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5 Multicultural and Plural Societies

The concept of a multicultural society
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Most researchers in the field of ethnic relations feel that they should perform more than a technical role, gathering facts which might be useful to government in the pursuit of undisclosed policy objectives. If the ends of such policies are subject to criticism, however, some way has to be found of distinguishing the value standards used by researchers from those of political partisans.

VALUE ORIENTATIONS IN SOCIAL SCIENCE

These problems were discussed in 1939 by the great Swedish social scientist Gunnar Myrdal when he was invited to make a definitive study of race relations in the United States (Myrdal 1944). The fundamental principles governing his research were as follows:

- 1 Social science always involves something more than the mere description of facts.
- 2 It claims not merely that such-and-such is the case but that it is necessarily the case. That is to say, it not merely describes but explains.
- 3 The concept of something being necessarily the case, however, has a special meaning in sociology. What is necessary from the point of view of one value standpoint is not necessary from another. What is necessary from the point of view of one interest is not necessary from the point of view of another.
- 4 Sociology cannot of itself declare one value standpoint to be morally

preferable to another. All it can do and what it certainly should do is to make its value standpoint or the state of affairs which it is taking as desirable, clear and explicit.

In studying American race relations, Myrdal chose to ask the question, 'what structures, institutions and policies are necessary to achieve the ends set out in the American constitution, as interpreted?'

The key to any honest approach to policy-oriented research is to be found in Myrdal's fourth principle. If asked what conditions are necessary for the successful implementation of policy, the researcher should ask for a clear and explicit declaration of policy goals. Unfortunately, all too often, when policy questions are posed there is no such explicitness or clarity. The honest researcher must therefore begin with a critical review of policy goals, focusing on what states of affairs are being held to be desirable and claiming 'necessity' for any policy, institution or structure only relative to the stated goals.

What I am going to suggest in this essay is that a new goal has become widely accepted in British race relations, namely that of the multicultural society, but that the meaning of this term remains remarkably obscure. One of the first and central tasks of a Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations must be to clarify its meaning, because it is in relation to the meaning given to the concept that our various specific researches fall into place.

Multiculturalism is a new goal for British race relations. It was not discussed much before 1968 and even today much research is directed by another and quite different value standpoint, namely that which emphasizes equality of individual opportunity. In theory, if not in practice, this other ideal is shared across a wide political spectrum and is certainly the basis of much discourse in the social service departments about social policy.

* * * Much ethnic relations research in Britain has concentrated very largely on the study of inequality and racial discrimination in the spheres of housing, employment, education and urban planning. Most of this work has served to confirm in special institutional contexts the conclusion reached in successive analyses of national samples carried out by the Policy Studies Institute: that in all these spheres immigrant minorities from Asia, Africa and the West Indies have suffered disadvantage due to racial discrimination (Daniel 1968; D. Smith 1977).

There is, of course, a need to continue such studies and to locate and publicize the origins of and responsibility for discrimination. But more and more of the problems posed to us are not about equality and how it can be promoted, but about the multicultural society, which *prima facie* at least, must mean a society in which people are not equally but differently treated. If in fact we pretend that multiculturalism and equality are the same goal under different names we are creating precisely that kind of fuzziness which Myrdalian principles would suggest we should avoid.

The issues which arise here originally crystallized for me when I participated in the UNESCO experts meeting on the nature of racism and race prejudice in 1967 (Montague 1972). The main theme of the statement which we drew up was about racial discrimination and inequality and how they could be overcome. Some black Americans on the committee then argued that the statement should begin with an affirmation of 'the right to be different'. We eventually decided to exclude such a reference because, as one member of the Steering Committee put it, 'every racially oppressive and segregationist government would seize on the statement as a justification of inequality'.

It was surprising perhaps that the desire to include a reference to difference came from black Americans. After all, the whole history of the civil rights movement had turned upon a rejection of the Plessy versus Ferguson decision of 1896 that facilities which were separate and segregated could nonetheless be equal. What was evident now, however, was that black politics included another theme. Assimilation was rejected as a sign of equality. The goal of the black movement was to attain *equality of respect* for a separate black culture.

In Britain today there are many egalitarians who take a similar view. They believe that anti-racism and the goal of equality requires that all minority cultures should enjoy equal respect. The unfortunate thing, however, is that because of the fuzziness of the ideal of multiculturalism, they gain apparent support from those who aim to ensure that minorities should receive something different and inferior, the very reverse of equality. This is particularly true in the sphere of education.

PLURAL AND MULTICULTURAL SOCIETIES

One good way of clarifying these issues is to look at the theories which sociologists and anthropologists have developed in studying plural multicultural and multiracial societies. It can be seen from these studies that [the definition of an ideal varies widely], and it must therefore be in some very special sense that we speak of such an ideal in contemporary conditions.

Most sociological theory had dealt with unitary societies or with conflict within society. Furnivall broke new ground, however, with his study of the plural society in Indonesia (Furnivall 1939). There he found different ethnic groups living side by side but interacting with each other only in the market place. The result of this was that, while the separate ethnic communities were governed by the morality and the religion and the kinship order, the market place was subject to no kind of moral control. While European capitalism had grown slowly out of the past and was constrained by some kind of common will, capitalism in Indonesia involved a market place in which one group simply oppressed or resisted another. The plural society was plural in two senses. One was that each ethnic community existed separately and had its own communal

morality. The other was that the private and communal world was separated from that of the market place. The question which this raises for us is whether a multicultural society will encourage tight-knit communal morality within groups or a world of total exploitation between groups.

M. G. Smith argues along similar lines (M. G. Smith 1965 and 1974). As he sees it, unitary social systems have a single and complete set of institutions covering the spheres of domestic life, religion, law, politics, economics, education and so on, whereas plural societies in the British West Indies characteristically have no such overall institutional set but a number of ethnic segments each of which has its own nearly complete institutional set. These segments would in fact be separate societies were they not bound together by the political institution, i.e. the State. In other words, such societies are held together only because one group dominates the others. The various groups are differentially incorporated, if not *de jure*, at least *de facto*. Here again it would seem the plural society model is a model of racial domination.

If we are to maintain the model of the multicultural society it must clearly be distinguished from that suggested by Furnivall and Smith. This can best be done by drawing a distinction between the public and the private domain. There appear then to be four possibilities:

- 1 One might envisage a society which is unitary in the public domain but which encourages diversity in what are thought of as private or communal matters.
- 2 A society might be unitary in the public domain and also enforce or at least encourage unity of cultural practice in private or communal matters.
- 3 A society might allow diversity and differential rights for groups in the public domain and also encourage or insist upon diversity of cultural practice by different groups.
- 4 A society might have diversity and differential rights in the public domain even though there is considerable unity of cultural practice between groups.

The ideal of multiculturalism, in which multiculturalism is held to be compatible with equality of opportunity is represented by the first possibility. The second might be represented by the French ideal of assimilation of minority groups. The third is common under all forms of colonialism and was represented above all by the South African apartheid system, while the fourth is the state of affairs which existed in the Deep South of the United States before the civil rights programme took effect. The crucial point about our multicultural ideal is that it should not be confused with (3). All too often it is, and those who support that possibility are likely to accept the slogan of multiculturalism and bend it in that direction.

Let us now be more precise about what we mean by the public and private domain.

The notion of the two domains seems at first to be at odds with mainstream sociological theory, as most sociologists see all institutions as being interconnected with one another in a single system. This seems to me to be equally true of the functionalist paradigm as developed by Malinowski (1962) and Radcliffe Brown (1952), of the structural functionalism of Talcott Parsons (Parsons 1952; Parsons, Shils and Bales 1953) and the structuralism of French Marxism (Althusser 1969). In all of these the private domain is not an optional extra but plays a part in socializing individuals for participation in the public sphere. On the other hand the public domain is seen as shaped by the morality which is inculcated in the family and through religious institutions.

The actual history of European social institutions, however, belies functionalist theory. The polity, the economy and the legal system have been liberated from control by traditional values and have been based upon new values of an abstract kind. Yet it has seemed possible to permit the continuance of folk values and folk religions as long as these do not interfere with the functioning of the main political, economic and legal institutions of society.

A great deal of classical sociological theory deals principally with the evolution of the new abstract value systems which a large-scale society requires. Ferdinand Tönnies ([1887] 1963) saw that folk community must give way historically to association and society, the first being based upon the natural or real will, the second upon the deliberate artificial and rational will. Durkheim wrote about 'organic solidarity' based upon the division of labour, which would replace the 'mechanical solidarity' of small-scale community based upon kinship ([18.] 1933), and, even more radically of an 'egoistic society' ([1897] 1952) in which values were located in the minds of separate individuals. Finally Weber saw in Calvinist religion and the Protestant ethic the end-point of an increasingly rationalistic trend in religion and, together with that, the development of political leadership based upon rational legal authority (Weber [1965] 1930).

Moral and legal systems of an abstract character thus were seen by all these authors as governing the social evolution of the modern state and of a formally rational capitalist economy. This is how what Parsons calls the Hobbesian problem of order (i.e. of how to avoid a war of all against all) was solved. This too is the significance of Furnivall's observation that the common will which characterized European capitalism was absent in Indonesia. It is under colonialism that we find what Marx called 'the callous cash nexus'. Economic and political institutions in Europe were embodied in what one might call 'the civic culture'.

The development of this 'civic culture' (e.g. the abstract public morality, law and religion) by no means implied the disappearance of folk morality, folk culture and folk religion. These now came to fulfil new functions. On the one hand they bound men together into separate communities into which individuals were socialized and within which they achieved their social identities. On the other they provided for what Parsons called 'pattern maintenance and

tension management'. Living in a larger world with abstract moral principles was, so Parsons believed, psychologically possible only if individuals could retreat somewhere conducive to intimate relations and letting their hair down.

The ideal of the multicultural society which I have outlined above really presupposes the evolution of the modern type of society, of which Weber and Durkheim especially wrote. In simple societies morality and kinship structures had to govern the whole range of human activity. In an abstract and impersonal society a new more abstract form of law and morality had to be developed to govern large-scale political and economic organizations, while the old folk culture and morality helped the individual to retain some sort of psychological stability through more immediate social interdependence. Thus multiculturalism in the modern world involves on the one hand the acceptance of a single culture and a single set of individual rights governing the public domain and a variety of folk cultures in the private domestic and communal domains.

How does the above discussion relate to Marxist sociology and political thought? I think that the latter contains a certain duality. On the one hand the liberation of the market from traditional restraints represents for Marx the creation of precisely that type of society without a common will to which Furnivall refers. On the other Marx may be seen as envisaging the emergence through class struggle of a new rational socialist economic order. To the extent that he does one may see Marx too as envisaging the possibility of a new civic culture.

THE INSTITUTIONS OF THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

We must now consider more closely the institution of the public and the private domain and in each case look more closely at the ways in which they are likely to intrude on one another. As we shall see education intrudes into both spheres and the communal ideologies which bind people together in the private sphere may have implications for their integration or non-integration into public life.

The main institutions which constitute the public domain are those of law, politics and the economy.

Law determines the rights of any individual and the way in which he or she is incorporated into society. The very mark of the plural society is that different groups and categories of people are differentially incorporated. In our ideal multicultural society, however, we are positing that all individuals are equally incorporated and that they have equality before the law. The ideals of the multicultural society and of its civic culture are not realized insofar as any individual or category of individuals is harassed or under-protected by the police or are denied access to the protection of the courts.

In the sphere of politics again, in the plural society different groups have

differing degrees of political power. In the ideal multicultural society each individual and group is deemed to have the same right to exercise political power through the vote or by other means. This by no means excludes the notion of conflict but no individual or group should find the rules governing such conflict disadvantageous. Participation in such a political system is a part of the multicultural ideal.

The economy refers in the first place to the institution of the market. This involves the processes of bargaining and competition and the sole sanction which an individual may use against the other is the threat to go to another supplier. The market should exclude the use of force and fraud. But while it is a rule-governed institution it excludes by definition the concept of 'charity', a concept which belongs to the world of community and folk morality. What is involved in market behaviour is the more abstract morality of sticking to the rules of peaceful market bargaining. The maintenance of such a system is another and quite central part of the civic culture and the multicultural ideal.

This is not to say that a market economy cannot be replaced by another type or allocation system or what is sometimes called the command economy. Here certain abstract goals are made explicit and organizations are set up to advance them. But the best that such a system can achieve is formal justice. Here as in the market economy there is no principle of charity, which is again assigned to the folk community.

To say that these are the macro-institutions which are required in the civic culture of a multicultural society is not to say that such a society will always be totally harmonious and peaceful. The pursuit of directly political goals involves conflict and markets too break down and give way to collective bargaining and political conflict. All that I wish to claim is that it is to be assumed in a multicultural society that no individual has more or less rights than another or a greater or lesser capacity to operate in this world of conflict because of his or her ethnic category.

Any suggestion that individuals or groups should receive differential treatment in the public domain is a move away from the multicultural ideal towards the plural society of colonialism. It would mean that groups were differentially incorporated *de facto* if not *de jure*. And this is true even in an atmosphere of paternalism. This would be the case, for example, if, while other groups had their needs provided by separate functional departments, all the needs of the minority were provided by a single Department of Minority affairs.

It may perhaps be suggested here that the efflorescence of race relations programmes at local level reflects not a genuine multiculturalism but this trend towards different and separate provision. It is moreover a process which it is very difficult to stop once it is in train because a considerable number of individuals from minority groups may be rewarded for staffing it.

THE BOUNDARIES OF THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

So far I have discussed the institutions of law, politics and the economy as institutions of the public domain, and I have suggested that matters relating to the family, to morality and religion belong in the private sphere. It is now necessary to note, however, that the public domain is often extended through bureaucratic state activity in matters of the family and morality, particularly in the welfare state.

Two kinds of barrier are breached in the modern state: the state may intervene in the economic sphere through ownership, through control and through subsidies to ensure efficient production; but it also intervenes in what are essentially family and community matters. It directs the economy towards full employment so that all bread-winners may have jobs. It permits as well as directs trade union activity to ensure job security. It makes provision through social insurance to ensure that individuals without employment have an income. It may build homes for letting or subsidize the building of houses for private ownership. It may provide education for children and for adults and it may provide social work services to help in resolving personal and family problems. All of these activities involve breaches in the barrier between public and private domains. When the state provides, moreover, its provision is universally oriented. It cannot easily make its provision multicultural; if it does, it may provide unequally and unfairly for different groups.

T. Marshall (1950) has suggested that it is the mark of the modern state that it provides, in addition to legal and political rights, a substantial body of social rights and that this has led workers to feel a greater sense of loyalty to the state and nation than they do to class. In terms of my argument, however, there is an even more fundamental point: much of the feeling of identification which individuals once had with the private domain and the local community is transferred to the state.

Undoubtedly functions have been lost by the family and community to the state, although there is an argument that state intervention actually supports the family and enables it to perform its primary tasks of consumption and primary socialization more effectively (Fletcher 1966). What seems to be the case is that there is inevitably a degree of state socialist provision for family welfare in the modern world and that this is an area of collaboration between public and private domains. When the state intervenes in education, however, more difficult problems arise.

EDUCATION AND THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE DOMAINS

A modern educational system has three clear functions. *It selects individuals on the basis of their achievement for training for various occupational roles. It transmits important skills necessary for survival and for work in industry. And it also transmits moral values.* It is this third function which brings it into conflict with the private domain, for clearly one part of the socialization process consists precisely in the transmission of moral values.

Clearly no ethnic minority will object to the selection mechanism being part of the public domain. What is important is simply that this mechanism should give equal opportunity to all. Again, if the minority is committed to living by employment in the industrial system, it will itself wish to take advantage of any skill training which is available. Moral training, however, involves other issues. Insofar as such training at school level is concerned simply with the transmission of what we might call civic morality and culture, the problems arising will be small. True, there will be doubts about the desirability of encouraging competitive and individualist values, because, taken out of context, these conflict with the principles of charity and mutual aid underlying local communities and the private domain. But this is an inherent tension in industrial society and one with which industrial man has learned to live. Moreover there are parts of civic morality which are of value and importance to minorities, especially in relation to the notion of equality of opportunity. Much more important than any objection to this aspect of the school's moral role is the objection to its interference in matters considered to be private or to involve individual choice. This is true of all matters relating to sex, marriage, the family and religion.

It is arguable that schools ought not to intervene in these matters at all or to do so only on the most general and basic level. Such an argument hinges on showing that these practices do not prevent the proper functioning of the state and may positively assist it. The counter-argument is that it is of concern to the state how family matters are arranged, both because the state is concerned with the law of inheritance, and because it has to uphold individual rights even against the family.

On family matters, however, there are considerable tensions between minority communities and the school in contemporary Britain. Among Asians, for example, there is a great emphasis upon arranged marriage and the relative exclusion and modesty of females. Neither the official curriculum of British schools nor the peer group culture in which minority children inevitably participate fosters the relevant values. Sometimes schools may be unnecessarily provocative, for example when girls are required to take part in mixed swimming classes, but more generally the whole ethos of the school, based as it is on the encouragement of individual choice and free competition, strikes at the root of any tight-knit marriage and family system.

There is often a fundamental clash of values on these matters in any modern society. The notion of equality of opportunity appears to point to the rights not merely of families but to those of individuals, male and female, against the constraints imposed by families. Feminism has made the issues here especially sharp. It is unacceptable in terms of feminist values that a woman should be forced into a marriage or that girls should be denied the maximum degree of education because of some preconceived notion of the female role.

Such emphases in the argument are, however, quite misleading from the point of view of Asian parents. They fail to acknowledge the fact that an arranged marriage reflects the care which the family shows towards its daughters: the guaranteed dowry is likely to be far more substantial than anything a European girl might get from her parents to initiate married life. Indeed it can be said that the whole system gives the bride more rights than does the notion of marriage based upon random selection and romantic love. Furthermore, the assertion of freedom in the sexual sphere is bound up with a whole set of values about the marketability of sex as reflected in the media and in sex shops. The feminist demand for greater freedom is therefore seen as part of this larger package which offends against all Asian concepts of modesty and love.

This clash of values cannot be examined here. It is simply important to note that it exists and that in a society which seeks to achieve *both* equality of opportunity *and* the toleration of cultural diversity, institutional arrangements will evolve to deal with this tension. Parents may seek to limit the role of equality of opportunity offered at certain schools by withdrawing their children from certain kinds of activity; they may also seek to provide supplementary moral education outside the school.

Another potential source of discord is religion. Here, however, the way has been prepared in a Christian society for dealing with potential conflicts. Because the various Christian sects and denominations have engaged in conflicts, even in international and civil wars, which have threatened the unity of the state, most nominally Christian societies have already downgraded religion to a matter of minor importance towards which there was no danger in exercising toleration. Once Roman Catholics had been given the right to teach their own religion in schools, there was no barrier in principle to allowing Islam or Sikhism or Hinduism to be taught in a similar way. Difficulties seemed to arise only with quasi-religious movements, for example Rastafarianism, because of their strong political associations.

Wider than the religious question was that of instruction in minority cultures, thought by many to be the key issue in any programme of multicultural education. Such innovations, however, are often far from popular with minority communities, who see them as diverting energies from subjects more important to examination success, and, in any case as caricatures of their culture. The strong preference of minority people is that, unless such teaching can be carried out by minority teachers in schools, it is best done outside school hours. What may perhaps be important is that while minority children learn

about majority culture, provision should also be made for majority children to learn about minority culture, since this will foster equality by encouraging equal respect for other cultures.

The question of language creates greater dilemmas. Teaching *in* mother tongues and teaching *of* mother tongues have both been seen to be important in a wide variety of minority communities. Teaching *in* mother tongue is important at the outset for those who do not speak the main school language. If children are simply confronted by another language on entering school, their education is likely to be seriously retarded. What is required therefore is initial teaching in the mother tongue with the main language of the school gradually introduced until it replaces the mother tongue as a medium of instruction. Paradoxically, the importance of using mother tongue as an initial medium of instruction is that it can facilitate assimilation. Much more important, however, is the fact that it promotes equality of opportunity.

The teaching *of* mother tongue is of separate importance. Systematic provision for such teaching is beyond the means of most minority communities, and, if it were literally left to mother, the mother tongue would simply become a restricted ghetto language. What minority people want is to have financial support so that it can be used to enlarge the cultural experiences of the group. In the kind of society under consideration here it cannot ever attain anything like equality with the main language in some sort of bilingual state. But there is no reason why minority people should not be able to express themselves and communicate with each other about their experiences in their own language.

What I am suggesting here is that, once the inherent tensions of the educational system are recognized, it is possible to envisage a balance of control because education belongs to both the public and private domains. The school should be concerned as the agent of the public domain with selection, with the transmission of skills and with civic morality. The community should control education in all matters concerning language, religion and family affairs, for which the state should provide financial support in a multicultural society.

The other alternative is to take education out of the public domain and make it an intra-communal matter. This is what has been done in England in the case of Roman Catholic schools and, in principle, no new ground is opened up if, say, Muslim or Hindu schools receive similar recognition. Obviously there would be a danger in such schools that the task fulfilled by the mainstream schools would be subordinated to the inculcation of communal values, but it is also possible that a balance could be struck here in which the controllers of minority schools themselves recognized the instrumental value of education in a modern society along with education in its own culture. If this were recognized it might be more possible to achieve the right balance in a school controlled by the minority than in normal majority schools which find themselves in tension with minority cultures.

THE PROBLEM OF ETHNIC SOCIAL WORK

Clearly education is a sphere in which the distinction between that which is necessary from the point of view of maintaining the culture of minorities and that which is necessary from the point of view of a large-scale society is difficult to draw. Another even more difficult area is that which arises in connection with social welfare and social work. Social workers have sometimes claimed that what is necessary in dealing with minorities is a special kind of multicultural social work. If, however, the problems of minority people are so different would it not be possible for the community to be subsidized so that it could take care of its own? Alternatively, is the problem not that of *combining* professional standards with sensitivity to community values? In that case would not the answer be to train social workers from the minority communities so that they could add professionalism to their existing sensitivity? The problem of trying to train majority social workers in sensitivity is much more difficult than that of training already sensitive minority people in professional standards.

THE STRUCTURES OF THE PRIVATE DOMAIN

The nature of the sociological problem with which we have to deal is this. For a member of the majority as a society, the world of the family and the primary community is an integrated structural part of the whole network of social relations which constitutes his or her society. It is also a functional subsystem of the whole and its culture is continuous with that of the main society. Among ethnic minorities the situation is wholly different. For such minorities the family and community are part of another social system and another culture. Quite possibly in that society the extended kinship group carried much more weight than it does in industrial society and in some cases provided the whole of the social structure.

The most important function of the immigrant minority kinship group is, of course, primary socialization. In the case of the majority this function is performed by the family, which exists in relative isolation from any larger community or network. In the case of the minority communities, however, the family is part of a wider network of communal and associational ties, the socializing community is larger and more people are involved in the child's socialization. The extended family is not solely a socializing agency but also provides a unit for economic mobilization; this function may even be performed when members are separated from one another by migration. The family and kin group has an estate to which members may be expected to contribute either in terms of property or in terms of skills and qualifications.

An event like marriage is not, therefore, and cannot be solely a matter of individual choice. It involves the transfer of capital from one group to another and, as a result, the linking of two groups. At the same time the new family constituted by marriage starts with a carefully husbanded inheritance of material and social capital.

Because extended kinship is seriously damaged by the fact of migration, the networks within which family life occurs come to depend more on artificial structures which are thought of as associations, but which are actually structures through which the wider community life is expressed. In my study of Sparkbrook (Rex 1973) I suggested that these associations had four functions. They helped individuals to overcome social isolation; they did pastoral work among their members and helped them to deal with moral and social problems; they served as a kind of trade union defending the interests of the group; and it was through them that values and beliefs were affirmed and religious and political ideologies perpetuated.

Of particular importance is the role of the association in the affirmation of values and beliefs. Included in this is that individuals can be offered beliefs about themselves, that is to say identity options or ideas about who he or she is. Naturally it is not the case that individuals automatically accept these options, but the associations are flexible instruments through which new identities appropriate to the new situation are suggested as possible.

Values and beliefs, however, cohere around the more systematic teachings of minority religions. Such religions have belief systems which go far beyond the present situation in explaining mankind's relation to nature and to our fellows. As such they can never be simply functional in a modern society. Nevertheless, whatever their particular content, these religions provide a metaphysical underpinning for beliefs of all kinds and therefore help to provide the psychological security which the whole community structure gives.

To a very large extent the kinship structures, the associations and the religions of the minorities may be seen as acting together to perform a function for the larger society. It is the function of what Parsons calls 'pattern maintenance and tension management' (Parsons 1952). We may say that they provide individuals with a concept of who they are as they embark on action in the outside world and also give them moral and material support in coping with that world. To the extent that they perform these functions, communal structures and belief systems become a functioning part of the larger society, whatever the particular form of the social structure and whatever the content of its culture.

Minority communities and minority cultures do not threaten the unity of society. Nor do they imply inequality between groups. They can have their place within a society which is committed in its main structures to equality of opportunity. What I have tried to suggest is that a multicultural society must find a place for both diversity and equality of opportunity. Emphasis upon the first without allowing for the second could lead to segregationism, inequality

and differential incorporation. Emphasis upon the second at the expense of the first could lead to an authoritarian form of assimilationism. Both of these are at odds with the ideal of the multicultural society.

CONFLICT AND COMPROMISE IN THE MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Finally, to qualify what I have said about the functionality of minority structures, I believe that we would do an injustice to the religious, cultural and political ideas of minority groups if we saw them as fitting easily and snugly into the social status quo. Sometimes their ideas and their institutions may be revolutionary or secessionist. Sometimes they are not addressed to the problems of the society of settlement at all, but to those of the original homeland. Should this mean that they are dangerous and should be repressed?

I think not. After all, British culture is by no means unitary. It can be and I think should be interpreted in terms of class struggle. The working classes nationally and regionally have developed definite forms of organization and revolutionary notions of social solidarity which challenges the social order and the culture of the ruling classes. The result of all this, however, is that what I have called civic culture includes the notion of conflict. The social order which we have is the result of social conflict. I see no reason why there should not be a similar process as that between majority and minority groups. Ours is a society which has produced institutions to deal with the injustices of capitalism. Surely it is not impossible to envisage a similar outcome to the struggle initiated by Rastafarianism which seeks to set right the injustices of the past 400 years. The only belief system which must be outlawed in the multicultural society is that which seeks to impose inequality of opportunity on individuals or groups. That is why the multicultural society must be an anti-racist society.

SUMMARY: THE ESSENTIALS OF A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY

- 1 The multicultural ideal is to be distinguished from the notion of a plural society.
- 2 In a multicultural society we should distinguish between the public domain in which there is a single culture based upon the notion of equality between individuals and the private domain, which permits diversity between groups.
- 3 The public domain includes the world of law, politics and economics. It also includes education insofar as this is concerned with selection, the

transmission of skills and the perpetuation of civic culture.

4 Moral education, primary socialization and the inculcation of religious belief belong to the private domain.

5 The structure of the private domain among immigrant minority communities includes kinship that extends back into a homeland, a network of associations and a system of religious organization and belief. This structure provides a valuable means in an impersonal society of providing a home and a source of identity for individuals.

6 Nonetheless minority communities at any one time may conflict with and challenge the existing order as have communities based upon social class in the past. The new social order of the multicultural society is an emergent one which will result from the dialogue and the conflict between cultures.

Is a society of this kind likely to come into being in Britain? I think not. The concept of a multicultural society which is now in vogue is too confused for that. It might lead much more readily to 'differential incorporation'. Moreover there are still many to whom the very idea of multiculturalism is anathema and they would oppose the emphasis upon diversity which I have advocated. But it never was the task of a sociologist to provide happy endings. All I can do is to clarify my value standpoint and indicate what institutional arrangements are necessary for its realization.

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Plural societies LEO KUPER

[...] There are two quite antithetical traditions in regard to the nature of societies characterized by pluralism. The first tradition, which I am following, is relatively recent. It is expressed in the theory of the plural society. In this tradition, the stability of plural societies is seen as precarious and threatened by sharp cleavages between different plural sections, whose relations to each other are generally characterized by inequality. The second tradition is much older, and offers a conception (or ideal type) of the pluralistic society, in which the pluralism of the varied constituent groups and interests is integrated in a balanced adjustment, which provides conditions favourable to stable democratic government. The second tradition is well established in the United States, and I refer below to some contemporary examples of this tradition. The adoption of, or affinity for, one tradition or the other is no doubt shaped by different experiences of social life, in the colonies or in the United States, but it seems also to derive from the opposition between two basic social philosophies expressed in the antithesis between equilibrium models of society (particularly consensual) and conflict models of society. The difficulties that arise in the attempted synthesis of these models also affect attempts to relate the different conceptions of the plural society and the pluralistic society in a broader framework.

'EQUILIBRIUM' MODEL OF PLURALISM

The 'equilibrium' model tends to associate democracy with pluralism (Kornhauser 1960; Shils 1956; Aron 1950). Shils indeed emphasizes his view that pluralism is consistent with diverse political positions - conservatism and liberalism, *laissez-faire* and socialism, traditionalism and rationalism, hierarchy and egalitarianism. But he does not regard these differences in political

position as crucial; he argues instead that the really crucial dividing line in politics lies between pluralistic moderation and monomaniac extremism (Shils 1956); and much of his discussion of pluralistic society concerns liberal democracy, which presumably exemplifies for him the ideal realization of the principles of pluralism. Kornhauser also finds in pluralism a basis for liberal democracy. He writes that a pluralist society supports liberal democracy; that liberty and democracy tend to be strong where social pluralism is strong; and that where the introduction of democracy is not based on a pluralist society, democracy may readily lose out to new forms of autocracy (Kornhauser 1960).

The political structure of the society, in the 'equilibrium' model, is itself plural. A system of constitutional checks and balances is designed to effect a separation of powers among the legislature, the executive, the administrative sector, and the judiciary, and in this way to ensure pluralism in the structure of authority. The struggle for power by political parties and leaders is seen as the plural political counterpart of the social pluralism of competing interest groups, and as the basis for democratic rule (in the sense of popular choice among competing candidates). If analysis of political process is directed to the role of elites, then political pluralism is represented by a divided elite.

As the preceding references indicate, the social basis for political pluralism is to be found in social pluralism. This may be conceived as a balance, and a relative autonomy, between institutional spheres. Shils, in his discussion of the pluralistic society, describes this aspect:

Every society is constructed of a set of spheres and systems: the domestic and kinship system, the political system, the economic system, the religious sphere, the cultural sphere, and the like. Different types of societies are characterized by the preponderance of one of the systems or spheres over the others. ... The system of individualistic democracy or liberalism is characterized by an approximate balance among the spheres. Liberalism is a system of pluralism (Shils 1956: 153-4).

In addition to the separation of spheres, Kornhauser emphasizes the presence of a strong structure of stable and independent groups, intermediate between the individual and the state. This provides the basis for a system of social checks and balances, a dispersion of power contributing to the maintenance of political pluralism.

Integration is seen as effected in part by a system of crosscutting loyalties or multiple affiliations. Thus Kornhauser argues that a multiplicity of associations is not in itself a sufficient basis for the pluralist society. The different associations, such as ethnic associations, may be highly inclusive, encompassing many aspects of their members' lives, and thus encouraging social cleavage, divisive loyalties, and submission to authoritarian control. Hence Kornhauser insists on multiple affiliation as a further condition of pluralism. This extends the concept of pluralism to the level of individual pluralism, in the sense of individual participation in a variety of plural structures. The pluralist disper-

sion of the individual's different roles is expected to foster diversity of interests, to restrain exclusive loyalties, and to link the plural structures together by innumerable ties of personal relationship. It may also be expected to contribute to integration by promoting the diffusion of common values.

The commitment to common values is, of course, the main basis for integration in the consensual form of the 'equilibrium' model. Shils, in his discussion of pluralistic societies, refers to some of these common values – sentiments of communal affinity among the elites, respect for the rule of law and belief in its sanctity, moderation in political involvement, commitment to gradual change, and recognition of the dignity of other values and activities within the society. But the 'equilibrium' model of the pluralistic society does not necessarily postulate consensus. Kornhauser describes it as exhibiting a fluidity and diversity of value standards which make difficult the achievement of consensus; and he finds the basis for integration in the competitive balance of independent groups and in the multiple affiliation of their members.

The model of the society is thus one of political pluralism, with a corresponding social pluralism in which the units are bound together by crosscutting loyalties and by common values or a competitive balance of power. It is a model that appeals to an optimistic view of society and of the relationships between social groups. The wide acceptance in the United States of models of this type as fairly descriptive of the society is encouraged by the experience in the acculturation and absorption of white immigrants from many different nations (Simpson and Yinger 1953; Berry 1951). From this point of view, optimism is easy to understand. It is more difficult to understand in the context of the relationship between American whites and American Negroes. Here there is much that recalls the more pessimistic view of the plural society of conflict theory.

'CONFLICT' MODEL OF PLURAL SOCIETIES

The 'conflict' model of the plural society derives from Furnivall, who applied the concept to tropical societies. For Furnivall, the political form of the plural society is one of colonial domination, which imposes a Western superstructure of business and administration on the native world, and a forced union on the different sections of the population (Furnivall 1939 and 1945).

The social basis is a medley of peoples living side by side, but separately, within the same political unit. It is in the strictest sense a medley of peoples, 'for they mix but do not combine. Each group holds by its own religion, its own culture and language, its own ideas and ways. As individuals they meet, but only in the market place, in buying and selling' (Furnivall 1945: 304–7). Economic symbiosis and mutual avoidance, cultural diversity and social cleavage, characterize the social basis of the plural society.

In the functioning of the society, there is a primacy of economic forces, relatively freed from social restraint. Furnivall argues that the plural society, arising where economic forces are exempt from control by social will, is a specifically modern invention, because only in modern times have economic forces been set free to remould the social order; and he quotes with approval, as applicable to plural societies, the following description of colonial Java by Dr Boeke:

There is materialism, rationalism, individualism, and a concentration on economic ends far more complete and absolute than in homogeneous western lands; a total absorption in the exchange and market; a capitalist structure with the business concern as subject, far more typical of capitalism than one can imagine in the so-called 'capitalist' countries, which have grown up slowly out of the past and are still bound to it by a hundred roots (Furnivall 1945: 312).

The economic forces act as determinants, creating and maintaining the plural society in situations of cultural and social diversity under colonial domination. Integration is not voluntary, but imposed by the colonial power and the force of economic circumstances. Furnivall emphasizes the prevalence of dissensus: there is a failure of the common or social will not only in the plural society as a whole, but also within each of the plural sections, which are atomized from communities with corporate life to crowds of aggregated individuals. Lacking a common social life, men in a plural society become decivilized, and share in common only those wants that they share with animal creation. Even the worship of Mammon, the sole common deity, does not create consensus, for the typical plural society is a business partnership in which bankruptcy signifies, for many partners, release rather than disaster. At many points, economic forces tend to create friction, 'and the plural society is in fact held together only by pressure exerted from outside by the colonial power; it has no common will' (Hinden 1945: 168). The failure of the common will is a crucial element in Furnivall's discussion of the plural society; and the institutions he discusses under the heading 'Resolutions of Plural Economy', namely, caste, the rule of law, nationalism and federalism (Furnivall 1939; Rex, 1959), may each be viewed as a possible mechanism for attaining some measure of consensus.

The most extensive analysis of the 'conflict' model of the plural society is given by M. G. Smith (1960). In the tradition of Furnivall, he sees plural societies as characterized by cultural diversity, social cleavage and dissensus, but he organizes these characteristics within a different theoretical framework.

The political form of the plural society, in Smith's concept, is domination by one of the units, or more precisely, domination by a unit that is a cultural minority. This is in part a matter of definition. Smith argues that if the different units of the plural society were to carry on their different institutional practices, including the political, they would constitute separate societies. Since they are bound together within a single polity, however, it must follow that the formal

political institutions of subordinate sections have been repressed as a condition of the political unity of the total society under control of the dominant group: 'plurality of form in political institutions cannot obtain.' The further specification of the form of government as domination by a cultural minority is again a matter of definition, suggested perhaps by the observation that in these circumstances pluralism attains its most characteristic expression. Smith writes that when the dominant section is also a minority, the structural implications of cultural pluralism have their most extreme expression, and the dependence on regulation by force is greatest. Pluralism under a dominant minority corresponds to an extreme type.

The specification of domination by one section as characteristic of plural societies is not, however, simply a matter of definition. The necessity for it arises also from theoretical consideration of the nature and consequences of cultural pluralism. Smith defines cultural pluralism as the practice of different forms of compulsory institutions, such as kinship, education, religion and economy, these different forms being incompatible in the sense that roles are not interchangeable. Since institutions combine social and cultural aspects, the culturally differentiated sections will also differ in their internal social organization. There is therefore a social pluralism corresponding to the cultural pluralism, but the boundaries of the culturally differentiated units and the structurally differentiated units may not fully coincide, since there may be a marginal association between adherents of different cultural traditions, and conversely there may be social division between adherents of the same cultural tradition.

Cultural pluralism is the major determinant of the structure of the plural society. It plays much the same role of primacy as economic forces in Furnivall's analysis. It is cultural pluralism that imposes the necessity for domination by a cultural section. Smith writes that 'where culturally divergent groups together form a common society, the structural imperative for maintenance of this inclusive unit involves a type of political order in which one of these cultural sections is subordinated to the other. Such a condition derives from the structural requisites of society on the one hand, and the condition of wide cultural differences within some populations on the other' (1965a: p. 62). Elsewhere, he describes the monopoly of power by one cultural section as the essential precondition for maintenance of the total society in its current form (1965a: p. 86).

Other factors are secondary to cultural pluralism. Thus racial differences derive social significance from cultural diversity. They are stressed in contexts of social and cultural pluralism. Culturally distinct groups of the same racial stock may even express their cultural differences in racial terms. In culturally homogeneous units, on the other hand, racial differences lack social significance (1965a: p. 84). Hierarchic race relations in a society reflect conditions of cultural heterogeneity and tend to lapse or lose their hierarchic character as cultural uniformity increases.

Plural societies are held together by regulation and not by integration. Smith appears to restrict the term 'integration' to a social cohesion which derives from consensus. He writes that 'social quiescence and cohesion differ sharply, and so do regulation and integration' (1965a: p. 90). There is no predominance of common values and of common motivations in the plural society, and in consequence the society must be held together by regulation. This regulation consists in the rigid and hierarchical ordering of the relations between the different sections. Since the various sections are culturally differentiated, consensus is a remote possibility. Further, the subordinate sections are unlikely to accord equal value and legitimacy to the preservation of the hierarchic pattern. Thus authority, power and regulation are of crucial significance in maintaining, controlling and co-ordinating the plural society. Changes in the social structure presuppose political changes, and these usually take a violent form (1965a: p. 91).

Comparing the approaches of Furnivall and Smith, there is basic agreement on domination by a cultural minority as characteristic of the plural society. This is a matter of historical fact for Furnivall, and a matter of definition and theoretical necessity for Smith. Again, both writers emphasize social cleavage and cultural diversity as qualities of the plural society. For Furnivall, this cultural diversity is again historical fact, tropical colonial societies having brought into contact two contrary principles of social life: a tropical system resting on religion, personal custom, and duties, and a Western system resting on reason, impersonal law, and rights (Hinden 1945: 162). For Smith, cultural diversity is implicit, as a theoretical necessity, in the concept of the plural society: it is the necessary and sufficient condition of pluralism.

Major differences between the two models are first in the range of societies conceived as plural. Furnivall is primarily concerned with colonial tropical societies under the impact of Western economic expansion. Smith includes societies other than colonial pluralities, whether originating in conquest and consolidation or by migration, and whether attributable to Western economic activity or to other forces. They differ also in the approach to causal factors. Furnivall stresses the role of colonial capitalism in the formation of the plural society; cultural diversity is the context within which the primacy of economic forces disintegrates the common will and transforms groups into mass aggregates. Smith, on the other hand, imputes causal significance to cultural incompatibility or wide cultural differences, regardless of the specific content of the cultural differences.

The model proposed by Smith has the advantage of extending the perceptions of Furnivall within a general theoretical framework. But it has serious social implications and a number of critical questions must be raised. Smith distinguishes two basic mechanisms, one of integration and the other of regulation, by which groups may be held together within the same society. Integration rests on common values and common motivations at the individual level, and on the functional relations of common institutions at the societal level. It presupposes cultural homogeneity (or cultural heterogeneity, but only

in the form of variations around a common basic institutional system). Cultural diversity or pluralism automatically imposes the structural necessity for domination by one of the cultural sections. It excludes the possibility of consensus, or of institutional integration, or of structural balance between the different sections, and necessitates non-democratic regulation of group relationships.

This implies a distinction between two basic types of society, integrated societies characterized by consensus and cultural homogeneity (or cultural heterogeneity, as described above), and regulated societies characterized by dissensus and cultural pluralism. It implies that cultural homogeneity (or heterogeneity) is a requisite for democratic forms of government; and it suggests the prediction, in concrete terms, that many of the newly independent states may either dissolve into separate cultural sections, or maintain their identity, but only under conditions of domination and subordination in the relationships between groups.

Since cultural diversity is assigned a crucial role in political structure, it becomes necessary to define the nature and extent of the diversity, which necessitates political domination. Smith recognizes that there are differences in the degree of cultural pluralism, and presumably also in the degree of incompatibility between institutions. While it is no doubt true, as he remarks, that these differences do not affect the analytical status of the social phenomena as expressions of cultural pluralism, they may be highly relevant for the political consequences. This relevance seems also to be accepted by Smith in his reference to 'wide cultural differences' as imposing the need for domination. No doubt a certain measure of cultural pluralism may be entirely consistent with democratic participation in government by the different sections.

There are also distinctions to be made in the texture or patterns of cultural pluralism. Thus cultural pluralism between sections may be expected to vary in different institutional contexts. There may be a greater incompatibility in familial institutions, for example, than in religious ones; and presumably some institutions have greater salience for the political constitution of a society. Thus in many plural societies which seek to unify their peoples through a uniform system of law, institutional diversity in family law is nevertheless often given explicit recognition, the customary regulation of family relationships in the different sections being accorded legal status. This cultural pluralism in family institutions may have little relevance for political structure; or it may have political significance under certain social conditions, but not others. In order to assess the political consequences of cultural pluralism, it is therefore necessary to distinguish different patterns of cultural pluralism and to relate them to the varied social conditions under which they appear.

The problem is further complicated by the inevitable co-existence of common institutions and plural institutions. The model of cultural pluralism represents an extreme type which would be most nearly approximated immediately after the establishment of a plural society by conquest. Even then, certain shared activities are likely to have preceded conquest. Once the plural

society is constituted, some growth of common institutions, in addition to common governmental institutions, and some association between members of different cultural groups, are inevitable. Intersectional association and common institutions may be expected to modify the political consequences of cultural pluralism, and the relationship between what is common and shared and what is divisive and incompatible must therefore be analysed as part of the social context of cultural pluralism, affecting its political expression.

Social conditions may also influence the perception of cultural pluralism. To some extent, objective measures of cultural pluralism can be devised without regard to particular social contexts or the perceptions of members of the society. Thus it is possible to make paired comparisons between different family institutions, and to assert that one set of differences exceeds the other. But there is also a relative and subjective element in the measurement of cultural pluralism. Cultural differences may be magnified or minimized. Members of the society may seek out and emphasize elements of cultural similarity as a basis of association, or they may stress cultural differences as absolute impediments to association. The political significance of pluralism is likely to fluctuate with the changing conditions of domination. Rather than accord primacy to cultural pluralism, it may contribute to understanding to analyse its significance in a plural society as in part a derivative of domination. Smith sees racist ideology as derivative, as symbolizing and legitimizing intersectional relations (1965a: p. 90). In much the same way it may be argued that cultural pluralism is, in some measure, an ideology of domination or of conflict in a struggle for power between different groups, the significance that the parties attach to cultural difference varying with changes in the structure of their relationships, and more particularly, with changes in relative power.

Cultural pluralism may also be seen as relative to the systems of government in the plural societies and to their dominant legal and political philosophies. Some systems of government may be more tolerant of cultural differences than others. Political philosophies influence the extent to which cultural sections are the basis of administration, as in systems of indirect rule, or are denied recognition and replaced by other categories of administration. In a paper dealing with 'The Sociological Framework of Law' (Smith 1965b; Kuper and Kuper 1965), Smith assigns a significant role to the theory of law of the dominant power. He argues that the common law tradition in the British system and the acceptance of the ruler's discretion as a legitimate source of law in Islam contributed to a flexible recognition of African traditional systems of authority and law, whereas the French emphasis on the imperium of the French state as the source of law impeded the administrative and legal acceptance of African cultural pluralism. If there is validity to these comments, then cultural pluralism may be seen not only as a cause but also as a consequence of political domination.

[...]