

Introduction

Maria Laura Cavalcanti (IFCS/UFRJ)

“Color de piel y clase social” and “Skin Color and Social Class” are respectively the Spanish and English versions of the article “Preconceito racial de marca e preconceito racial de origem – sugestão para um quadro de referência para a interpretação do material sobre relações raciais no Brasil”, *Anais do XXI Congresso Internacional de Americanistas [Annals of the 21st International Congress of Americanists]*, held in São Paulo, in August 1954, volume I, p. 409-434. This article was republished by the author in the book “Tanto preto quanto branco: estudos de relações raciais” (São Paulo: T.A. Queiroz, 1985) [Both Black and White: studies in racial relations] and more recently by the magazine *Tempo Social* (vol.19 n.1, June 2007). The comparison between the different dynamics and characteristics of the racial situations in Brazil and the United States presented is the result of two important research experiences. The study referring to the Brazilian racial situation – “Relatório das relações raciais no município de Itapetininga” [Report on Racial Relations in the Municipality of Itapetininga] – was published in 1955, as an integral part of the UNESCO Racial Relations Project and was republished in 1998 by EDUSP/SP as “Preconceito de Marca: as relações raciais em Itapetininga” [Brand Prejudice: Racial Relations in Itapetininga]. The study referring to the U.S. racial situation was not independently systematized and was realized from 1945 - 1947, while Oracy Nogueira conducted his doctoral studies, under the guidance of Everett Hughes, at the University of Chicago. In addition to the academic debates and the contact with the U.S. literature about racial relations, during this time Nogueira frequented black neighborhoods, black clubs and associations and institutions that fought racial discrimination. This rich experience is reported in detail in the Introduction to the book “Tanto preto quanto branco” (Nogueira, 1985) and much of this documentary material can be found in the *Fundo Oracy Nogueira* (IFCS/UFRJ. www.lauracavalcanti.com.br).

“Skin Color and Social Class” was published in the volume *Plantation Systems of the New World. Papers and discussion Summaries of the Seminar held in San Juan, Puerto Rico, by the Research Institute for the Study of Man and the Pan American Union. Washington D.C., Organization of American States, 1959.* It was translated by Clotilde da Silva Costa and Irene Diggs.

Only one copy of “Color de piel y clase social”, without the bibliographic reference, was found at the Fundo Oracy Nogueira, with the inscription Havana, 1987. We cannot check the bibliographic reference and we appreciate the help of anyone who can help us in this task.

Skin Color and Social Class¹

*Oracy Nogueira*²

The Era of Discovery increased the knowledge of various regions of the world and with the demand for mineral resources and other natural products accelerated and intensified European penetration; but above all it was the agricultural production for export to European markets which made European occupation systematic and continuous.

The *modus vivendi* in different parts of the world between Europeans and their descendants and the aboriginals depended upon several factors: 1) the size and density of the indigenous population; 2) the technical-economic development of the indigenous population and whether or not it was engaged in productive activities which the Europeans were interested in developing; 3) the degree of similarity between geographic characteristics of the region and those of the European continent, which tended to determine whether Europeans would attempt to establish an intentionally or unconsciously modified replica of the metropolitan country; 4) the capacity of the territory to provide vegetable and animal products for European markets, especially products which Europe could not produce, because of soil and climatic conditions; 5) cultural characteristics such as nationality, language, technology, traditions, history, et cetera, of the European as well as of the indigenous population.

1 Nogueira, Oracy. 1959. "Skin color and social class," in *Plantation systems of the new world*, Social Science Monographs. Edited by General Secretariat, Organization of American States. Papers and Discussion Summaries of the Seminar held in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Washington, D.C.: Research Institute for the Study of Man and the Pan American Union.

2 The author is grateful to Clotilde da Silva Costa and Irene Diggs for translation of this paper. [E.N.: In this transcription of the translation original 'racial' terms have been maintained and only a few spelling errors of Brazilian terms corrected.]

In the more densely populated areas, European penetration tended to be superficial and the demographic and cultural contribution of the aboriginals to the emerging national societies more perceptible, as was the case for example in Mexico, Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay, and a considerable part of Central America. Because of the relationship between techno-economic development and the demographic structure, these factors combined to facilitate the survival of the aboriginal and his integration into the newly emerging culture of the region in various areas of America.

In North as in South America the European tended to be dominant, both from the cultural point of view and as a physical type, in those areas where geographic conditions resembled more closely those of Europe and where European customs of living might be transferred with a minimum of modification: Canada and the United States, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, and southern Brazil.

In places where the soil, combined with a tropical climate, favored the large-scale production of crops for export, the European organized production by using native labor when possible and convenient; otherwise labor was secured in Africa. The cultivation of sugar cane in colonial times, both in Brazil and in other parts of America, was originally developed by using local labor and later, on a large scale, with slave labor from Africa. Coffee and cotton were also produced in Brazil and other parts of America; until the nineteenth century almost exclusively by the labor of Africans and their descendants.

In Brazil, the influx of free foreign labor, or “immigrants”, began in the nineteenth century, prior to the Abolition Act (1888); but large-scale immigration did not begin until the last decade of the nineteenth century and continued through the first three decades of the twentieth century. Immigration consisted almost entirely of white Europeans: Italians, Portuguese, Spaniards, Germans and others. However, Japanese immigration increased during the twentieth century, especially to São Paulo, the most industrialized State of the Union and the area where agriculture has reached its most intense development. In this State, in rural as well as urban areas, the Japanese and their descendants tend to be ubiquitous as laborers, artisans and professionals.

With the coming of African and later of other non-European elements, the ethnic panorama of America became diversified. There was amalgamation not only of European and Amerindian, of the direct descendants or

mestizos of both groups, but also of Africans, Asians, and mixtures of these stocks. Perhaps the major inter-racial or inter-ethnic problems of the continent do not involve the descendants of the European and Amerindian but rather the descendants of Europeans and Africans. From the beginning of America's colonization to the present, Europeans and their descendants have been dominant in political, economic and social life. As one of the components of the race situation of each national or regional society, the decisive role of the European's attitudes with regard to the other groups is understandable. In an over-all view of inter-racial relations in America one may refer to the relationship between "whites" on the one hand and "non-whites" on the other, but to do so is to fail to recognize the diversity in types and situations which the designations "white" and "non-white" tend to conceal.

It is probable that certain cultural aspects such as religion and historic tradition – especially with regard to inter-ethnic, interracial or inter-cultural relations – explain, at least partially, the way in which this dominant group treated the Amerindians, the Africans and their descendants, or other foreign groups with which they came in direct contact. Some valuable contributions to the sociological and socio-historic literature of this continent belong to this field.

Viewing the cultures of the Americas as a whole, it is undeniable that language is an important distinguishing factor. In some areas English is the current language; and the national culture, as far as reference to "national culture" is justified, is primarily a modified version of the English culture. In others the current language is a neo-Latin language and the national culture a version of neo-Latin culture. One cannot ignore the fact that some more localized groups do not fit into either of these categories. On the other hand the socio-cultural diversity in Latin America results not only from differences in "habitat" and in local historical experiences, but is also conditioned by the Portuguese, Spanish and French cultural heritage of Latin American peoples, – by the proportion of indigenous and African elements and the extent of transculturation in each country.

As a rule, marked regional differences in ethnic origin of the population are to be found in each country: in Brazil, the Indian descendants and the mestizos predominate in the Northern and Northeastern regions; the descendants of Africans are more concentrated in the East and the whites in the South.

Although mention has been made only of the contrast between Latin America and English-speaking America, one must always keep in mind that both designations involve a number of variations and that some situations and traditions in this hemisphere cannot be classified in either of these two major categories.

The element which is definitely one of the common denominators of large areas of non-Latin and most areas of Latin America is the plantation; it is the chief factor determining the development of multi-racial national societies in this part of the world.

The plantation or latifundium is land for large-scale agricultural production, generally dedicated to a single product for export and using outside labor--labor not belonging to the family of the proprietor. Eventually this labor will be integrated into the production system and gradually into the national culture. This acculturative process has been characterized by different tempos, and at present assimilation in most areas is far from complete: on the one hand are the Europeans and their direct descendants, on the other hand the indigenous peoples, Negroes and other ethnic elements and their descendants, as well as mestizos and mulattoes with different proportions of caucasoid, mongoloid, and negroid genes.

The plantation or latifundium involves a social hierarchy of human elements with the caucasoid (European and his descendants) land-owners at the top; and at the other extreme the Negroes, Amerindian and mestizos or mulattoes living as slaves or dependents (administrados) and later as rural laborers, farm hands, tenants, et cetera.

The latifundium or plantation seems to have been the main factor responsible for the development of national and regional cultures in Latin America, in the tropical islands, and to some extent in the South of the United States. Social stratification in these cultures was polarized in two opposing layers with an extremely thin, almost non-existent middle layer. With the political emancipation of these nations, with the abolition of slavery, with increased industrialization and urbanization, there has been a tendency throughout America, in the last century and especially in the last half century, toward less rigidity in the social structure, together with a corresponding increase of individual and family vertical mobility. Nevertheless, it can be noted almost everywhere that the whites tend to remain concentrated in the more favorable economic, social and political positions, while the Negroes,

Amerindians, and the darker mulattoes tend to stay at the opposite end of the class pyramid.

Two factors have primarily determined the relative rigidity of the social structure in America with regard to the distribution of individuals and families, in accordance with their European or non-European origin: 1) the fact that the plantation or latifundium system to a great extent continues to be the cornerstone of such a structure, with concentration of land ownership in the hands of the dominant group, and 2) the current ideas, attitudes and stereotypes regarding the Negroes, mulattoes and Amerindians, that is, the non-Europeans. This ideology of the dominant white group, developed to defend its own interests rather than the interests of the remaining population, has become a striking element of the various national or regional cultures of this continent and has influenced the subordinate individuals and groups, not only from the outside as alien manifestations, but also from within as patterns of thinking, feeling and acting.

In Brazil, particularly in the south, as urbanization is intensified and industrialization expands, social classes show a tendency to become more diversified, without, however, any fundamental change in the population distribution in accordance with physical (racial) characteristics, except perhaps the tendency of mulatto elements to concentrate in larger urban areas. The recognition of the existence of prejudice against non-whites in the Americas since colonial times does not imply ignorance of national and regional difference in various racial situations.

This paper is an attempt to characterize two types of prejudice in Latin America and other American countries which tend to reduce the social mobility of non-white elements of the population and to hamper the integration of those of different ethnic origins into the national societies.

The recognition of racial prejudice in the Americas, Latin and non-Latin, and the difference between the two forms of prejudice, constitute in the opinion of the author two fundamental steps toward the understanding of the current dynamics of the respective racial situations. However, the question still remains as to how and why these distinctive forms of prejudice developed and continue to exist in the different areas.

Race prejudice of mark and race prejudice of origin³

The conceptual framework to be presented has the following main objectives: 1) to invite modifications, corrections or additions to the formulation of the two ideal concepts; 2) to compare the two ideal concepts with available data on the racial situation in the different national and regional cultures of America for the purpose of ascertaining whether there are areas in which there are fundamental discrepancies in relation to one or the other of these concepts, and, if so, to invalidate or alter the thesis through the addition of a third type; 3) to invite new research which will test these hypotheses; and 4) to contribute to the collection and organization of data on the different multi-racial cultures of America and other regions of the world.

Since the concepts presented are based principally on contrast of the racial situation in the United States with that in Brazil, the author is uncertain of their applicability to other racial situations with which he is less acquainted.

Studies of the Brazilian race situation and mixed populations may be classified into three different categories: 1) the Afro-Brazilian approach, advanced by Nina Rodrigues, Arthur Ramos and their followers, which, under the influence of Herskovits, is being continued in a somewhat modified form by Rene Ribeiro, Roger Bastide and others. This approach emphasizes study of the acculturation process in order to determine the contribution of African cultures to the development of Brazilian culture. 2) The historical approach, represented chiefly by Gilberto Freyre, seeks to analyze the introduction and integration of the African in Brazilian society. 3) The sociological approach, although it does not ignore the importance of these two categories, seeks to examine the present relations between white and non-white in Brazil⁴.

The systematic sociological approach to the study of relations between white and non-white was introduced in Brazil by Donald Pierson's work centered in Bahia (1942), although a number of previous studies by different au-

3 Starting from this point this paper constitutes a new presentation of a frame of reference the author presented at the International Congress of Americanists held in Sao Paulo, August 22-30, 1954. "Mark" has a very broad meaning and may include even the language accent of a foreigner, whereas "appearance" tends to restrict the impression to a person's physique.

4 Among the followers of Arthur Ramos, Edson Carneiro especially must be mentioned. It should be stressed that, although each scholar tends to be especially interested in one or the other of the three fields of study, it is hardly possible to classify all the works of an author exclusively in anyone category.

thors on certain aspects of the general theme of "race relations" already had been published.

Due to the repercussions of Pierson's work, as well as the greater contact of Brazilian scholars with foreign scientific literature, especially that of the United States, such studies became more frequent, as can be verified in the pages of scholarly publications, particularly those of "Revista do Arquivo Municipal" and "Sociologia," both edited in São Paulo.

A few years later, Felte Bezerra (1950) examined the formation and present structure of the population of the state of Sergipe: he acknowledged the validity of Pierson's conclusions concerning relationships between white and nonwhite elements and in general, the complex aspects of the Bahian racial situation.

Besides the well-known studies which can be classified in the "Afro-Brazilian" category, Roger Bastide (1951, 1953), with his sociological approach, has contributed greatly to the knowledge of the Brazilian racial situation, particularly that of Sao Paulo.

A number of studies have recently been made under the auspices of UNESCO in different parts of the country, by national and foreign scholars. In some cases the study of race relations has been coordinated with community studies or other types of sociological research already under way: Charles Wagley (1951, 1953) studied the racial situation of an Amazon rural community, while some of his collaborators analyzed the same aspect of social life in rural communities of the "sertão" (Zimmerman, 1951); in the mountainous regions of Bahia (Harris, 1951); and in the Bahian Reconcavo (Hutchinson, 1951). Thales De Azevedo (1953) studied vertical mobility of non-whites in the city of Salvador; Rene Ribeiro (1953, 1956) the racial situation in the Northeast; Costa Pinto (1953) made a similar study in the Federal District; and in Sao Paulo, Roger Bastide and Florestan Fernandes (1953) carried out research in the State capital where Virginia Bicudo (1953) and Aniela Ginsberg (1954) also studied important aspects of this subject. Oracy Nogueira (1954) carried out an analysis of the racial situation of a community in the interior of the state of Sao Paulo.

These studies, notwithstanding certain differences in orientation, conclusions and interpretation of data, have the following characteristics in common:

1. limiting the area covered by the research in order to permit intensive and systematic collection of data that would ensure a solid empirical basis; 2) detailed and explicit presentation of the data gathered so as to permit comparison with similar studies and reinterpretation by the reader, 3) comparison of the Brazilian racial situation with that of other countries, particularly the United States; and 4) the effort to understand the racial situation of the country as a whole, through Comparison and synthesis of the numerous concrete case studies made in different parts of the national territory.

These studies, which include quite different geographical and ecologic conditions, from the State of Pará in the North to the State of São Paulo in the South, are not comprehensive enough to cover every situation. With regard to the size and complexity of the groups involved, the studies in question include small rural communities as well as large centers where the effects of urbanization and industrialization are more manifest. It would, however, be desirable to have more studies of a greater variety of situations or, at least, studies which would present the whole rural-urban continuum of a given zone area, or region. This would make possible a more adequate evaluation of the effects of urbanization and industrialization on relationships between people of different racial appearance when certain general conditions (climate, natural resources, historical background. etc.) are relatively homogeneous and constant.

These studies also differ from the point of view of the proportion of caucasoids, negroids, mongoloids, mestizos and mulattoes in various combinations and degrees of amalgamation. The studies include communities where the phenotype of the mongoloid predominates, communities where there is a numerical prevalence of individuals with negroid features (generally mulattoes) as is the case in certain parts of Bahia, and communities such as the state capital of Sao Paulo and the município of Itapetininga, where caucasians prevail. However, studies should be made which would include as many variations in types as possible.

As the number of studies increase and as they cover a greater variety of situations, there will be more probability of obtaining an adequate synthesis which will include the racial situation of Brazil as a whole, with the determination of the constants, as well as the variables.

Using as a basis the above-mentioned, the sociological and anthropological literature on the North American racial situation, as well as a direct

knowledge of both the Brazilian and the North American situation, the author formulated a frame of reference which he deems useful both to characterize the racial situations and to raise new problems which may lead scholars to consider new aspects of the question.

The frame of reference presented is based on two ideal concepts, inferred from concrete cases. Each particular case tends to the polarity of one or the other of the two ideal concepts, although no case coincides, point by point, with either: one approximately represents the Brazilian, and the other the North American situation.

While some scholars may not admit that the "problem of race prejudice" is the central problem in studies of racial relations, and although it is admitted that prejudice, no matter what importance one attributes to it as a problem for study, should be focused in the context of the racial situation, it is a fact that all research carried out in this field reveals at least implicitly a concern with its existence. Even when studying a race situation where prejudice is supposedly absent, or almost absent, there is at least an implied interest in comparing it with situations where the occurrence of prejudice is unquestionable.

The United States and Brazil are examples of two types of racial situations: one where race prejudice is apparent and unquestionable, and the other in which the very acknowledgement of prejudice has given rise to a controversy difficult to resolve.

Generally speaking, if one should examine the existing literature on the Brazilian race situation produced by scholars or by Brazilian or North American observers, one would notice that the Brazilian writers, influenced by the ideology of race relations characteristic of Brazil, have a tendency to deny or underestimate the prejudice that exists in Brazil, while North Americans, accustomed to prejudice as it is evidenced in their own country, have difficulty in observing it in the way it exists in Brazil. It would appear that prejudice as it exists in Brazil falls below the perception threshold of North Americans.

The tendency of the Brazilian intelligentsia to deny or underestimate prejudice as it exists in Brazil and the difficulty of most North American observers to perceive it, contrast with the general impressions of the non-white Brazilian population. In the studies sponsored by UNESCO, one point which is noteworthy is the recognition of prejudice in Brazil. Thus

for the first time, the testimony of social scientists frankly admits and corroborates the contention of the non-white population of Brazil based on their own experience.

The contrast between inter-racial relations as they exist in the United States and in Brazil raises the additional question of determining whether prejudice differs only in intensity or if this difference is qualitative. At least one of the UNESCO-sponsored studies states explicitly that racial prejudice differs mainly in intensity. (Cf. Costa Pinto, 1953, pp. 96-7). In the view of this writer, however, the differences occurring in racial prejudice in Brazil and the United States are such that one must recognize diversity in the nature of racial prejudice itself. Prejudice, as manifested in Brazil, is designated here as prejudice of mark, while that in the United States is called prejudice of origin. The propositions that follow have been formulated in an attempt to determine the characteristics which differentiate the two types of prejudice: the dynamics of race situations dominated by one or the other of the two types; and hypotheses which will lead to new research or which will call for new syntheses of already available data.

The expression "prejudice of mark" constitutes a reformulation of the expression "prejudice of color", which can be found not only in the literature, but actually is a current expression in Brazil: it is therefore, merely a systematic presentation of what is recognized by scholars and other interested people as well. It should be noted at this point, that these are two ideal concepts which indicate 'pure', abstract situations which concrete situations only approximate' and that it is not expected that there exists a point by point correspondence of any real case with one or the other of the two ideal types.

Race prejudice is an unfavorable, culturally conditioned disposition toward members of a population who are stigmatized. either because of their appearance or the ethnic origin which is attributed to them. When race prejudice derives from appearance, that is, when its manifestations are based on the physical characteristics of the individual, on physiognomy, gesticulation or accent, it is said to be prejudice of mark; when the assumption that the individual descends from a given ethnic group is enough to make him the victim of prejudice, it is called prejudice of origin.

The following differences may be pointed out between the racial prejudice of mark and that of origin:

1. With regard to behavior: prejudice of mark involves shunning, avoiding; prejudice of origin determines unconditional exclusion of members of the group from situations or resources for which they would compete with members of the discriminating group.

Thus, in Brazil an association may offer greater resistance to the admission of a non-white than of a white member. However, if the non-white individual compensates for the disadvantage of color with an undeniable superiority of intelligence, education, professional and economic condition, or if he is skilled, ambitious and persevering he may overcome the barrier and be admitted, "exceptionally." This exception will not set a precedent for the admittance of other persons with equivalent or lighter color. It must be noted that all things being equal, the black or dark person is always at a disadvantage. One should neither overlook nor underestimate the handicaps which the dark individual must overcome, nor his sufferings and sorrows, his moral and material losses because of prejudice.

In the United States in general, restrictions on the Negro are, contrariwise, independent of personal conditions such as learning, occupation, et cetera. Whether he is a Ph. D. or a worker, in certain parts of the United States the Negro is not permitted to live outside the segregated area, to be admitted to certain hospitals, frequent certain theatres, make use of "white" waiting rooms in railroad stations or airfields, to use certain sanitary installations, water fountains, et cetera. It is true that restrictions imposed on the Negro in the United States vary from one region to the other and even from one locality to another.

2. With regard to the definition of members of the discriminating group and members of the discriminated group: Whenever there is prejudice of mark, the phenotype may be the criterion. When it is a case of prejudice of origin, the mulatto, no matter what his appearance, or what proportion of ancestry of the discriminating he may possess, has the "hereditary potentialities" of the discriminated group and therefore is racially identified with them.

The line between the type attributed to the discriminating and to the discriminated group is indefinite and varies subjectively in Brazil, where there is prejudice of mark. This varies with the characteristics of the observer and of the observed, and with the attitudes and relationships of the observer to the individual being identified. Variation in judgments, however, is limited by

the possibility of ridicule or absurdity which the discrepancy might imply between the appearance of an individual and his identification. Thus, the concept of white and non-white varies with degree of amalgamation, from individual to individual, from one class to another, from one region to another.

In the United States, on the contrary, “whitening”, through amalgamation, no matter how complete, does not determine the incorporation of the mulatto into the white group. Even if he has silky, blond hair, light skin, aquiline nose, thin lips, blue eyes; even if he does not have a single characteristic that might be considered as negroid, the mulatto will remain socially Negro (cf. Warner, Davis, Gardner and Gardner, 1941). In the United States the Negro is defined as “any individual who is known as such in his community” without reference to physical characteristics.

In Brazil there is no problem of “passing” because the individual who has Caucasian features is considered Caucasian even though his negroid ancestry or his kinship with negroid individuals is known. In the United States “passing” is only possible for Negroes to the extent that their racial affiliation can become known through identity papers and circumstantial evidence.⁵ Under such conditions, individuals may move into a new environment, change their names and start to live as white, a technique which may be used permanently or temporarily⁶ for specific purposes or as a definitive change of destiny (Burma, 1946; Eckard, 1947), notwithstanding the mental conflicts which may result⁷ and the sanctions to which they may be subjected should their “true” origin be discovered. On the part of the white group, the sanctions imposed vary from loss of employment and the discontinuance of relations to physical aggression and lynching; on the part of the Negro group the individual may be subjected to moral criticism for lack of loyalty, to ridicule, and to boycott⁸.

5 Paradoxically the “white-Negro” moving into a new environment may have to prove his racial affiliation even to the Negroes with whom he enters into contact.

6 The sensationalist press frequently exploits this subject, assuming that great numbers of white North Americans descend from Negroes who passed the “color line”.

7 The author met among other “white-Negroes” a lady who “passed” for six months, accepting a job as a secretary. After six months she could stand it no longer and told her boss, thinking that since he considered her efficient, her confession would contribute to a change of attitude in favor of the Negro group, but she was fired. On the subject of the Negro who dares to “pass” see Stonequist (1937).

8 One of the novels of Sinclair Lewis, *Kingsblood Royal*, pictures the drama of a successful citizen in the business world (banker) and in “society”, who discovers an old document left by one of his ancestors, showing that he is of Negroid descent.

Projection of the concepts of white and Negro, in both situations, raises the possibility for a series of *quid pro quos*, the analysis of which might be considered useful to the comparative study of race relations. Thus, slightly negroid or completely caucasoid individuals who have always lived in Brazil as caucasoids, may be considered Negroes if they go to the United States⁹. On the other hand, North American Negroes travelling in Brazil may be treated as whites, light mulattoes, dark mulattoes, or Negroes, depending on their phenotype: this may create contradictions when they return to their own country and tell about their experiences¹⁰.

A North American Negro may be disappointed when he learns that a Brazilian whom he considered as belonging to his group and from whom he expected “racial” loyalty identifies himself and is identified by other Brazilians as a white and is openly prejudiced toward non-whites.

3. With regard to emotional content: prejudice of mark tends to be intellectual and aesthetic; prejudice of origin tends to be more emotional and inclusive with reference to attributing inferiority or undesirable features to members of the discriminated group.

In Brazil, the intensity of prejudice varies in direct proportion to negroid features; such prejudice is not incompatible with the strongest ties of friendship or with manifestations of solidarity and sympathy. Negroid features, especially in a person for whom one has feelings of friendliness, sympathy or deference, create sympathy, just as a physical “defect” would. From the start it is impressed upon the white child’s mind that negroid characteristics make its bearer ugly and undesirable for marriage¹¹.

9 The author met in Chicago a Brazilian intellectual, a light mulatto, whose caucasoid identification was never questioned in Brazil, but who was under severe emotional strain because he had been subjected to discrimination in a Chicago hotel.

10 In Chicago, in an institution frequented by university students and whose regulations prohibited racial discrimination, Brazilian students of both sexes were irritated with the attitude of a young American girl, a blonde who was always seen with a Negro with whom she danced and from whom she accepted other demonstrations of intimacy. Some of the students who were thus irritated learned that the “blonde” girl, in the United States, was a Negro. One of the Brazilian students when he learned the ‘true’ identity of the girl and heard that in the United States in view of the definition of Negro, there are white individuals who are considered Negroes, joked: “Well, I am going to marry a blonde Negro woman like this one and will write my family that I married a Negro: they will think I have gone mad. When I arrive in Brazil with my wife nobody will believe she is a Negro.”

11 Adult people frequently tease a white boy that when he grows up he will marry a Negro. Black boys are teasingly called “negrinho” (little black) “urubu” (black vulture), “anu” (a small black bird) etc., by

In the United States, prejudice tends to be more emotional and irrational than intellectual and aesthetic, and takes on the character of antagonism or intergroup hatred. For this reason its manifestations are more conscious and take the form of intentional exclusions or segregation of the Negro from the most varied walks of life occupational and residential; school segregation, segregation in religious, cultural, recreational, social assistance, and public health institutions, in public places and conveyances. Such prejudice consequently implies a deep emotional bias, hampering judgment of non-white people or of acts attributed to them by the white.¹²

4. With regard to interpersonal relations: where there is prejudice of mark, personal friendship and mutual admiration easily cross the color line; when it is prejudice of origin, relations between the discriminating and the discriminated groups are severely restricted by taboos and sanctions of a negative nature.

In Brazil, an individual may be prejudiced against non-white people in general and at the same time be a personal friend, client or admirer of a particular non-white person without a sense of inconsistency, because his friendship does not involve a redefinition of attitude or point of view on his part toward non-whites.

In certain areas of the United States the white who maintains friendly relations with non-whites is deprecatingly called “Negro-lover” or “voluntary Negro” and is subject to drastic sanctions. A white person who marries a Negro may become a Negro socially and an object of discrimination.

5. With regard to ideology: with prejudice of mark, the prevailing ideology is pro-assimilation and amalgamation; when it is prejudice of origin, it is pro-segregation and race exclusion.

In Brazil, there is a general expectation that both the negroid and the

their own playmates and adults. They frequently hear remarks that “blacks are not people.” In all situations of this kind, in the guise of teasing, the concept of the inferiority of the blacks and the undesirability of negroid features is impressed upon the white as well as the black child’s mind, although the speaker may not be aware of the effect.

12 On the subject of rationalizations regarding racial situations in the United States, see Myrdal (1944). On the “drastic restrictions, the strange habits and the tragic violence inspired by prejudice with respect to the Negro in the United States, see Embree (1942). For a more recent classified bibliography, for a dynamic and comparative study of the North American race situation, see Frazier (1949; 1957a 1957b).

mongoloid will finally disappear as racial types through continuous crossing with the caucasoid. The general concept is that the whitening process constitutes the solution for the ethnic heterogeneity of the Brazilian people. The intermarriage of a caucasoid and a negroid usually is considered "lucky" for the latter, while the former either showed "bad taste" or lowered himself for dubious reasons. The white child of a mixed couple is also said to be "lucky;" when the child is dark, people feel sorry for him.

Therefore, this ideology is actually but a covert manifestation of prejudice, since in general the whites who welcome the whitening of the population hope that it will result from the cooperation of other whites, particularly where legal marriage is concerned. On the other hand, the non-white individual who wishes to marry a person with lighter skin may reveal dissatisfaction with negroid features and a preference for the caucasoid type to which he hopes his descendants will belong.

The Brazilian ideology of interracial and interethnic relations is pro-amalgamation concerning physical traits and pro-assimilation as to cultural characteristics. It is generally hoped that the individual of non-Luso-Brazilian origin will progressively abandon his cultural heritage for the "national culture"--language, religion and custom. Expectations both for assimilation and amalgamation manifest themselves with reference to elements of African and indigenous origin as well as to foreign immigrants and their descendants.

Notwithstanding the fact that it conceals a veiled form of prejudice, the Brazilian ideology of interracial relations, as a part of the national ethos, involves an ideal of race egalitarianism and provides a reference point for public condemnation of overt and intentional manifestations of prejudice, as well as for the protest of non-whites against discrimination. In view of national pride with reference to the non-aggressive and peaceful coexistence of different ethnic elements in the population, overt and intentional manifestations of prejudice are avoided and condemned by the majority of Brazilians.

In the United States the expectation of the majority, with regard to minorities subjected to discrimination, is that they continue to be endogamic and nucleated, each forming a separate social world, so as to mingle as little as possible with the former, whose racial "purity" it considers necessary to preserve.

6. With regard to differentiation between minorities: with prejudice of mark the dogma of culture prevails over that of race; when it is prejudice of origin the opposite is true. Consequently, when there is prejudice of mark the least endogamic and ethnocentric minorities are favored; when there is prejudice of origin on the contrary, there is greater tolerance for ethnocentric minorities.

In Brazil, one frequently heard the complaint that Japanese, Syrian and other immigrant groups, “do not marry Brazilians” and seek to preserve their own cultural heritage: language, religion, and custom¹³.

In the United States, on the contrary, when two or more minorities are compared, it is frequently pointed out as an attenuating circumstance that “their members are not trying to impose themselves upon other groups.” As a rule, I believe there is greater tolerance in the United States (than in Brazil) toward immigrants who speak their own language even in public, retain their own music, etc.

7. With regard to etiquette: with prejudice of mark the etiquette of interracial relations emphasizes control of behavior in individuals of the discriminating group in order to avoid hurting or humiliating individuals of the discriminated group; when it is prejudice of origin, the emphasis is placed on the control of behavior of members of the discriminated group, so as to check the aggressiveness of elements of the discriminating group.

In Brazil, it is not polite to broach the subject of color before a Negro or mulatto: one avoids making references to color just as one would avoid referring to any other subject that might hurt the feelings of the other person. On the contrary, when quarreling with a non-white, the first insult is to refer to his ethnic origin¹⁴.

13 In Sao Paulo a Syrian remarked that “The problem of the Italian in Brazil is ‘de-macaronization’, that of the Syrian is ‘dequibiation’, and that of the German is ‘debeefation’; the problem of the black is whitening. Also in Sao Paulo a young man of Japanese origin, in the liberal profession, who is active among Brazilians, i. e., outside the groups of the Japanese and their descendants, and who has been identified as a mestizo or an Indian in his travels to other Brazilian states and South American countries, declared: “In my opinion race prejudice does not exist in Brazil; there exists an aesthetic prejudice. The Japanese who most resembles individuals of the white race--for example one that has less elongated eyes-is better accepted.”

14 In a situation of deference any dark individual may be euphemistically referred to as “moreno.” On the other hand, a mulatto can be called a “black” or a “bode” by his opponent: there are indirect ways of indicating that an individual is of negroid descent. One can say, for example, that he has a foot or an ear “in the kitchen”.

In the United States etiquette emphasizes the asymmetry of relations between the white and the Negro: the white demands to be called “mister” and to be addressed by his surname; the Negro, however, at least in the South, may have to tolerate being called by his first name by the white man. In public places, the mutual behavior of white and Negro persons is strictly regulated so as to emphasize the unfavorable position of the latter¹⁵.

8. With regard to the effect on the discriminated group: when prejudice is one of mark, consciousness of discrimination tends to be intermittent; when it is prejudice of origin, it tends to be continuous and obsessive.

As a rule in Brazil, the non-white is submitted to sharp consciousness of his color in conflict situations, when his opponent tries to humiliate him by referring to his racial appearance or when in contact with strangers; but he can go through long periods without being involved in humiliating situations regarding racial identification. This is especially true with respect to non-whites who live in small communities where primary contacts prevail and where individuals know one another personally. As secondary contacts become more frequent there are greater probabilities of being treated according to racial features, and therefore according to a stereotype.

In the United States the consciousness of race identification is permanent, pervasive and obsessive in the Negro; it involves three inter-related tendencies: 1) the permanent necessity of self-assertion; 2) a constant defensive attitude; 3) a sharp sensitivity to race attitudes. The need for self-assertion of the North American Negro is revealed in the effort to restore the aesthetic value of the race through photographs printed in the Negro press¹⁶; in the intellectual elevation of the Negro by raising the level of education, or by glorifying those Negroes who distinguish themselves in the fields of letters, arts and sciences, or by their role in social and political affairs, as a model for moral and civic improvement¹⁷; and in every effort to destroy current stereotypes of the innate inferiority of the Negro.

15 For further information on behavior patterns between white and Negro in the United States, also see Doyle (1937).

16 In 1943 the North American Negro press included 273 publications, embracing 64 active newspapers. (Murray, 1947, p. 237 ff).

17 A Brazilian will be surprised, for example, to find that the North American Negro press glorified Castro Alves, Floriano Peixoto, Nilo Pecanha and other Brazilian personages, as “Negroes.” Even an English queen was once included in a list of “eminent people of African blood” and therefore as a “Negro” in accordance with the North American definition.

This defensive attitude is also revealed in the obsessive preoccupation to exclude from language and all symbolic behavior any expression or manifestation that might contain a detrimental meaning for the Negro group, even if this meaning is unintentional¹⁸.

It is likewise revealed in the complementary preoccupation to disseminate expressions and symbols that might contribute to dignify and elevate the morale of the Negro group.¹⁹

On the other hand, the acute sensitivity of the North American Negro to any reference, explicit or implicit, to the race question is revealed in the tendency to carefully censor the attitudes of both the in-group and the out-group, so as to systematically call attention to discrepancy with regard to a philosophy of strict racial equality.

9. With regard to the reaction of discriminated groups: with prejudice of mark, reaction tends to be individual, and the individual tries to “compensate” for his traits by the display of aptitudes and characteristics involving social approval by those of his own racial group as well as by members of the dominant group and people with “lighter” traits than his own; when it is prejudice of origin, reaction tends to be collective through the strengthening of group solidarity, aesthetic redefinition, etc.

In Brazil, experience deriving from the “color problem” varies in accordance with the intensity of traits and the facility of the individual to counterbalance them with the display of other characteristics: beauty, social class, elegance, talent, politeness, etc.²⁰

¹⁸ Referring to this tendency of the North American Negro, an intellectual belonging to the group once remarked, “Race consciousness in the North American Negro is so deep that it is enough for someone to exclaim, ‘What a dark night’ and he is hurt.”

¹⁹ The North American Negro, for example, demands that the designation of his group be capitalized – Negro. He also does not tolerate the exhibition of caricatures of colored individuals with thick lips, big eyes with exaggerated whites, flat nose, etc., like those frequently seen in Brazil during Carnival, even in the clubs of non-whites.

²⁰ In December of 1951, the author witnessed the following incident in Sao Paulo: In a restaurant, among other customers there were two well-dressed mulattoes and a white man in working clothes, sitting at separate tables. The waiter was equally solicitous to all. The two mulattoes were familiarly treated both by the manager and the employee, and were old customers. A short time later a young black man came in who was also a working man. The waiter didn’t let him sit at a table, and the young man asked: “Is this the Esplanada?” (a fashionable hotel). This situation shows that this non-white, of the same social class as the white man, was refused; however, the two other colored men, of a higher social class, were accepted.

Even among non-white individuals there is a general impression that it is difficult to arouse solidarity in their own group and that, as a rule, when a Negro or mulatto "climbs" socially he loses interest in the fate of his color-mates and sometimes even denies the existence of prejudice. The more or less chronic state of crisis of recreational and cultural organizations of non-white people in Brazil, seems to be a reflection of this difficulty in social integration (due to internal competition and quarrels) (See Bicudo, 1947.) The expressions "black" or "preto," "white," or "pardo", when used in Brazil, refer to groups of individuals with certain physical appearance rather than "social groups", since the concept of social group implies specific organizations and does not refer merely to a statistical number of individuals.

In the United States the struggle of the Negro as a Negro, no matter what his appearance may be, is mainly a collective struggle. Even individual triumphs are considered the establishment of new positions on behalf of the whole group.²¹ In every contact with white people, even in the organizations instituted to fight race restrictions and to improve relations between different minorities and the majority, the non-white individual plays the role of a representative of his group.

10. With regard to the effects of the proportional variation of the minority contingent: prejudice of mark shows a tendency to attenuation in those places where the proportion of individuals of the discriminated group is higher; prejudice of origin, on the contrary, shows the tendency to increase in places where the discriminated group becomes quantitatively more conspicuous.

The general impression in Brazil is that non-whites are more frequently subject to manifestations of prejudice in São Paulo where they are less numerous in relation to the population as a whole, than, for example, in Bahia or Rio de Janeiro²². In the United States, on the contrary, Negroes are consid-

21 The admission for the first time of a Negro into a school, a club or other institution, or in a previously exclusive residential area, is often a dangerous venture. Even excluding the danger of lynching or physical violence, there is a manifest humiliation in the specific assignment of the places where the Negro may stay. In a previously exclusive residential area which, under pressure of the Negro himself or of democratic campaigns, begins to accept colored people, the latter may be subject to boycott by merchants, and to other actions meant to discourage their penetration of the area. Nevertheless, there are always Negroes willing to play the part of pioneers, who believe that they are establishing a precedent which will make it easier for other Negroes to enjoy the same rights;

22 According to the 1940 census, the white population in Sao Paulo totaled 84.92 percent and the "pardos" and blacks constituted 12.0110. In Bahia the population was 28.74 per cent white and 71. 20 per cent

erably more subject to restrictions in the areas where they constitute a greater percentage of the population. In some parts of the North, the increase in the proportion of Negroes in the population has been accompanied by aggravation of the racial problem.

11. With regard to social structure: with prejudice of mark, the probability of social mobility is inversely related to the intensity of the traits of the individual, race prejudice being thus concealed by class prejudice with which it tends to coincide; in prejudice of origin, the discriminating and discriminated groups are rigidly separated from one another in status as if they were two parallel societies in symbiosis.

In Brazil, even sociologists who have studied this problem find it difficult to distinguish between the effects of class prejudice and those of color prejudice in relation to mulattoes and blacks (Pierson, 1942, *op. cit.* and 1951; Bezerra, 1950, *op. cit.*).

In the United States, impenetrability between the Negro and the white groups is such that sociologists have not hesitated to use the term "caste" in referring to such groups and to North American social organization (Warner, *et al.* 1941, *op. cit.*; Dollard, 1937).²³

12. With regard to the type of political movement it inspires: with prejudice of mark the struggle of the discriminated group tends to fuse with the class struggle; with prejudice of origin the discriminated group acts as a coherent "national minority" and thus is one capable of group action.

In Brazil, social and political campaigns which appealed to the group consciousness of the non-white population have failed. The political campaign of Nazi-fascist inspiration, was not without followers among non-whites, including intellectuals, which in the United States would be regarded as paradoxical. In the United States the Negro minority not only behaves as if it were a nationality fighting for "status," but has been treated as a

nonwhite. In the Federal District these percentages were 71.10 and 28.62 respectively. The proportion of whites varied from a maximum of 94.44 per cent in Santa Catarina to a minimum of 28.74 per cent in Bahia; the proportion of blacks and "pardos" varied from a minimum of 5.54 per cent in Santa Catarina to a maximum of 71.20 per cent in Bahia: cf. Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (1950).

²³ Park considers the etiquette of interracial relations in the South of the United States as a mechanism of the caste system. Cf. his introduction to Doyle (1937, *op. cit.*).

national minority by scholars²⁴ as well as politicians.

From the propositions presented it may be noted that racial prejudice in either form is considered a cultural element closely related to the social ethos, i. e., culturally conditioned behavior which is revealed in interpersonal relations, both through etiquette and less explicit behavior patterns. There is a tendency toward internal consistency in the behavior patterns relating to interracial relations, since they are integral parts of the ethos of the respective society.

In Brazil, the attempt to avoid injuring the feelings of non-whites can be interpreted as a manifestation of cultural emphasis on the "polite" obligation to spare the sensibility of people in interpersonal relations in general. In Brazil it is usual to distinguish between "education" and "learning": an individual may be educated without being learned and vice-versa. The concept of education involves, particularly the idea of "politeness" or "tact" in dealing with other people while the concept of "learning" implies principally the idea of erudition or the accumulation of formal knowledge. The Brazilian concept of an "educated man" or of a "man of tact" reminds one of the definition of the "gentleman" by Lord Chesterfield: like the gentleman, the "educated man" or the "man of tact" is "one who never offends another unwittingly." The opposite of the "educated man" is the boor, i. e. someone who is always hurting other people's feelings. Even among the less schooled social strata, individual development is generally oriented in this direction: "never speak of rope in a hanged man's house." In the field of interracial relations in Brazil, as we have seen, it is the rule that the white avoid hurting the feelings of the non-white. The very word negro is generally reserved for quarrels; at other times such expressions as pardo, mulato, or preto and even euphemisms like moreno and caboclo (with reference to negroid individuals) are preferred. One of the direct consequences of this course of action is the intermittent nature of race consciousness. Another equally important consequence is that the accommodation process is made easier by the "effective disarming" of the Negro.

The North American ethos trait directly opposed to this trait of the Brazilian ethos is "absolute frankness." This trait, like the Brazilian one, is equally noticeable in situations of interracial as well as of interpersonal

24 The North American Negro leader Booker T. Washington referred to the Negro group in the United States as "a nation within a nation." Cf. Park's Introduction to Pierson (1942, op. cit.). Park observed symptoms of transition, in the United States Negro group, from a caste situation to one of a "national minority". (Park, 1950)

relations in general. In the field of interracial relations this contributes to the pervasiveness of race consciousness in the North American Negro, as well as to the almost permanent state of conflict which characterizes the racial situation in the United States.

To conclude: in addition to the problems presented in this paper for hypotheses that may serve as a starting point to new research either in Brazil or elsewhere. other equally important problems may be formulated based on the same scheme. It may be important for example, to examine systematically the effects of industrialization and urbanization in each type of race situation. With particular reference to Brazil, research should be carried out concerning the influence of immigration on the frequency and intensity of manifestations of prejudice.

Comments

By James G. Leyburn

Dr. Nogueira's scholarly and illuminating essay is a comparative study of the nature of racial prejudice in Brazil and the United States. Before we reach the technical sociological points to be discussed, I should like to say that I regard it as an unusually perceptive analysis. I hope it may be widely distributed and read, not only for the information it contains, but also for the stimulus it should give to research along many lines, and most of all for what it may accomplish toward the understanding of a transcendent problem of the twentieth century.

Dr. Nogueira starts with the frank recognition that racial prejudice exists in both the United States and Brazil. There is, however, a sharp contrast between inter-racial relations in the two countries. The question therefore arises as to whether the differences in attitudes and behavior are merely differences in intensity, or whether they must be considered qualitative--an essential difference in the nature of prejudice as exhibited in the two countries. Dr. Nogueira contends that the difference is qualitative.

He characterizes the Brazilian type of prejudice as prejudice of mark and that which exists in the United States as prejudice of origin. The term "mark" seems to me an unfortunate one. I recognize the fact that it was chosen

because it is already current in Brazil; but “mark” designates whatever can be observed. Much of the prejudice in the United States, therefore, would properly be called prejudice of mark, since people can mark the difference in appearance, gesticulation, and accent. More than that, the crucial phrase in the definition is that such “racial prejudice derives from appearance;” and accent is not appearance. I should hope, therefore, that a more accurate term might be chosen to designate the Brazilian type of prejudice, and that the definition might be somewhat clarified.

The other term, “prejudice of origin,” is much better; but its definition needs sharpening. It seems to me to be a mistake to use the phrase, “a given ethnic group,” when race is under discussion. “Ethnic group” emphasizes, or at least implies, similar culture whereas Nogueira’s whole point is that in the United States it makes little difference what a Negro’s culture may be: he is still subject to the sting of racial prejudice. We shall never be able to think clearly about our racial problems until all of us can use the same words to convey precisely the same ideas. It is particularly important therefore that, when social scientists are just beginning to analyze this enormous problem, we reach unanimity and accuracy in terminology.