teaching that all who were Christians were the same kind of men. As time went on the Church was more and more conceived as an instrument of international order, the glory of God demanding that the whole world be brought under its sway. With this purpose in view wars were fought against Muslims and 'pagans', the basis of antagonism being entirely religious. Jews were persecuted and Muslims enslaved because they were enemies of the faith, not because they were considered racially different from Christians. Nevertheless, Jews, Muslims, and pagans, in their unlikeness from Christian Europe, serve as forerunners of the modern concept of alien races. In other words, this period between the First Crusade and Columbus' discovery of America was characterized by the religious view of world order, and it established a pattern of dealing with non-Christian peoples which was to be continued—lacking only its religious motivation—to the present day. In the meantime, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese merchants were making their voyages of discovery and meeting new peoples and cultures. The Moors and heathens whom the Portuguese encountered down the African coast were inferior to them as fighters, but this led to no conclusions about racial superiority. Nor was there, as yet, any idea of perpetuating the servile status of black people captured in such raids and

1. cf. Ina C. Brown. *Race Relations in a Democracy*, Harper, 1949.

forays. On the contrary, their conversion to Christianity was sought with enthusiasm, and this transformation was supposed to make the Africans the human equals of all other Christians. In this way, many of the Africans taken by the Portuguese were assimilated in the general population and a number of them rose to important positions in the Portuguese State.

What changed this easy-going attitude to men of different race was the development of capitalism and the profit-motive as a characteristic feature of Western civilization. The new lands discovered in America provided ideal opportunities for economic exploitation and their native inhabitants were too weak to withstand the well-armed European settler-business man. Tobacco, indigo, rice, cotton, and sugar cane, which could be produced on a large scale and at a considerable profit, were grown for sale in Europe. The difficulty was to recruit the workers required. There was a lack of free labour, and so it became necessary to use slaves. Slavery in the Spanish colonies was at first limited to the aboriginal Indians, but long before the end of the colonial era a large part of the native population was wiped out by harsh treatment or by European diseases. Also, Indian slavery was severely criticized on religious grounds by the Jesuit and other missionaries, including the celebrated priest, Las Casas; and so it was decided to introduce Negroes from Africa. They made better workers and were less restive in captivity.

The first African Negroes were landed in the New World about 1510. As already mentioned, trade in African slaves, including Negroes, was not new in commerce; but before the middle of the fifteenth century it was limited to the Mediterranean. In West Africa, there was not the same excuse for war, but if Christian men had any misgivings, they were allayed by a bull of Pope Nicholas V which authorized the Portuguese 'to attack, subject and reduce to perpetual slavery the Saracens, Pagans, and other enemies of Christ southward from Capes Bajador and Non, including all the coast of Guinea'. The usual condition was attached: all captives must be converted to Christianity.

These elementary methods of securing slaves sufficed while the trade was local, but the rapid exploitation of fresh settlements in the West Indies and on the American mainland greatly stimulated the demand and brought a more elaborate system into being. All along the West African coast trading-stations sprang up, which were stocked by African purveyors, and at which slaves could be procured by barter. The Africans

offered for sale were, or were supposed to be, war-captives, condemned criminals, or persons who had sold themselves into slavery. By this convenient rationalization, the Europeans were relieved of moral responsibility, and the supporters of the slave trade even took credit for saving their victims from death. However, the scale of the commerce was too large to escape public attention, and as time went on there was increasing knowledge of the harsh and inhuman conditions on the plantations as well as of the horrors of the Middle Passage. The slave owner and trader had to find some way of justifying themselves or run the risk of losing both property and business. At first, they argued on the grounds of the economic necessity of slavery to national prosperity, and then, as the humanitarian attack was pressed, they offered the ingenuous theory that Negroes were sub-human and incapable of moral feelings; hence there was no obligation to treat them like ordinary human beings.

Mr. Long, in his *History of Jamaica*, published in three volumes in 1774, wrote:

'We cannot pronounce them *unsusceptible of civilization since even apes* have been taught to eat, drink, repose and dress like men. But of all the human species hitherto discovered, their *natural baseness of mind* seems to afford the least hope of their being (except by miraculous interposition of Divine Providence) so refined as to think as well as act like men. I do not think that an Orang Outang husband would be any dishonour to an Hottentot female.'

What this amounted to was a deliberate attempt to de-personalize a whole group of human beings—to reduce them to mere articles of commerce or economic 'utilities'. The extent to which it was successful may be illustrated by the case of the slave ship *Zong*, when one hundred and thirty slaves were thrown overboard on the plea of lack of water. The law took its course, but the trial was not for murder. It was to decide whether the throwing overboard of the slaves was a genuine act of jettison, for which the insurance company would have to pay, or a fraud on the policy.

However, what is significant about this earlier development of racial prejudice is the fact that efforts to impersonalize human relations in order to exploit men more effectively for economic purposes were not confined to the African slave. The capitalist-entrepreneur of the day was just as ready to use people of his own race in the same way. Indeed, part of the early demand for labour in the West Indies and on the



mainland was filled by white servants, who were sometimes defined in exactly the same terms as those stereotyping the Negro. Plantation owners bid eagerly for supplies of convicts from the London prisons, and hundreds of children were kidnapped and shipped from Scotland. But the white servants were allowed to work off their bond, while the Negro was gradually pushed into chattel slavery. His servile status was established by substituting a racial reason for the previous religious one—by characterizing a whole race as degenerate, degraded, immoral, lacking in intelligence, etc. The religious argument proved insufficient when it came to be a question of continuing slavery for the convert.

This, then, as Dr. Oliver Cromwell Cox has pointed out, marks the beginning of modern race relations.

'It was not an abstract, natural, immemorial feeling of mutual antipathy between groups, but rather a practical exploitative relationship with its socio-attitudinal facilitation—at that time only nascent racial prejudice. Although this peculiar kind of exploitation was then in its incipiency, it had already achieved its significant characteristics. As it developed and took definite capitalistic form, we could follow the white man around the world and see him repeat the process among practically every people of colour.'<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Cox goes on to quote Earl Grey's description in 1880 of the motives and purposes of the British in South Africa.

'Throughout this part of the British Dominions the coloured people are generally looked upon by the whites as an inferior race, whose interest ought to be systematically disregarded when they come into competition with our own, and who ought to be governed mainly with a view to the advantage of the superior race. And for this advantage two things are considered to be especially necessary: firstly, that facilities should be afforded to the white colonists for obtaining possession of land heretofore occupied by the native tribes; and secondly, that the Kaffir population should be made to furnish as large and as cheap a supply of labour as possible.'

Dr. Cox's thesis is that racial exploitation is merely one aspect of the problem of the proletarianization of labour, regardless of the colour of the labourer. Hence, racial antagonism is essentially political class conflict. The capitalist exploiter, being opportunistic and practical, will utilize any convenience to keep his labour and other resources freely

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1. Oliver C. Cox. *Caste, Class and Race*, Doubleday, 1948.

exploitable. He will devise and employ race prejudice when that becomes convenient. The reason why race relations are 'easier' in most countries colonized by the Latin nations, viz. Portugal and Spain, is partly because neither Spain nor Portugal ever attained the industrial development of Northern Europe. They remained longer under the political and economic authority of the Church. Also, the capitalist spirit, the profit-making motive among the sixteenth-century Spaniards and Portuguese, was constantly inhibited by the universal aims and purpose of the Church. This tradition in favour of the old religious criterion of equality is in contrast to the objective, capitalistic attitude of Anglo-Saxon and Germanic countries, such as Britain, the Netherlands, and the United States.<sup>1</sup> It might be compared in some respects, however, with the assimilative aims of French colonial policy—to absorb colonial and coloured subjects as part of a 'greater France' on a common basis of culture and citizenship.

What this implies is a direct relationship between racial attitudes and society—that *race relations are, in effect, a function of a certain type of social and economic system*. The best way to consider the matter further is to take a number of societies with varying attitudes towards race and colour. South Africa is a convenient example to start with because racial consciousness and feeling is probably more intense there than in any other part of the world and is most explicitly confessed as a code of official opinion. Brazil and Hawaii represent the opposite extreme, and Great Britain will be considered as intermediate in this respect. The British situation will be described at some length, because it is less well known to students of racial problems, and because it illustrates quite strikingly the somewhat paradoxical fact that both racial discrimination and racial toleration sometimes exist alongside each other in the same society.

## THE SOUTH AFRICAN CASE

The South African situation is the outcome of European colonization, which commenced when the Dutch made their initial settlement in 1652, in and near what is now Cape Town. When the British took over the colony in 1806, its population

1. *ibid.*, p. 174.

numbered some 76,000 souls, including 30,000 slaves from Madagascar, India and the East Indies; 20,000 native Hottentots; and about 26,000 whites. Factors of race and colour were not so important as were religious considerations. Thus, if a freed slave woman were baptized she frequently married a white man, and she and her children would become absorbed in the white community. Marriage between white and Hottentot, as distinct from co-habitation, was extremely rare. The marriage of Eva, a Hottentot woman, and van Mierhoff, a white explorer, celebrated at Government House, was an exception and will be quoted as such in all books referring to this period. As the colony expanded, a growing divergence of outlook and way of life developed between the town and country folk. The lack of racial consciousness, and hence prejudice, in the town was largely due to the freer and less conventional mode of life. The population was in a constant state of flux, the town acting chiefly as a port of call, and refreshment and provision station for visiting ships. In the country, on the other hand, a more homogeneous, independent, and stable community was developing. Composed chiefly of farmers whose main concern was to flee interference by the administration, it developed a stricter and more rigorous mode of life. This group lacked all those elements of class differentiation which existed among many of the earlier pioneers of European colonies in the New World. They were people with a common code and ideology deeply rooted in the Calvinistic tradition of seventeenth-century Europe. The doctrine of pre-destination and the concepts of the eternally damned and the elect were a part of their social heritage to which they clung tenaciously. The frontier farmer thus came to regard membership of his religious group as an exclusive privilege which distinguished and separated him by an immeasurable distance from those who did not share it with him. This belief in the exclusiveness of his group and its privileges justified his right to dominate the 'out-group' which surrounded him, viz. the heathen Bantu whom he fought, and the primitive Bushmen whom he hunted as vermin. Any conception of the equality of human beings was foreign to him, and 'liberty' and 'fraternity' held no validity for him outside his closed circle.

This awareness of group exclusiveness found expression in a consciousness of racial and social superiority which coincided with the distinctions of creed and colour. Thus, colour became a mark of a separate breed, and for the first time in the history of South Africa group colour prejudice was ac-

cepted as a social fact. The attempts of missionaries to spread Christianity within the ranks of the 'out-group' threatened this group exclusiveness and the Boer farmers met evangelical efforts to improve and regularize interracial relations with strong suspicion and hostility.

The growing influence of the administration and its machinery of control, were, together with the above considerations, a main reason for the movement eastwards and northwards known as the *Great Trek*, during the first half of the nineteenth century. This movement marked the opening up of the South African interior. Eventually, the trekkers managed to appropriate all the land north of the Vaal and Orange rivers, and a large number of Africans became employed on European-owned farms. A labour tax was introduced and the practice of employing African child labour was highly favoured. For the first time in their history these early pioneers were able to rule as they wished and deemed right—a policy of complete domination was apparent in its most extreme form. By contrast, in the Cape, a more liberal policy was in force. The 1853 Cape constitution had granted the right of franchise to all men over 21, with property or land worth £25, or earning a yearly salary of £50, irrespective of colour or creed. In Natal, a policy of separation had been established. Thus, completely divergent racial policies found expression and formulation within the same country.

The discovery of diamonds and gold in 1870 and 1886 respectively brought about radical changes in an economy which, till then, had been entirely agricultural. In the wake came an unprecedented growth of communications, the establishment of towns, and the employment of a rapidly increasing African labour force. The discovery and development of these new primary industries led to the growth of other enterprises, all requiring additional labour, and these also opened up new types of employment for the large untapped African labour source. African women came to be employed in the European economy as domestic servants, washerwomen and cooks. In turn, this expansion of industry and growth of urban centres stimulated agriculture, and Africans continued to provide the majority of farm labourers. Their work was largely seasonal, and many would move into the towns in search of work during slack agricultural periods. Never in the history of South Africa had there been such a large scale migration of non-Europeans, in particular of Bantu, from the country to the larger European centres.

This introduced a new factor into the South African problem—Europeans and non-Europeans living next door to each other. Almost up to the time of the first world war, there was, in fact, virtual separation, the vast bulk of the African population being out of sight on reserved land in the south-east, or in distant Natal. Transformation of the predominantly subsistence farming economy into a more complex industrial system with different standards of living brought large numbers of Africans into close contact with Europeans; it also produced the 'poor white'. This category of European failed to find a secure foothold in the new economy, partly owing to the quick adaptation of the African to heavy manual and unskilled work, and the contempt with which Europeans came to regard such labour. It included farmers who had reacted slowly to the expanding demand for their products and failed to benefit from the urban markets. These, and the landless Europeans congregated on the periphery of the towns, living largely on public and charitable assistance. Their numbers were increased by the depression which followed the Boer War, and the growth of European poverty became a matter of public concern. A policy of protecting Europeans from non-European competition attracted political support and a series of colour bar acts were passed.

The first of these (in 1911) prevented Africans from obtaining certificates of competency necessary to certain skilled types of work, and laid down certain categories of work as exclusively for whites. A second act consolidated existing laws of recruitment and employment established in the gold and diamond industries, and made it a criminal offence for an African to break his work contract or to strike. In 1918, the South African Industrial Federation came to a *Status Quo* Agreement, which as its name implies, aimed at preserving the existing position of white and black employment. An attempt to repudiate this agreement and to dismiss some 2,000 white miners led to the 1922 miners' strike. The strike itself was unsuccessful but its importance lies in the fact that it showed the lengths to which European labour was prepared to go to protect its position.

This factor has greatly influenced subsequent industrial legislation including the civilized labour policy, heralded by the 1924 Industrial Conciliation Act and the 1925 Wage Act. The former introduced machinery to promote industrial peace on a basis of collective bargaining but the statutory definition of 'employee' in the Act debarred the majority of African

workers from benefiting. The purpose of the Wage Act was to enable minimum wages and conditions of work to be laid down for industries in which labour is organized. Somewhat illogically, however, agriculture and domestic service, the two industries in which labour is most difficult to organize and in which non-Europeans predominate, were excluded from the operation of the Act. Neither Act permits differential rates to be laid down on racial grounds, and this means that where non-Europeans are employed as artisans they are subject to the same statutory minimum rates as Europeans. Wage legislation of this type has tended to restrict the openings for the less capable workmen and particularly for non-Europeans as they are prevented from off-setting lack of skill by accepting lower wage rates.<sup>1</sup>

A further important aspect of the industrial situation is the extensive nature and use of African migrant labour, which is mostly of a temporary kind. The wants of Africans have multiplied as they have come into contact with an increasing range of European goods, and they have a general desire to improve their economic circumstances by moving from the rural areas to earn wages in mining and other industries. The effect of migration is to increase the supply of labour in the areas to which the migrants move and so, in the absence of wage fixation, to depress wages and incomes in different parts of the country. In other words, the existence of a plentiful supply of cheap African labour and of restrictive labour laws and customs tends to constitute a vicious circle. On the one hand is the fear of the European worker of his wage-scale being under-cut; on the other hand, the African worker is debarred from the very means which, by raising his economic standard, would make him less of a competitor on the labour market.

In the mining industry, a statutory colour bar was created by restricting Africans to unskilled or semi-skilled categories, whilst skilled and supervisory occupations were preserved for the Europeans. This tendency to restrict the participation of non-European peoples in the life of South African society has been a significant feature ever since Union. The result is a caste-like system of human relations in which Europeans invariably occupy the superior, and non-Europeans the inferior place. One of the clearest illustrations of this is revealed

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1. cf. Sheila T. van der Horst in *Handbook on Race Relations in South Africa*, ed. Ellen Hellmann, Oxford University Press, 1949.

in salary and wage figures. Not only do the Africans provide the bulk of the unskilled workers, which means that they receive the lowest wages; but even those who attain high professional status never receive as much as their European counterpart. For example, in the teaching profession scales will vary according to the qualifications, but even where these are similar in the case of a European and a non-European teacher, the salary scales differ. Thus, a non-European teacher possessing a university degree and professional certificates is on the scale £210-£390, and a European teacher with a degree and one year's training is on the scale £300-£700. In social work, the European male starts at £260 p.a., and an African male at £96 p.a.

Also characteristic of caste is the close relationship in economic life between occupation and social group. In the South African situation, as Dr. van der Horst points out, the greatest occupational gulf is between Europeans and Africans. 'Coloureds and Asiatics, in the districts in which they live, occupy an intermediate position. Professional, supervisory, and skilled work is performed mainly by Europeans; to a lesser extent by coloureds and Asiatics, and to an almost negligible extent by Africans. This is true of all branches of economic activity, viz. agriculture, manufacturing, transport, public administration, and professional work, with the exception of teaching, nursing, and religion where non-Europeans serve their compatriots.'<sup>1</sup>

A further characteristic of the system is the rigid separation of European and non-European in nearly every sphere of social life. Recent legislation enacted under the present Government's policy of *apartheid* decrees that non-Europeans are to be residentially segregated from Europeans, and separate areas are also to be provided for the various non-European groups. This means that only persons belonging to the group for which the area is proclaimed can occupy land there, though employees belonging to another group can reside with their employers. In other words, Africans who work for Europeans can live near their homes and farms. In urban areas there are different forms of segregation. The most important of these is the establishment of locations, villages or townships administered by the local or municipal authority. All towns have one or more of these, and in these areas Africans may be permitted to lease lots for the erection of houses and huts.

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1. *ibid.*, p. 109.

Other Africans live in mine compounds, as domestic servants, and the remainder in tribal reserves and on European-owned farms.

This type of residential segregation forms the basis of other types of segregation. For example, all non-European primary and secondary schools are separated from the European school system, and there is a tendency for the different non-European groups to have separate schools. While a number of universities open their doors to non-Europeans, the Government has provided a separate university for them in Durban.

Generally, both Europeans and non-Europeans enter public buildings and shops by the same entrance and are served at the same counters. In post offices separate counters are provided: otherwise separate queues are formed, and in such cases the non-European will generally have to wait until all Europeans have been attended to. In certain new buildings special lifts are set aside for non-Europeans. Separate waiting- and cloakrooms are to be found at all railway stations, even at small sidings along subsidiary lines of communication. In Cape Town, the bus service for Cape Town and greater Cape Town is used by all racial groups without discrimination as to seating. More generally in South Africa, however, the African section of the non-European group has separate buses and street cars, manned by Europeans or Indians in most instances. Coloureds and Indians may use European means of transport, but of late public opinion has been so explicitly disapproving that they have themselves preferred to use non-European transport. Third classes on all main, subsidiary and suburban lines are reserved for non-Europeans, whites using only first and second class. Where non-Europeans use first and second class, these are separated from the European coaches. In the Cape, coloureds were allowed to share coaches with the whites, but this was changed soon after the Nationalist Party came into power. Despite protest, the coloureds now have to travel in separate coaches.

Libraries are run only for Europeans, though separate branches have been set up in some of the larger cities, e.g. in Johannesburg the Public Library has established a travelling library which visits each municipal location once a week. Hospitals are run separately, and staffed by European doctors. European doctors may practise amongst white and black, whilst non-European doctors only practise amongst their own people. In reformatories, juvenile delinquents' homes, non-European social workers are employed under the direct



supervision of a European. In the prisons, which are also separate for whites and non-whites, warders are all European. Non-European policemen may only serve in non-European areas and may only handle non-European offenders.

These measures and the whole system of racial relations in South Africa derive mainly, of course, from the political supremacy of the European group. Only persons of European descent are eligible for either House of Parliament. Most of the political rights the non-Europeans at some time enjoyed on a common roll have been successively withdrawn. In 1936, Africans on the common roll at the Cape were transferred to a separate voters' roll with the passing of the Representation of Natives Act. More recently, attempts have and are being made to transfer the Cape coloured from the common roll to a separate voters' roll. Political representation is at present as follows. In the Lower House, there are three European representatives, elected by individual vote by Africans in the Cape. There is no special Cape coloured or Indian representation. In the Upper House four senators, elected by a system of electoral colleges, represent Africans of the four provinces; there are also four senators nominated for their special knowledge of non-European affairs. There are no elected coloured or Indian representatives.

What this racial situation in South Africa amounts to is, in large part, an adjustment to the circumstances created by the impact of a technically advanced civilization upon a primitive one. The industrial revolution begun at the end of the last century has continued, and its social results are analogous to the upheaval experienced by Britain during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. To serve the new industries of the Union, Africans have been recruited and have settled in numbers which far outstrip housing accommodation. The consequence is insanitary slums, shacks and shanties knocked up by the occupants out of bits of wood, corrugated iron, and old rags sprawling alongside new housing estates. The Africans are underfed and have inadequate medical services, their standards of living being extremely low. Most of them, moreover, are fresh from tribalism and have had no time to accustom themselves to the different rules and conditions of an urban life.

From the angle of the Nationalist Party, therefore, *apartheid* may be seen as a planned attempt to solve these problems by avoiding the friction of races living and working in close contact with each other. In furtherance of these aims,

the present Union government spends a good deal more *per capita* on the welfare of its Bantu people than other territories on the continent. Its supporters also point out that the Union is the pioneer in Africa of a service such as pensions for Bantu blind; that its Bantu housing is efficient enough to have become a model for low-cost building in other countries in and out of Africa; that its Bantu education services, from kindergarten to university, though still inadequate, are nevertheless far in advance of those elsewhere on the continent; and that each year thousands of Africans from neighbouring territories illegally cross the Union's borders in quest of the higher wages to be earned in South Africa. It is also claimed that *apartheid* envisages the Bantu people expressing themselves politically in their own institutions; hence legislation, such as the Bantu Authorities Act.

In these respects, *apartheid* does not signalize any radical change in the older policy. What it does stress, however, is that the real factors of racial cleavage lie very deep and are psychological as well as economic. Ostensibly, the position of the 'poor white' is the main reason for colour bar legislation. Yet, behind the resistance to non-European encroachment on the living standards of the European working class lies the fear of virtually the entire white population of being politically and culturally submerged by a coloured race. This is the basic reason why equal rights are denied to the non-Europeans, and particularly the Africans, who comprise nearly 70 per cent of the total South African population. This explains the European reluctance to allow non-Europeans to develop culturally in a European direction, and to allow them comparable opportunities of education and training. The ever present fear is that as ever larger sums are spent on the uplift of the African, ever increasing numbers will demand enfranchisement and the time will therefore come when power will have passed into African hands.

It must be realized that this opposition to non-European advancement is felt almost as a moral obligation for many whites. It is not merely political or economic. Indeed, many of the most ardent exponents of *apartheid* acknowledge that their country would benefit economically and industrially through fuller use of its reserves of non-European man-power. However, the fact is that a large proportion of the white population, particularly amongst the Afrikaner element, have attitudes which are quite non-rational towards the subject of 'colour'. They have feelings about meeting and mixing with

coloured individuals which are irreconcilable with any notion of racial equality. These feelings go back to the earlier Boer farmers—the pioneers of modern South Africa. In other words, it is still the latter group's sense of exclusiveness, based on the doctrine and teaching of predestination, in a racial homogeneity, which constitutes the hard core of resistance and which rules out any solution not based on racial separation.

## THE BRAZILIAN AND HAWAIIAN CASES

In striking contrast to South Africa is the situation in Brazil and in Hawaii. Though obviously not comparable in many other respects, these two countries have at least two things in common—an extremely heterogeneous population and a highly tolerant attitude towards racial mixture. In both cases, this attitude was present from the start of European colonization.

### BRAZIL

The first people with whom the Portuguese settlers of Brazil came into contact were the aboriginal Indians. Most of these early settlers, and, in particular, the garrison men, had no family ties, and though white women were encouraged to come to the country, they were insufficient in number to provide the necessary mothers for a new generation. Consequently, there were widespread relations with Indian women, who were absorbed into the Portuguese community as concubines, and later, as wives. The Portuguese had already had a prolonged history of contact and marriage with the Moors, and thus, long before the discovery of Brazil, were accustomed to mixed unions and their offspring. Any repugnance to intermarriage among these early colonizers was overcome by the Roman Catholic Church which firmly sanctioned it.

Intermixture was continued with the Negroes brought over as slaves to replace the Indians. The economy of the plantations was patriarchal and the Portuguese masters and the Negro

slaves lived in a type of close intimate association which, to quote an American author, 'excels the most sentimental and romantic accounts of the social solidarity existing between master and slave in the Southern States'. The children of slaves were in close contact with the children of their masters, and came almost exclusively to speak Portuguese, to wear European clothes, and to take part in the religious life of the family. The master recognized a common religious bond with his slaves. They were regularly instructed in Roman Catholic ritual and, in the eyes of God, were treated as equals.

Mulatto children of the plantation owner were frequently taken into his family, and it is also a fact that even when there were sufficient white women for marriage, extra-marital relationships with coloured women were condoned. Such women and their children were housed, supported, and cared for by their white fathers. In addition, many of the later Portuguese immigrants from Europe were too poor and ill-educated to obtain a white wife, and therefore set up with coloured women. There was also prestige for her in having a 'white' child, and this encouraged miscegenation.

It is believed that this social selectivity has resulted in a tendency for whites to absorb lighter mixed-bloods, and mulattoes to absorb blacks, and the Brazilian population claims that it is undergoing a 'lightening' process. However, the discovery of ancestral Negro blood does not alter the social standing of the individual. The fact is that if a dividing line were drawn according to conventional racial distinctions, it would often mark out members of the same family from each other.

These circumstances, particularly the last, help to explain why, in Brazil, racial tolerance has become a kind of philosophy which seeks to bind together a wide variety of groups. A popular slogan is, 'We Brazilians are rapidly becoming one people. Some day, not far distant, there will be only one race in our country'. Consequently, there has always existed a great pride in amalgamation, and racism is vigorously attacked. Racial mixture is accepted as inevitable and no attempt is made to go counter to this process. There is a wide range in skin colour in the Brazilian population and the higher up the scale one goes, the lighter the complexion tends to be. In other words, colour is associated with class differentiations, but it is not a principal factor. A popular saying in Bahia (the oldest city in Brazil) is that 'a rich Negro is a white man, and a poor white man is a Negro'. This is merely another

way of saying that class (one criterion of which is wealth), not race, is the primary consideration.<sup>1</sup>

In the early days, when Brazil was still a Portuguese colony, there seemed to exist in both town and country three social classes: the whites as slave-owners at the top; the mixed-bloods as an intermediary class; and the blacks at the bottom of the scale. As the plantation system broke down, the mixed-bloods emerged as a more important social element. Their rise was helped by a conviction which, since at least the late eighteenth century, had been crystallizing in the minds of Brazilian intellectuals—to the effect that the Negroes, whose strong arms and broad backs had long furnished the country's labour supply, were the economic builders of Brazil. Among the mixed-bloods who contributed in large measure to the cultural history of Brazil were men of letters, painters, sculptors, musicians, and scientists. The list is a long one. It should, however, be noted that though the light mulattoes set the pace in the struggle to rise and constituted the bulk of the advancing individuals of colour, they did not completely monopolize the field. They were followed, and in some cases, out-distanced by individuals from the darker sections of the population.

A picture, therefore, of the present social stratification of Brazilian society shows a concentration of whites in the upper level, diminishing sharply as one descends the occupational scale and appearing in small percentages in the lower levels. Thus, analysis of class composition, based on indices such as occupation, tax returns, automobile ownership, etc., indicates that blacks and the darker mixed-bloods generally occupy the lower economic levels; the medium and light mulattoes the middle position; and whites the upper stratum. The upper classes consist mainly of the descendants of the original Portuguese settlers, but there are some black people among them, just as there are some whites, among the recent immigrants, at the base of the social pyramid.

Absence of racial legislation does not, of course, rule out the possibility of unofficial forms of discrimination; but the fact that most dark skinned persons belong to the poorer economic classes means that it is difficult to draw a sharp distinction between class and racial prejudice. For example, in many Brazilian cities coloured people live apart, but this is because residential segregation easily establishes itself on grounds of economic differences. Like white persons of equally

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1. cf. Donald Pierson. *Negroes in Brazil*, Chicago University Press, 1942.

limited means they usually avoid hotels, restaurants, and the smarter dance halls.

A university inquiry carried out in the state of Sao Paulo found that Negroes of the middle class had ambivalent attitudes towards white people. They felt frustrated for two reasons: firstly, because in the competition for jobs and positions employers required more from them than from white candidates; secondly, because though they were at the same social level as white middle-class persons and though many of them had friends among the whites, they felt strongly that they were not taken as equals. In such places as fashionable clubs and high-class hotels, Negroes are not welcome, and there are few whites who dare to introduce Negro friends or relatives into such places. It was also found that Negroes are excluded from quite a large number of formal associations maintained by the upper-class families of the city, although the club statutes do not contain any reference to Negro members. On the other hand, some exclusive clubs have Negroes and dark mulattoes as members, and the explanation usually given to those who are puzzled by this contradictory behaviour is that these persons are not regarded as Negroes. In other words, social class as a factor of integration seems to be somewhat stronger than the segregating influence of racial differences.<sup>1</sup>

The Sao Paulo evidence further suggests that possibilities of social advancement are connected with skin colour and other Negroid traits, i.e. the more Negroid the physical features, the more probable become attitudes of rejection on the part of white people. The mulatto's own concern about his appearance is expressed in the saying that 'to be good-looking' means to look like white people.

However, in so large a country as Brazil, a good deal of regional variation in racial behaviour is to be expected. Sao Paulo, for example, contains many recent immigrants from Europe and the bulk of the darker population lives elsewhere, in northern states like Bahia—but the more general position seems fairly explicit. It is that if a coloured person has ability and shows evidence of personal worth, his racial origin will, at least to some degree, be disregarded. Whether black or mulatto, he can win prestige and esteem, both locally and nationally, for his qualities. Colour prejudice is probably felt

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1. cf. Emillo Willems. 'Race Attitudes in Brazil', *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 54, 1948-49, pp. 402-8.

among many Brazilians and in certain social circles, but it is generally not overt, and public opinion is opposed to any form of open discrimination on racial grounds.

#### HAWAII

In the Hawaiian Islands, a still more remarkable amalgamation of many different races and cultures is taking place, though on a much smaller scale. In addition to the native Hawaiians, there are the Chinese, the Japanese, and the Koreans, whose outlook is influenced by Buddhism, and Confucianism. There are the people of North American and North European origin whose moral standards have been conditioned by Protestant Christianity, and those from Southern Europe whose background is Roman Catholic. There are the Filipinos who have also been brought up as Catholics. Racial mixture takes place mainly through intermarriage. There is no law against such intermarriage and no public disapproval of it. The islands are now an integral part of the United States and under the federal laws Latin immigrants sometimes cannot qualify for naturalization because of illiteracy. But the Hawaiian-born children of all immigrants are citizens by birth. School education, which is compulsory up to the age of 15, is open to all, and there are no formal limitations to political and economic opportunity on the grounds of race.

The reason for this racial freedom in Hawaii lies largely in the very heterogeneity of the population which is racially so distributed that no politician, business man, or newspaper proprietor could afford to affront any of the more important groups of his followers or customers with race prejudice. Moreover, so numerous are the Hawaiians of mixed blood, so influential, so closely related to influential white or Chinese families that one cannot in any large group speak against mixed marriage lest he offend people of prominence who have relatives of mixed ancestry. However, these remarks describe, rather than account for, Hawaii's unorthodox character as regards race relations.

There was little foreign settlement in Hawaii until the middle of the nineteenth century and the population has grown to its present proportions mainly through immigration. The earliest foreign contact was chiefly a trading one. The islands were not discovered until 1778, and in the beginning the

masters of ships engaged in the fur trade would round Cape Horn on the way to the north-west Pacific, and call at Hawaii for water, fruit, and fresh meat. It was a haven for scurvy-ridden mariners. After 1820 Honolulu and other island ports were visited by the vessels engaged in whaling in the North Pacific. They, too, needed foodstuffs and Honolulu became a centre for the refitting of ships.

A number of castaways and deserters from this traffic found their way ashore and there were always a few foreign men after 1790 but no resident foreign women until 1820. This resulted in there being nearly three times as many white men with native wives as with wives of their own race at as late a date as 1849. There were also more than twice as many persons enumerated as 'half caste' as there were Hawaiian-born children of foreign parentage. It is probable that only the children acknowledged by their fathers were counted as 'half caste'. Such mixed-bloods as may have survived from transient and irregular unions between sailors and Hawaiian women were apparently counted as Hawaiians.

There was no opposition to mixed marriage during this early period of contact. In fact, conditions on both sides favoured it. Some of the few white men who came to Hawaii in the eighteenth or early nineteenth century rendered important services to the native monarchy as advisers in military and civil affairs. In order to bind these men to Hawaii and to his service, the King gave them Hawaiian women of high rank. The absence of white women thus meant that the resident whites had the choice of a Hawaiian mate or remaining single. A good many found the native women attractive, married them and had families. Some secured status and landed property by such marriage. These interracial relationships were also facilitated by the Hawaiian family system which permitted a married woman to consort with more than one man. Their equalitarian nature was maintained by the continued independence of Hawaii and the continuation of a system in which the native King was a personage of authority and dignity. Hawaii was not annexed by the United States until 1898, and throughout most of the nineteenth century foreign enterprise depended very largely on the King's good will. The fact that planters, traders, and missionaries alike found it necessary to treat him with respect prevented any sharp drawing of racial lines.

However, Hawaii did not become a 'racial melting-pot' until well on in the nineteenth century. In the 'fifties there



was a considerable development of sugar production under foreign control. The Hawaiians had sufficient land for their own needs. They were not attracted by the kind of monotonous labour required on the plantation and so it was decided to import Chinese under indenture. The experiment was continued and from the 'seventies onwards there was a heavy influx of immigrants of many nationalities to serve directly or indirectly the expanding economy. This was based on only one form of employment—agriculture—and for most of the period of Hawaii's modern development, on only one important crop—sugar cane. Some 46,000 Chinese, chiefly men, came to the islands, mainly before 1898, but nearly half of these later returned to China. Japan and the Philippines sent the largest contingents, but more than half the Japanese and Filipinos who came to Hawaii have emigrated. Other immigrant groups include Portuguese, Spaniards, Galicians, Germans, Poles, Russians, and Puerto Ricans.<sup>1</sup> According to the 1940 census, the population of Hawaii includes some 14,000 Hawaiians, 50,000 part-Hawaiians, 112,000 Caucasians ('whites'), 20,000 Chinese, 158,000 Japanese, 53,000 Filipinos, and 6,900 Koreans.

The various immigrants came widely in touch with the native Hawaiians. Many of them worked only a few years on the plantations before seeking other sorts of economic opportunity in the islands, and contacts were established nearly everywhere. Many of the newcomers were without wives and some of them married native women. As the immigration population increased the rate of out-marriage for Hawaiian women became higher. Conversely as the number of immigrants became larger and as there came to be more women among them, their rate of out-marriage with Hawaiians decreased, even though the absolute number so marrying increased. What is interesting in this matter is that out-marriage between various immigrant groups and Hawaiians and part-Hawaiians has been determined, not so much by racial preference or prejudice, as by numbers, length of residence, and sex ratios. It is also interesting that white people of American and North European ancestry have played the most important role in amalgamation—by reason, not only of their numbers, recently augmented by servicemen but also their long period of contact—and next come the Chinese, who have

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1. cf. Romanzo Adams. *Interracial Marriage in Hawaii*, Macmillan, New York, 1937.

been numerous for a long time. The Portuguese sex ratio was more normal and hence there has been less intermarriage with Hawaiians. The Japanese were able to obtain wives from their homeland without much difficulty, and only a few have married outside their group. Intermixture has gone on fairly freely between Filipinos and Hawaiians.<sup>1</sup>

Out of this amalgamation have come a great many types, chiefly Caucasian (white)-Hawaiians and Chinese-Hawaiians, or a three-way mixture. Today, the part-Hawaiians greatly outnumber the 'pure' Hawaiians, and the trend of marriage suggests that individuals of mixed blood will constitute a majority of the population by the end of the century. By 1920-24 the ratio of out-marriages had increased to 22.6 per cent and by the early 'forties (1940-41) somewhat less than a third of all marriages were interracial in the Hawaiian sense.

However, it is significant that since the overthrow of the Hawaiian kingdom the ratio of marriages between Hawaiians and *haole* has declined. *Haole* is the term applied in Hawaii to white persons of superior social and economic status. The strong social connexions of the *haole* with the United States have established their cultural and political domination of Hawaiian life. Nowadays, in Honolulu, members of this class maintain a degree of segregation, particularly as regards more intimate contact with the other racial groups. There are residential areas in which houses and building lots are not sold to others. There are schools in which most of the pupils are *haole*, and there are churches mostly attended by *haole*. The rural *haole* and the whites who are newcomers to Hawaii are less aloof, and they marry out of their group much more freely.

Closer contact with the United States and the making of Honolulu into a great naval and military base has affected the cultural development of the Hawaiian. It is making him more and more of an American. It is also tending to diffuse the traditional American attitude towards race relations into the islands. Thus, in spite of the doctrine and practice of racial equality, the race and nationality groups are not equal in terms of cultural status, social prestige, and economic power and political influence. Racial etiquette does not permit public forms of racial discrimination. Nevertheless, in some fields the Oriental learns that he may advance so

1. *ibid.*, pp. 22-3 *et seq.*

far and no further. For example, the positions of greatest responsibility in the plantations and in certain non-political enterprises controlled by *haole* are open only to whites. In fact, the attitude of the *haole* is somewhat ambivalent. On the one hand, there is a sentimental attraction towards the Hawaiian and a paternalistic impulse which would push him into a prominent position just because he is a Hawaiian, and not because of merit. On the other hand, there is a desire to maintain social distance from him and a subtle prejudice and discrimination against Hawaiians when, for example, they seek employment in business.

This dual pattern of racial relations has psychological repercussions on the other racial and cultural groups, particularly the part-Hawaiians. The social position of the mixed-bloods is as complex as their biological heritage. Some of them are leading university graduates, and those who are descendants of important white and Hawaiian ancestors have a relatively high status. But their position among Hawaii's social elite is at best equivocal, and they feel the private condemnation of mixed marriage. The Chinese-Hawaiian tends to compensate for the insecurity of this cultural position by blaming his Hawaiian blood and heritage. Those mixed-bloods who are closer to Hawaiian parentage and are rejected by the white side identify themselves with other part-Hawaiians.

Thus, there is a tendency to create social groups made up of similarly constituted members of the different groups. This is strongest among the Chinese. Most of the original Chinese immigrants were people of humble position in their old homes. Now the sons and daughters, born in Hawaii, have had a good education, and as they have come to know more about China and its civilization they have developed a new sense of their own dignity as its representatives. Organizations have been started for the perpetuation of Chinese culture in Hawaii, and one of the consequences of the increasing respect of the Chinese of things Chinese is a raising of status in the community. It has also produced a certain degree of group exclusiveness in relation to marriage. Among those Chinese who have achieved high social standing there is severe parental disapproval when a son or a daughter is married to a non-Chinese.

Nevertheless, the more general trend in Hawaii is in the direction of a common cultural and national sentiment rather than towards the drawing of strict social lines on the basis of

culture and race. Closer and closer ties with the mainland and an educational system modelled on American lines are rapidly adapting the Hawaiian community to American ideals of thought and conduct. So far as racial relations are concerned, perhaps the most significant comment on the contemporary situation is the one made by the small Negro minority, now resident in the islands. Although there is far from a 'complete absence of Negrophobia in Hawaii', Negroes find there 'the closest approach to real democracy available under the Stars and Stripes'.<sup>1</sup>

## THE BRITISH CASE

From Hawaii we may now turn to a lesser known and quite different racial problem—that of Britain. A number of factual considerations distinguish race relations in the United Kingdom from the countries considered above, South Africa and Brazil in particular. In the first place, the coloured group forms a very small proportion of the total British population, and is largely the result of recent immigration into the British Isles. Secondly, the expression 'coloured' is used very loosely in Britain; its popular application is wide enough to include almost any person not of European origin. It tends, therefore, to denote not only African and New World Negroes, but Arabs, Indians, Chinese and North Africans. This means that when English people speak of the 'colour problem', they may have in mind practically any type of racial or ethnic contact which involves persons or groups of persons darker, or believed to be darker, in skin colour than themselves.

There is no official or reliable estimate of this 'coloured' population of the British Isles, it may be put tentatively at 60,000-80,000. The majority are males from the British colonies, principally the West Indies and West Africa. There are also relatively large numbers of Indians and Pakistanis, and Somalis and Arabs, the latter groups coming mainly from Aden. Most of these people live in the seaport cities of Liverpool, Cardiff, Newcastle, Manchester, and Hull, and also in London and Birmingham. They have well-established homes and households of their own in many cases, but for the most

1. cf. F. M. Davis. 'A Passage to Hawaii', *The Crisis*, 56, pp. 296-301, November 1949.

part their wives and consorts are white women drawn from the poorest and least educated sections of British society. Their living is gained mainly by seafaring. They serve as boiler-men, firemen, stokers, and greasers on ocean-going steamers and tramps. An increasing number work in factories and various branches of industry.

Apart from this working class element, but included in the general total, are more than 5,000 students attending British universities or training in hospitals and technical institutes. Most of them are also from the West Indies and West Africa, but unlike the working class group, which is for the most part permanently domiciled, the majority of the students return home when their period of three or four years in college is over. A further number of coloured residents earn a living as doctors, or in other types of professional employment; others are occupied in clerical work, in trading, and in the theatrical and entertainment industry.

London had a relatively large population of Negroes during the eighteenth century, and during the nineteenth century other non-Europeans came in small numbers to settle in Britain. But the present coloured community originated largely in the circumstances of World War I. During 1914-18, many of the ships on the West African and other routes on which Negroes and other coloured seamen are usually employed, were requisitioned by the Government for transport service, and their crews left behind. Coloured labour battalions were formed for service abroad, and the men were subsequently demobilized in Britain. Coloured men were also recruited for work in chemical and munitions factories and were brought over to Manchester and other cities. All this meant the domiciling of considerable numbers of Negroes, and, when the war industries and other forms of employment were closed down, very many of them flocked to seaports such as Cardiff and Liverpool, where there was opportunity of work, in connexion with seafaring and the shipping industry. The recent war led to further immigration. Men from the British colonies were again recruited for industry and the armed services. Several parties of West Indians were brought over as skilled and semi-skilled workers, and other West Indians, serving in the Royal Air Force, were stationed in Britain. Although most of these latter were subsequently repatriated, many of them have since paid their own fares back to look for work they could not find at home. During and since the war, there has also been an extra influx of students from the

colonies and, in addition, quite large numbers of West Indians and West Africans have found their way into the United Kingdom by less orthodox means. In many cases they have boarded ship at a colonial port and stowed themselves away for the voyage; others have signed on as members of the crew for the trip to a British port and 'jumped the ship' on arrival. Since World War II, there has been a fairly substantial influx of further immigrants from the West Indian islands.

The fact that nearly all these coloured people in the United Kingdom possess British nationality through having been born in a British colony or protectorate, or in Britain itself, means that they are entitled to the same rights and privileges as any other British subject irrespective of race or colour. There is a complete absence of any kind of legislation affecting race relationships in Britain. There are absolutely no regulations of any statutory or official kind, such as exist in South Africa, decreeing where a person of colour shall live or the kind of employment he may or may not take up. This does not mean that unofficial forms of racial and colour discrimination are lacking, or that relations between white and coloured people are entirely amicable. When it comes to employment, for example, there are frequent difficulties in persuading an employer to engage a coloured man and white employees to work alongside him. As mentioned above, a large part of the coloured population lives in seaports and depends upon the shipping industry for a living; this has meant difficult times for many of them because in the periods of economic depression between the two wars, coloured workers have suffered more severely from unemployment than other sections of the community. For example, on 11 June 1936, out of a total of 690 unemployed firemen on the Cardiff Docks Register, 599 were coloured men. A more recent estimate in respect of Liverpool suggests that one in every six coloured colonials is unemployed, compared with one in every 20 in the total insured population.

In particular, there has been widespread prejudice against the employment of coloured juveniles both in Liverpool and in Cardiff. In 1929 one juvenile employment committee noted:

'Little difficulty is experienced (in regard to the coloured children) during school-days, as they mix quite freely with the white children, and usually belong to homes which are at least equal in condition and parental supervision and care to those of white children. It is when they leave school and

desire to enter industry that the difficulties arise. . . . The industrial problem is much more acute in relation to girls, for though the boys are not so easily placed as white boys, there is not the same prejudice shown to the coloured by male workers as by female workers. A fair proportion of the boys eventually go to sea after an interval of some months after leaving school. In regard to the girls, the committee are faced with a serious difficulty, as they are not usually acceptable in factories and there is only the poorest type of domestic service open to them.

'An industrial survey is being conducted at the present time, and employers are being approached with a view to the absorption of some of these girls into their works and factories, but the response is far from reassuring. The difficulty is not with the employers, but with the white girls employed, who strongly object to the suggestion of the introduction of half-castes. It is a very sad commentary on the Christian spirit shown, and indicates that the Colour Bar is still very strong in this country.'<sup>1</sup>

Difficulties in placing West Indian technicians have been reported more recently from Liverpool; and coloured seamen have complained since the war that shipping companies have shown an increasing reluctance to sign them on, especially in ships where they may have to work alongside a white crew. More generally, the situation is variable and often difficult to disentangle. Certain firms, for example, have employed coloured workers for many years and speak highly of their services. Some employers refuse to engage a coloured man on the grounds that their staff will go on strike; others complain that the coloured worker does not 'stick' at the job, or is unwilling to do unskilled labour because, he says, it is beneath his dignity. The coloured worker's own explanation is that he is the victim of deliberate discrimination and is relegated to menial work, such as cleaning floors.

The resident coloured communities usually live on quite friendly terms with their white neighbours in the immediate locality except during times of general unemployment and economic uncertainty. On such occasions, there have been instances of racial antagonism which have sometimes led to violence. For example, in 1919, after World War I there

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1. I am indebted to Messrs. Routledge and Kegan Paul, Ltd., for permission to include this quotation and other quotations referring to the British situation, from my book, *Negroes in Britain*.

were racial riots in a number of cities. In Liverpool, many Negro families did not venture out of doors for some ten days, and there is at least one Negro there today who recalls having been given a police escort to his work every day, for fear of lynching. The rioters are said to have numbered several thousands and the police were obliged to make a number of baton charges on the crowd. In Cardiff, shops and houses in which Negroes lodged were attacked and one shop was completely demolished. Exchanges of revolver fire and fighting with razor blades resulted in 10 people being admitted to hospital, where one of them died. Eventually, soldiers were called in to assist the police, but not before a number of unlucky Negroes had been chased by the mob, to find sanctuary just in time, either in a house, or behind the horses of mounted police. Further serious disturbances, including fights between white people and coloured people, occurred in Liverpool, in 1948, and the police made 60 arrests.

Public protests about the presence of the coloured men and their families have also been made periodically in Cardiff, in Liverpool, and in parts of London. There have been complaints in the press, in speeches from public platforms, and even in the House of Commons about their 'moral undesirability', and about the 'dangers' of racial mixture. A good deal of this opprobrium was the result of disputes in the shipping industry, it being felt by the white seamen that the ship owners were deliberately substituting coloured for white crews in order to save on the wages bill. The following is a fairly typical outburst. Speaking in a Parliamentary debate in 1934, Mr. Logan, M.P., said:

'Is it a nice sight as I walk through the south end of the city of Liverpool, to find a black settlement, a black body of men—I am not saying a word about their colour—all doing well, and a white body of men who faced the horrors of war, walking the streets unemployed? Is it a nice sight to see Lascars (East Indians) trotting up the Scotland Road, and round Cardiff, and to see Chinamen walking along in the affluence that men of the sea are able to get by constant employment, while Britishers are walking the streets and going to the public assistance committees?'

This kind of feeling has also given rise to attempts to secure 'repatriation' of the coloured population on the grounds of their being a charge on the public purse. The idea was to transport them, adults and juveniles alike, to the West Coast of Africa. In reply to one of these proposals made at a public



meeting in Liverpool, a coloured man arose and asked the speaker in a broad local accent where the latter thought he ought to go!

Legislation for the benefit of the shipping industry has also affected the colour problem. For example, both in Liverpool and in Cardiff the operation of the Special Restrictions (Coloured Alien Seamen) Order, 1925, obliged many coloured seamen who were really British colonial subjects to register as aliens unless they could produce clear documentary evidence of their nationality—and even then pressure was often brought to bear upon the man to comply with the regulations and to register with the police as if he were an alien. In Cardiff, for instance it is estimated that the effect was to force some 1,500 men to carry alien cards. The original object of the order was to prevent British crews being replaced by coloured alien crews, but the actual operation of the order caused considerable hardship to British subjects who were coloured. It meant their exclusion from employment by firms for whom most of them had worked regularly. An additional hardship, in Liverpool, was that Englishwomen married to coloured seamen were also to all intents and purposes, treated as aliens and were even deprived of the opportunity to vote. It is difficult to say how much of this situation was deliberately engineered by the local branches of the seamen's unions, and how much of it was inadvertent.

Coloured people in Britain also meet difficulty over housing and accommodation. There are instances of special clauses in the leases of houses and flats excluding a coloured person, and quite often a coloured family will have to pay a higher rent than a similar white family. Houseowners are reluctant to let because they fear that the presence of coloured tenants will cause a lowering of assessments in the districts concerned, and hence a depreciation in the value of their property. Residents in the area are afraid that their peace will be disturbed and the neighbourhood acquire a bad name. Antipathy is even stronger when it comes to sharing the same house, or lodgings. The effect is to cause a fairly definite concentration of coloured families in less desirable parts of the town because of the difficulty of finding rooms elsewhere.

This means that the cities concerned—notably, Cardiff, Liverpool, and Manchester—all have specific localities, known as the 'coloured quarter', which produce to some extent the social and other features of the so-called 'black belts' of American cities like Chicago and New York. The comparison,

it must be admitted, is not a complete one; partly because the coloured aggregation in the British case is numerically very much smaller, and partly because it is limited almost entirely to persons of the same low economic class. At the same time, the white inhabitants of these British cities have much the same kind of feeling as the white inhabitants of American cities, of their own racial and social separateness from the coloured areas. This attitude, in turn, creates special psychological barriers to normal methods of social intercourse and communication between the two groups. It means, for example, that any matter attracting police attention in the coloured quarter is given special notice in the press and that the unfavourable comment aroused tends to be extended beyond the individual concerned to all the inhabitants. It means that the kind of stereotype gained of the coloured man is based on the relatively poor educational and economic traits of the local coloured community.

The fact that many people are reluctant to live at close quarters with a coloured person creates a special problem for colonial students seeking lodgings. The attitude of landladies and boarding house keepers is governed very largely by the prejudices of their customers, and if the latter object to a coloured lodger, business interests may dictate a policy of exclusion. In some cases a student is promised accommodation, by correspondence or over the telephone, before his racial identity is known, only to be turned away when he presents himself in person. It is difficult to gauge the exact extent of discrimination of this kind, but it is certainly widespread, particularly in London. Thus, from inquiries made before the war it was estimated that up to some 60 per cent of lodging, guest and boarding house keepers and of private individuals normally in the habit of taking paying guests, refuse a coloured lodger, even of 'good class'. Difficulties of this sort have led the Colonial Office to institute a number of special hostels for colonial students. In recent years, additional hostels have been provided and are now managed by the British Council. The idea is to provide comfortable surroundings and social centres where the coloured residents can meet other people and where general amenities are available. These hostels are also open to white students from the colonies, but the actual result is segregation, and the British Council has therefore tried the policy of dispersing students in approved lodgings.

What all this amounts to is that a fairly strong body of colour prejudice exists in Britain, despite its lack of sanction

or support by the law. Indeed, the attitude of the courts, as a rule, is definitely to deprecate it. For example, in a case in Liverpool, Mr. Hemmerde, the Recorder, commented critically on the Government's failure to protect its colonial subjects from discourtesy, and in another case, involving an Indian, a jurymen who raised 'the question of colour' was ordered to leave the box, and another juror sworn in.

The fact that there is no specific legislation against racial or colour discrimination makes it very difficult to contest alleged instances of it. All that a person who has been promised accommodation can do is to sue the hotel management for breach of contract. By refusing to accommodate coloured persons when room is available the innkeeper commits a legal offence. Cases have been taken to the courts and, in each instance, the verdict, when favourable to the coloured plaintiff, has been on a purely technical point. It has hinged in no way on race or colour.

The question of legislation has been raised in the House of Commons, in respect both to the position of lodging houses and hotels, and the licensing of dance halls. In each case, however, the reply has been that such matters are not under the control of the legislature, and in the case of dance halls, are under local control. If it can be shown that a hall which is licensed for a given purpose is, in fact, discriminating against a section of the community, it is a matter for local appeal against the holder of such a licence. Fairly recently, an attempt on the part of Mr. Reginald Sorenson, M.P., to introduce a Private Member's Bill failed owing to there being insufficient time for it to be debated.

While there are many people who favour legislative action in Britain, there is also a strong feeling that coloured people—or Jews—are as much citizens as anybody else with equal rights and equal obligations. Many feel that the introduction of protective legislation would tend to delimitate too clearly the groups concerned, a position which would run counter to the policy favoured on behalf of Jews, i.e. that of assimilation.<sup>1</sup>

The fact that racial discrimination exists in Britain without any backing from the law or the constitution means that colour prejudice has developed as part of the heritage of British society. It is relevant to recall that it was the British

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1. I am indebted to Mr. L. G. Green of the Faculty of Laws, University College, London, for guidance on the above matters.

who played a major part in the slave trade and that a large proportion of African slaves were transported in British ships. During the course of the trade 'left-overs' from these human cargoes were frequently landed at English ports and publicly auctioned. Other Negroes were brought into the country by returning West Indian planters whom they served as slaves and body-servants. It is estimated that at one time there were some 20,000 of these Negroes in London alone. In this way, no doubt, English people became accustomed to seeing and hearing of black men in servile and menial positions, and the ground was laid for the ideas and arguments which, as mentioned above, were used in England and other Western countries to combat Abolition. How far these circumstances were psychologically conclusive cannot be measured today, 200 years after the event, but it is evident that the myth of Negro inferiority was firmly entrenched among most classes of Englishmen by the nineteenth century. This is the impression conveyed by the novels of the day. In Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*, George, the son of an ambitious middle-class family, is invited to propose marriage to a coloured heiress from the West Indies. George's response is: 'Marry that mulatto woman? I don't like the colour, sir. Ask the black that sweeps opposite Fleet Street, sir. I'm not going to marry a Hottentot Venus. . . .' And in Jerrold's *St. Giles and St. James*, Miss Canary, the genteel vendor of fruit and snacks at the Covent Garden Theatre, shrinks away in horror and disgust from Gumbo, the Negro coachman.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, Britain's possessions overseas were very extensive, and included India and large parts of Africa. This seems to have convinced many English people of their superiority to the coloured man and to have produced an attitude of mind which, in terms of arrogant and harsh treatment of native individuals of rank, was responsible—to take one example—for the situation leading up to the Indian Mutiny. 'The most scrubby mean little representative of *la race blanche* . . .' (wrote the correspondent of *The Times*) 'regards himself as infinitely superior to the Rajpoot with a genealogy of 1,000 years.'

Probably this habit of looking down on coloured races was also strengthened by a widely awakened interest in evolution and man's relationship to other members of the animal kingdom. As early as 1796, a paper read to the Manchester Philosophical Society was entitled 'An Account of the Regular Gradations in Man, and in Different Animals and Vegetables,

and from the Former to the Latter'. Its thesis was that the Negro 'seems to approach nearer to the brute creation than any other of the human species'. Later, nineteenth-century biology was interpreted popularly in a similar way and the Darwinian theory was also misused. It seems to have largely taken the place of previous arguments justifying the dominance of the white races. Since the latter had survived and had been more successful than the other races, they must be superior to them, not only in organization and efficiency, but in every other field, including the mental and moral.

Theories of biological evolution were accompanied by theories of social evolution. Thus, Lewis Morgan, who paid special attention to kinship, marriage, and property, divided all history into three main stages—savagery, barbarism, and civilization—and correlated each with intellectual and economic achievements. As civilization was correlated with literacy, it meant that all non-literate peoples, including all Negro peoples in Africa, were lower and more primitive than Europeans.

The later nineteenth century was notable, too, not only for the parcelling out of black Africa amongst the European powers, but for the readiness with which the imperialist tendencies of those powers were rationalized. Extensive use, in which the British joined, was made of racial myths like Aryanism, Nordicism and Teutonism, which affirmed the superior race to be white and attributed biological inferiority to the coloured races. Since the new colonial territories brought under control were inhabited almost entirely by coloured peoples with cultures wholly different and technically more primitive than Western society, these ideas are not surprising. Evolutionary theories had already prepared the ground. Moreover, the immense achievements of Western civilization—unprecedented development of machines, technology, efficient organization, scientific inventions, etc.—provided a convincing contrast with the meagre material equipment of Africans and Melanesians. And many of the returning travellers, traders, and missionaries had horrific tales to tell of native customs which, taken outside their proper context, were barbarous and repellent to English ears.

This complicated background of overseas exploration, slave trading, colonial expansion, and scientific rationalization helps us to understand the ambivalent nature of modern racial attitudes in Britain. They are a mixture of apathy and toleration because a large number of British people have never had

personal contact with a coloured person and have little interest in or concern with the colonies. They also include a good deal of friendly curiosity and paternalism, which are as much a part of the social heritage as feelings of repulsion and condescension. Long before the Abolitionist movement, individual writers and philanthropists were pleading the cause of the Negro slave and striving for his freedom. Abolition itself largely originated in England among the Nonconformist sects and started a tradition of philanthropy and liberalism which is still a great force in British dealings with colonial peoples. But this British toleration of racial differences tends on the whole to be idealistic rather than real. The reason is that it arose out of the abstract idea of freedom for the Negro, and in the absence of actual necessity to treat him as an equal in the ordinary give and take of social life. Consequently, though many English people are favourably disposed and sympathetic towards the coloured man, their desire that he should be given a 'square deal' is largely an abstract one, partly because the other psychological elements in the matter, though less conscious, are actually as strong.

In contrast with the idealistic trend, there is the fairly general feeling that coloured people are in some way 'inferior', not merely because they are 'alien' or 'foreign' but because of their pigmentation and other physical characteristics. Along with this go the culturally derived associations of colour and physiognomy with horror and repulsion. The result is that for some people it is as if the 'blackness' of the Negro diffuses itself over persons or objects around. Some of them speak of being 'contaminated' by his physical proximity and women, in particular, express special aversion to the idea of his hand coming into contact with their white skin.

What this amounts to is that skin colour has a definite significance for many English people, a darker complexion making a person socially less acceptable. It means that there is a tendency for Africans and darker West Indians to be eschewed not merely because they are racially different from the English men and women who might consort with them, but because of the likelihood of social stigma from such association. In other words, colour prejudice is to some extent linked with class prejudice, and this means the frequent exclusion of even well-educated persons of colour from British middle-class homes. Though many of the individuals concerned may lack personal prejudice, they feel that their social reputation will be jeopardized if they are known to have

coloured friends or acquaintances. To introduce a Negro into their social circle would cause embarrassment because it would lower prestige in much the same kind of way as bringing the milkman or grocer's boy into the house. As an example of this, a bank manager, with whom I discussed the application of two African students to occupy the house next door to him (his own property), strongly objected to the idea. He added, partly in parenthesis, partly in apology, 'Oh, I know these days we are all supposed to be equal'. The belief that having coloured guests will get one's house a 'bad name' is also often mentioned. 'Colour' has the same socially inferior connotation as English spoken ungrammatically, or without the 'correct' accent, or of wearing a muffler instead of a collar and tie.

Nor is this feeling of racial and social superiority confined to self-conscious members of the middle classes. Much, no doubt, depends on the political or ideological attitude of the person concerned, but working class people can be equally colour-conscious, when it comes to being seen calling on or talking to a coloured person. The point is particularly evident whenever any kind of contact or mixture between the sexes is involved. A good many people will declare that they have absolutely nothing against a coloured person 'so long as he leaves the girls alone', and one of the most frequent objections made to inviting an African or West Indian home is through fear of its leading to some kind of liaison with a female member of the household. The emotional effect of seeing a white girl in the company of a coloured man is often very great, and sometimes insulting remarks are addressed to the couple. Consequently, when intermarriage takes place, it is often in the teeth of opposition from the girl's parents and she may be estranged from most of her friends. In the relative absence of women of their own race, the result is that many coloured men are virtually debarred from female companionship, or their opportunities of it are limited to prostitutes. Thus, a 'vicious circle' is set up. It means that a girl of 'good' class may have to consider whether she is prepared to risk her reputation before she decides to associate with a coloured man.

The ordinary coloured individual reacts to the racial situation in Britain with a good deal of bitterness—not always expressed on the surface. Those born in the country naturally feel that they are entitled to the same rights and privileges as any other citizen, and they particularly resent being regarded or treated as 'foreigners'. Those arriving from the colonies

feel that British professions of racial equality are insincere so long as discrimination can be practised without interference from the Government. What they find specially galling is the British pretence of the same treatment for all races.

Quite a large number of colonials coming to Britain have been brought up under strong missionary and Christian influence. It is the conflict between the ideals of brotherhood and a common humanity they have been taught and the experience of being cold-shouldered on account of their colour which affects them most deeply. Hardly less disturbing to both West Indians and Africans than any overt display of colour prejudice, is the fairly constant battery of curious questions to which they are subjected. These have mainly to do with the supposed abundance of wild animals, the climatic conditions, and the 'uncivilized' behaviour of the 'natives'. West Indians particularly resent being asked if they speak English, which is their native language. African students sometimes remark that they are asked if they wore clothes before they came to England, and complain that they are regarded as savages, even by persons who beg alms of them in the streets.

Whether or not such attitudes imply actually colour prejudice, the important point is that many coloured persons live in constant expectation of it. The result is that the ordinary coloured man is very wary in his relationship with British people. Sometimes, he is so afraid of humiliation that he will deliberately keep out of their way and hold himself aloof rather than run the risk of it.

Paradoxically, the very fact that racial relations are not officially regulated in Britain exacerbates these feelings. Unlike South Africa or the United States, the public authorities in Britain have no responsibility for the colour bar, and so any disabilities which the coloured person suffers are felt, not as something impersonal and unpremeditated, but rather as a deliberate and personal piece of discrimination. Again, the fact that colour prejudice is not limited to, or necessarily associated with, any particular kind of social institution, but may crop up in virtually any field of social intercourse, only increases his uncertainty and doubt about personal relations. How is he to know, for example, when a disregarded greeting or proffered clasp of the hand is unintentional, and when it is a sign of racial rejection? The easier way is to give up speculation and simply assume that all one's English acquaintances are insincere at heart, whatever their professed attitude.



For example, a West Indian technician, who was asked his opinion of the foreman in charge of his work, replied that the latter's behaviour was always 'correct' but he knew, nevertheless, that 'inside' the foreman looked down on him as an inferior.

Additional reasons for racial friction and misunderstanding arise out of the coloured person's own background. Quite a large number of colonials arrive in Britain without much knowledge of the subtleties of European social custom and etiquette. They do not realize how much importance is attached to punctuality in personal as well as business relationships; they are unaware of the conventions of home visiting; the Western attitude to relations between the sexes is strange to them. Many of the newly arrived immigrants not only lack the ability to read and write, but do not possess sufficient English or the kind of industrial skill necessary to earn a satisfactory living. The fact that they are refused a job or are debarred from higher paid work because they lack the experience or training for it, not because they are coloured, is not always apparent to them. Their experience of Europeans in the colonies, all engaged in relatively highly paid, 'white collar' occupations, has led them to expect that in the European's own country the same conditions will apply to everyone.

Again, some colonials mistake for racial ostracism and aversion the 'normal' impersonality of life in a large European city. Coming straight from African or West Indian communities, characterized by warm kinship and neighbourly ties, they find the relative anonymity of the English environment almost intolerable, and suffer from an acute sense of isolation. Other colonials, particularly those studying, have problems of finance, are doubtful about their prospects of employment on returning home, or fail to pass a crucial examination. In such cases, there is usually some feeling of personal insecurity and frustration for which the existence of 'colour bar' provides a convenient form of compensation. It serves as a means of explaining, and even excusing, personal difficulties and failures.

Thus, there is a variety of reasons why the race question should be a subject of considerable and intrinsic interest for coloured people in Britain. With so much diversity in cultural background and experience, and in personal aspirations, it is the one thing binding them together as a group and creating a common sentiment.

Yet the development of an active sense of racial conscious-

ness is less frequent than might be imagined. Its lack can be explained by the fact that the majority of permanently resident coloured people are poorly educated, and the small size and scattered nature of the population offers little opportunity for racial leadership on a national scale. Students from the colonies constitute the only articulate section with any influence, and they, as temporary migrants, have only a transient interest in the matter. They are concerned far more with what is going on in their own countries than with Britain. Only on rare occasions of crisis in race relations, such as the Seretse Khama affair, is a 'common front' created.

Consequently, there are but few organizations of Negro, or coloured 'protest', and there are none at all comparable in terms of function or effectiveness with, say, the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People in the United States. Indeed, politically the significance of the racial situation in Britain lies mainly in its relation to the British colonies. The colonial young men and women, who study in Britain, belong to the class leading public opinion in their own countries, and there is no doubt that student experiences and reactions to life in Britain are instrumental in the rapid growth of colonial nationalism. A good deal of the dissatisfaction felt with conditions in Britain is 'drained off' to swell the demand for speedy self-government in the colonial countries themselves.

The race problem in Britain, in itself comparatively unimportant, is indeed mainly a function of the relationship between the United Kingdom, as mother country, and the other members of the Commonwealth and empire. A number of 'coloured' countries—India, Pakistan, and Ceylon—have remained within the Commonwealth after becoming self-governing, and it is the expressed desire of the British Government that the present colonial dependencies shall follow suit when they, too, gain the right to self-determination. Logically, this policy has two implications. In the first place, it means that the British Government has to retain and, if possible, increase the feelings of loyalty and goodwill among its colonial subjects. This will obviously necessitate something more than political progress and constitutional reform abroad. It will also require positive measures at home among the British public to arouse sympathy and interest in the colonial peoples and countries. This, in turn, should lead to greater exertion, educationally, to correct confused thinking about racial and similar matters. Secondly, the achievement of

self-government by one or more of the African or West Indian colonies should have the result of elevating not only the political status of the countries concerned, but the personal status of their nationals. And this, in turn, should lead to an improvement in the status of all persons of Negro origin, since, from the point of view of the man in the street, all Negroes are the same, whether they come from Jamaica, Trinidad, the Gold Coast, or Nigeria.

As already mentioned, the British Council endeavours to provide, or to obtain, accommodation for colonial students who need it; a special department of the Colonial Office also deals with problems of welfare in general. There are also signs of increasing interest in the matter on the part of churches and of the trade union movement, and numerous voluntary associations offer hospitality to students, and hold meetings, 'socials' and conferences of an interracial kind. Evening institutes, intended to provide opportunities for study and recreation for both coloured and white people have been opened in several cities. On the local plane, relations between the resident coloured community and their white neighbours are generally amicable. The student's personal connexion with the wider public is also growing, and he is generally accepted with little or no reservation in most university circles.

Thus, it is possible to foresee the development of a fresh trend in race relations in Britain. It must be emphasized, however, that the 'problem' there consists not only in certain traditional attitudes, but in the fact that the coloured individual so often exhibits traits such as poor education and low living standards, which apparently confirm the familiar stereotype of racial inferiority. There are signs that the coloured population in Britain is increasing and that it may continue to increase through immigration. This will make assimilation, in a biological sense, an unlikely solution. The best remedy seems to lie in getting rid of existing educational and cultural disparities. It is these which mainly hold up the economic advance of the resident coloured group and restrict the social opportunities of those of its members who desire a better status in British society.

## CONCLUSION

From these four examples of race relations which we have considered certain conclusions may be drawn relevant to the thesis propounded on page 175. All four situations are the direct or indirect outcome of white colonization. In very few cases have such colonies been established out of philanthropic motives. Priests and missionaries, it is true, have gone to America, India, Africa, and the Pacific to spread the gospel; but the majority of Europeans who moved to lands overseas between the fifteenth and the twentieth centuries went to earn a living, to trade, to make profits. The way of life of these migrants was strongly opposed to the cultural systems which they encountered; therefore, the native inhabitants had to be suppressed whenever they obstructed, or threatened to obstruct, the European purpose. This suppression was frequently carried out in the early days with rapidity and with but few scruples on the ground that the native people constituted an 'out-group' from the point of view of Christianity.

But religious arguments gradually lost their importance, and it became necessary to seek some other reason more compatible with the scientific and rational spirit of the times. This was found in the notion that coloured races were mentally retarded, childlike, and incapable of looking after themselves in a modern, economically specialized age; hence they were the 'white man's burden'. The white man is responsible for the welfare of the coloured races; therefore he has the right to order and control their affairs as he deems fit. If he considers that contact with his own civilization is inimical to them, then racial segregation and exclusion from Western education and skills is the right as well as the logical policy.

This kind of reasoning is best illustrated by South Africa, but the British experience also shows how rationalization of the exploitation of India and other colonial territories has shaped the attitude of the man in the street. It is obvious that the British sense of racial superiority is inherited mainly from the days when Britain was the world's mightiest political and military power. Rationalization is necessary in such cases because of the wide gap, which frequently occurs in race relations, between ideology and practice. Peoples like the British, the North Americans, and the South Africans, who have a traditional attachment to Christianity, democracy, and egalitarianism, are also those who have made the sharpest

distinction between races; hence the rationalizing tendency. It avoids serious moral and intellectual conflict amongst members of the prejudiced group by providing them with an explanation of what is incongruous. The belief, for example, that racial separation is ordained by God makes it possible for the believer to exclude people of another colour from his church without giving up his faith in the Fatherhood of God.

The examples of Brazil and Hawaii, however, suggest a somewhat different explanation from the exploitation one. In Brazil, the Portuguese never erected any barriers between themselves and the coloured population. Intermixture and intermarriage made it impossible for the whites to retain an exclusive monopoly of power and privilege as a racially distinctive group. Moreover, the Portuguese remained industrially undeveloped compared with the colonizing peoples of northern Europe, and the growth of capitalism was retarded by the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church. Perhaps the part played positively by the Church in encouraging and supporting the institution of the family was even more significant. The fact that the family was maintained as a solid unit, fulfilling its patriarchal functions and obligations, inhibited distinctions which would have interfered with the loyalty of its members to each other.

In Hawaii, effective white control was only secured at a comparatively late date. The initial circumstances of racial contact created a liberal attitude towards intermarriage which was also compatible with the nature of later immigration into the islands. In addition, the rise among the non-white population of a number of relatively influential and economically important cultural groups, differing but little in their racial traits, has prevented the development of any simple basis for discrimination.

The conclusion of this essay, then, is that the phenomenon of race relations is part of a special era in human history, that it arose out of the earlier European attempt to exploit overseas territories, and that it later became an integral part of colonialism, as an economic and imperial policy. In fact, a study of Western politics during the nineteenth century reveals a very close connexion between racial myths and national and imperial ambition. Racial attitudes and antagonisms can be described, therefore, as functions of the wider organization of Western society, and as the product of those social movements which have been shaping its development for the past five or six hundred years.

If this analysis is correct, it means that there is nothing permanent about the race problem. Human society is essentially dynamic, and there are already signs that several of the countries primarily involved are taking up a fresh attitude. For example, the British conception of the welfare state is being extended to Britain's colonial possessions in terms of large annual grants and interest-free loans for local development. The British have also promised their colonial peoples the right of self-government: one West African territory, the Gold Coast, has already advanced far along that road, and others close behind her. The French, whose principal colonial possessions are also in Africa, have similarly instituted important constitutional and legal reforms. The status of French citizen is now applicable to all Africans. This means that a Muslim, or a pagan, are accorded the same public liberties. They also enjoy certain political rights, very similar to, and sometimes even identical with, those of a French citizen. Penal law for major offences is the same for all and is no longer administered by special courts for non-Europeans different from those reserved for Europeans, although due consideration is given to religious and traditional customs. In a wholly different sphere of race relations, in the United States, there has been a steady growth in liberal opinion. Laws forbidding discrimination in industry have been passed in a number of states, and some cities also have local laws. Segregation has been declared illegal on inter-state forms of transportation, and recent judgements in the courts make it increasingly difficult for the Southern states to keep Negroes from attending the same schools and universities as whites. A large number of Southern cities now employ Negroes in the public services, including the police; and the Negro is beginning to play an effective part in politics. One of the obstacles—which has recently been removed—was the restriction of primary elections in the South to whites. The South is still firm on social segregation, but a substantial proportion of white Southerners thoroughly condemn all practices of violence, and a large number favour the Negro having full political and economic opportunities.

Taking the long view, therefore, we can look forward with some confidence to the day when race and colour distinctions will have ceased to plague mankind. Indeed, to future generations it may seem unbelievable that a slight difference in the chemical composition of their skins should have caused men to hate, despise, revile, and persecute each other. But, in

the meantime, the danger remains—and it is a very grave one, and may become a major issue in world affairs. There are already signs that the fears and tensions which underlie South African race consciousness are spreading to the central and eastern part of the African continent, and are threatening to transform a previously cultural division of peoples into a narrowly racial one.

A fundamental aspect of the problem is the enormous disparity in relative prosperity between Western peoples and the rest of the world. North Americans, and most Europeans, have a standard of life which is many times higher in material comforts and social security than that of most Asians and Africans. There is also, in large part, the same kind of psychological gap as obtained between rich and poor at the time of the agrarian and industrial revolutions. Writers like J. L. and Barbara Hammond have described the attitude of the ruling class towards the English labourer in terms which could be duplicated in several modern situations of race. The English common people were conceived solely as hewers of wood and drawers of water. They should receive only vocational and industrial education, and they should not be encouraged or permitted to obtain employment outside their menial station in life.<sup>1</sup> The analogy, moreover, does not stop here. Just as the workers of England organized themselves as a body and broke the tyranny of the employer and landlord class, so colonial peoples today are in revolt against what they regard as the oppression of alien rule. The new factor is that the underprivileged are now of different ethnic or racial stock from the privileged, and the struggle has in most cases assumed a nationalist or racial complexion, rather than a class one. India, Indonesia, and more recently, colonial peoples in Africa, all exemplify in various ways, and to a varying extent, these new social movements. Politically and psychologically relevant, moreover is the fact that a major world power—Soviet Russia—claims that it has no colour problem. The constitution of the U.S.S.R. guarantees its citizens equal rights, no matter what their race may be, and, according to the Russians, there is no such thing as racial segregation among them: neither in education nor in anything else is any difference made between races and colours.

Seen in this kind of perspective, the future of race relations is bound up with the whole reorganization of world affairs

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1. For further discussion of this point, see Cox, *op. cit.*, p. 338 *et seq.*

and is a world responsibility. Something much more imaginative and realistic than armaments is needed to meet the practical and psychological requirements. The race problem is no longer a matter to be settled by parochial politics. What happens to people of colour in South Africa or in the United States is felt by non-Europeans nearly everywhere as their personal concern. It should be equally the concern, therefore, of the white peoples of other nations, and particularly those with coloured citizens or subjects of their own.

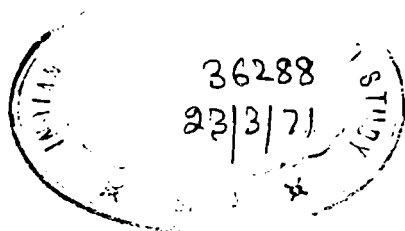
What is needed, primarily, is an international effort to liberalize racial attitudes. This must not stop short at admonition: racial harmony is not, unfortunately, a simple matter of goodwill. Fundamental political and economic issues are also involved. A nation like South Africa, for example, is confronted not only with the psychological problem of prevailing racial attitudes, but with the vast costs of urbanization, of coping with a disintegrated tribal society, and the urgent need for rural rehabilitation. In other words, many of the immediate difficulties to be overcome have nothing whatever to do with what people think about race.


Again, the 'coloured countries' are handicapped by illiteracy and malnutrition, and by general poverty and under-production. Part of the task of remedying this is already being performed by Unesco and those related organizations which are conducting health and literacy campaigns, distributing educational and cultural literature, and so on. The United States has a plan for economic aid to 'backward' territories, and MSA exists to provide them with finance and technical assistance. The colonial powers have their schemes for general development. But a very great deal more will have to be done; not only to 'iron out' existing economic inequalities, but to convince the coloured peoples of the sincerity of European and white society. There is no use disguising the fact that this will call for sacrifice as well as understanding on the part of European communities. It will mean forgoing some of the privileges hitherto regarded as essential to the continuation of their special cultural and racial heritage.



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