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Zambezia is the journal of the University of Rhodesia and its publication has been made possible by a generous grant from the Publications Committee of the University. The title Zambezia has been chosen to convey a primary interest in the life of human societies in countries on, or around, the Zambezi; and it is hoped that the name will carry the same wide interest and reference that it did in the past. The Editor plans to produce the journal once a year and will welcome contributions in the field of local art and literature, education, sociology, social medicine, political science, history, linguistics, and indeed in any aspect of society. It is therefore hoped that contributions will be forthcoming not only from members of the University, but also from other scholars with a knowledge of Rhodesia and other parts of Central and Southern Africa.

The current issue is devoted largely to the reproduction of a series of lectures given at the University of Rhodesia Vacation School in August 1972, under the title ‘Comparative Race Policies in Southern Africa’. The lectures have been edited to take account of the change from spoken to written word, but no attempt has been made to up-date the content. The series was part of a larger programme of lectures on race and ethnicity, which formed the major topic of the Vacation School in 1972. Many of the other lectures given at that time are worthy of publication, but have been omitted from this issue because they lacked the comparative and regional focus which integrates the articles which are now presented in the belief that they form a useful record of the racial policies of Southern Africa and what people thought of them at that time.

The next issue will be devoted largely to articles on African literature and music in Rhodesia; and the issue after that will carry articles on various aspects of planning in Rhodesia.

Subscription

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*The publication of an author's views does not necessarily imply the approbation of the Editor or of the University of Rhodesia.
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Introduction

Race in Southern Africa

M. W. Murphree

The objective in the organization of this particular series of lectures, given at the University of Rhodesia's Vacation School in 1972, was to provide a comparative perspective on the different formally sanctioned policies regarding race relations to be found in various representative political units in Southern Africa. To this end several eminently qualified speakers were invited to the School, and the University was fortunate in obtaining the services of Professor S. B. Ngcobo, currently of Lesotho, Professor N. J. J. Olivier of the Republic of South Africa, Mr. J. L. R. Torres of Mozambique and Senator W. R. Whaley of Rhodesia to speak on the policies of their respective countries. It had been hoped also to obtain the services of an eminent scholar from Malagasy to provide a perspective from a Francophone area in Southern Africa, but this attempt was in the event frustrated by the repercussions that this participation would have had on the career of the man in question, a fact which is in itself an oblique commentary on the importance at a personal level of the subject of this volume to the people who live in Southern Africa. In addition to the guest speakers mentioned, a number of lectures were presented by members of the staff of the University, and some of these are included in this volume because of the apposite nature of their contents to the comparative perspective involved.

Certain points should be taken into consideration in the reading of these articles. Firstly, it should be borne in mind that the authors do not necessarily personally represent the policies and perspectives that they present; the lecture series was an exercise in academic analysis and the writers are to be personally identified only with those value judgements which they specifically espouse in what they write. Secondly, it should be remembered that in their original form these articles were delivered as lectures to an academically 'lay' audience which could not be presumed to have any specialist background in history or the social sciences. Thus the lecturers had to deliver their material at a relatively broad level of generalization which did not permit an in-depth analysis from their own disciplinary specialities. Finally, the lectures on which these articles are based are now well over two years old, and the reader has the benefit of knowledge of more recent events which the writers could not at the time have predicted with accuracy. This gives the advantage of allowing us to test what was said in 1972 against the measure of subsequent developments; additional data is now available for analysis and we can perhaps improve on the understanding that our authors provided over two years ago. On balance, however, the conceptual tools that they used, and the conclusions that they drew, stand the test of our subsequent knowledge remarkably well. The comparative approach taken by the series, covering as it does most of the contemporary alternatives available for race relations policy in racially heterogeneous states,
has in this instance provided a good base for
the study of the subject as subsequent events
have shown. In the 'slippery' arena of social
science data, where a plethora of variables
confront us in bewildering profusion, the com-
parative method still remains perhaps our best,
albeit imprecise, tool for giving insight into
the complex dynamics which motivate and
inform our societies.

This is not the place to give a detailed
summary of the points of analysis put forward
by our authors — on this the articles speak
for themselves. I do wish however to point out
certain factors which are common to the treat-
ment given in each paper, variables which pro-
vide the comparative contrasts and similarities
in the various societies studied. The first of
these factors is the set of historical sequences
which have led to the present racially hetero-
genous populations of the polities under
scrutiny. In each of these the sequence has
varied but, as Torres points out (p. 40), they
have all involved a period of colonization dur-
ing which a fundamental division in society has
been created between the colonizer and the
colonized which has invariably placed the colo-
nized in a subordinate position. Furthermore
this division of superordinancy/subordinancy
has a racial aspect in that it consistently corres-
donds to a segmentation that is defined in
terms of racial criteria. In a passage quoted by
Torres (p. 41) Kennedy states: 'The first of the
universal traits of colonialism is the colour
line. In every dependent territory a true caste
division exists, with the resident white popula-
tion separated from the native masses by a
social barrier that is virtually impassable. The
colour line, indeed, is the foundation of the
entire colonial system, for on it is built the
whole social, economic and political structure.'
Even if one accepts Torres' caveats concerning
the universal applicability of all of Kennedy's
assertions, this statement must be taken as
having a certain general validity, and the im-
portance of the way in which the colonizer,
racially defined, has historically reached his
position is something which is acknowledged,
either implicitly or explicitly, by all of our
authors.

A second important variable is the de-
ographic one, a factor especially emphasized
by Ngcobo (p. 55). The intensity and the
nature of racial conflict varies, he asserts, with
the relative numerical size of the different racial
groups within a population. Any comparison
between the different societies of Southern
Africa must, therefore, keep this item in con-
sideration.

Finally, there is the factor of culture, the
different perspectives on man and society in-
culcated by the ideologies and value systems
of the various parent societies of the colonizers,
be they Anglo-Saxon, Iberian or Dutch in
origin. Refined and modified by the historical
sequences mentioned above, these various cul-
tural traditions are held to be a critical variable
which has differentiated the course of race
relations in the different societies of Southern
Africa. Indeed Torres makes it the most import-
ant of all his variables, and asserts that the
lebenswelt of the Portuguese is so different from
that of the British and the Afrikaners that 'it
allows for contacts between White and Black
to take place on a level of tolerance and
equality that has never been possible in South
Africa, or what was British Central and East
Africa' (p. 51).

In laying such stress upon the cultural
factor, Torres is in danger of obscuring what
is fundamental to all racial contact situations,
the fact that race relations are power relation-
ships, that racially defined groups meet as
groups representing segmental interests, in
competition for the same scarce resources. A
good illustration of this fact is to be found in
Torres' own article, where he shows (p. 48)
that in spite of ostensible egalitarianism in
labour legislation in Moçambique, the non-
black-dominated labour syndicates have
managed to exclude large numbers of Blacks
from qualifying for open competition in certain
sectors of the labour market. Olivier's article
illustrates the same point. The historical se-
quence he describes for South Africa shows
(p. 24) how menial labour came to be
associated with Non-Whites, a process which
strengthened the self perceived role of the
white man as an overseer and supervisor.
Manual labour on the whole was regarded as
being unsuitable for Whites; it brought about
and reinforced a social and economic stratifica-
tion in which the Whites were regarded as
superior and Non-Whites as inferiors'. The
racial differentiation had an economic objec-
tive, an objective implemented by the manipula-
tion of political power. Thus Olivier states:
'As is almost inevitable in a situation where
the Whites are in exclusive political control,
differentiation between White and Non-White... would be a matter of common occurrence, sometimes amounting to factual discrimination. In the provision of funds... it is to be expected that the Government of the day should first and foremost consider the interests of those people who have the power to vote them in or out of office' (p. 26).

The colonizer, racially designated by self-definition in various historical sequences, is thus in a politically and economically powerful position. He has, however, also the problem of maintaining his position in the face of increasing pressures, both internal and external. As Dixon puts it (p. 63): 'Unless their interests can be protected, the minority has no reason for existence in the Southern African environment: they will lose their individual and collective identities'.

In seeking to preserve these identities various policies have been evolved by the white superordinate minorities which are described in this volume, notably Separate Development and Multiracialism. Both have their own sets of problems. Separate Development has its economic inconsistencies, which are discussed by Olivier. Multiracialism has its own conceptual inconsistencies, perhaps best illustrated by Whaley's article, where at one point (p. 32) it is stated that, 'The belief is that the co-existence of people comprising a number of groups can only be achieved when groups and communities have the rights and the opportunities to preserve their own identities, their own traditions and their own customs', and at another (p. 32) it is stated that, 'The hope is that with the passage of time the boundaries of politico-racial cleavage may become blurred and finally eliminated.' How, one is led to ask, is the hope to be realized when legislation is shaped to reinforce the belief?

Much more damaging, however, to the viability of Multiracialism is the inherent instability of a society built upon this principle. Dixon's article, in my opinion, well substantiates this point of view.

There is left, among the alternative policies provided in Southern Africa, that of Non-Racialism, described by Ngcobo. Is it a viable alternative, or is it, as Dixon implies (p. 65) simply another guise for racial sovereignty black racial sovereignty in this case? Perhaps only a further development of this particular historical sequence can yield an answer. Human societies have a ubiquitous propensity to segment themselves into interest groups stratified according to differential access to rewards and to opportunities. Where such societies are comprised of more than one racial group the alignment of interest groups and that of racial groups seems almost always to be inevitable. A racial interest group in a super-ordinate position then evolves a racist ideology to buttress its position. The racial interest group in a subordinate position then evolves in response a counter-ideology leading to further conflict, as Patel describes.

In such societies there appear to be only two viable long-term alternatives. One alternative is to make such a society monoracial. This is the kind of solution that General Amin in Uganda is moving towards. Another variant of this solution is partition or fragmentation. The other possibility is to create within the society new cross-cutting interest groups in which the racial visibility factor is less significant. There is some evidence to demonstrate that in some countries, particularly since the Second World War, this kind of approach has produced new social and political alignments in replacement of old racial ones. R. W. Mack's study, 'Race, class, and power in Barbados' (in Social Change in Developing Areas, ed. H. R. Barringer et al., Cambridge (Mass.), Schenkman, 1966, 131-54), indicates the emergence of certain status aggregates which cut across racial boundaries, even though they are aggregates of persons similar in income, education, occupation, religion and amount of social power. None of these was an integral part of the old status structure, but their presence is vital to explain the mechanisms of change. Because of the similarities in the life-style of members, these status aggregates are gradually becoming status groups, and as they do the emerging class structure obliterates the old meaning of race.

In citing a Barbadian case study I am of course suggesting a wider comparative study than that presented in this issue of Zambezic. It is a necessary one, for we must constantly see Southern Africa in a wider, global context. But to do so effectively, we must first gain an understanding of the policies that exist here, and the dynamics that have shaped them. It was towards a contribution to this understanding that this series of lectures was first designed, and is now published.