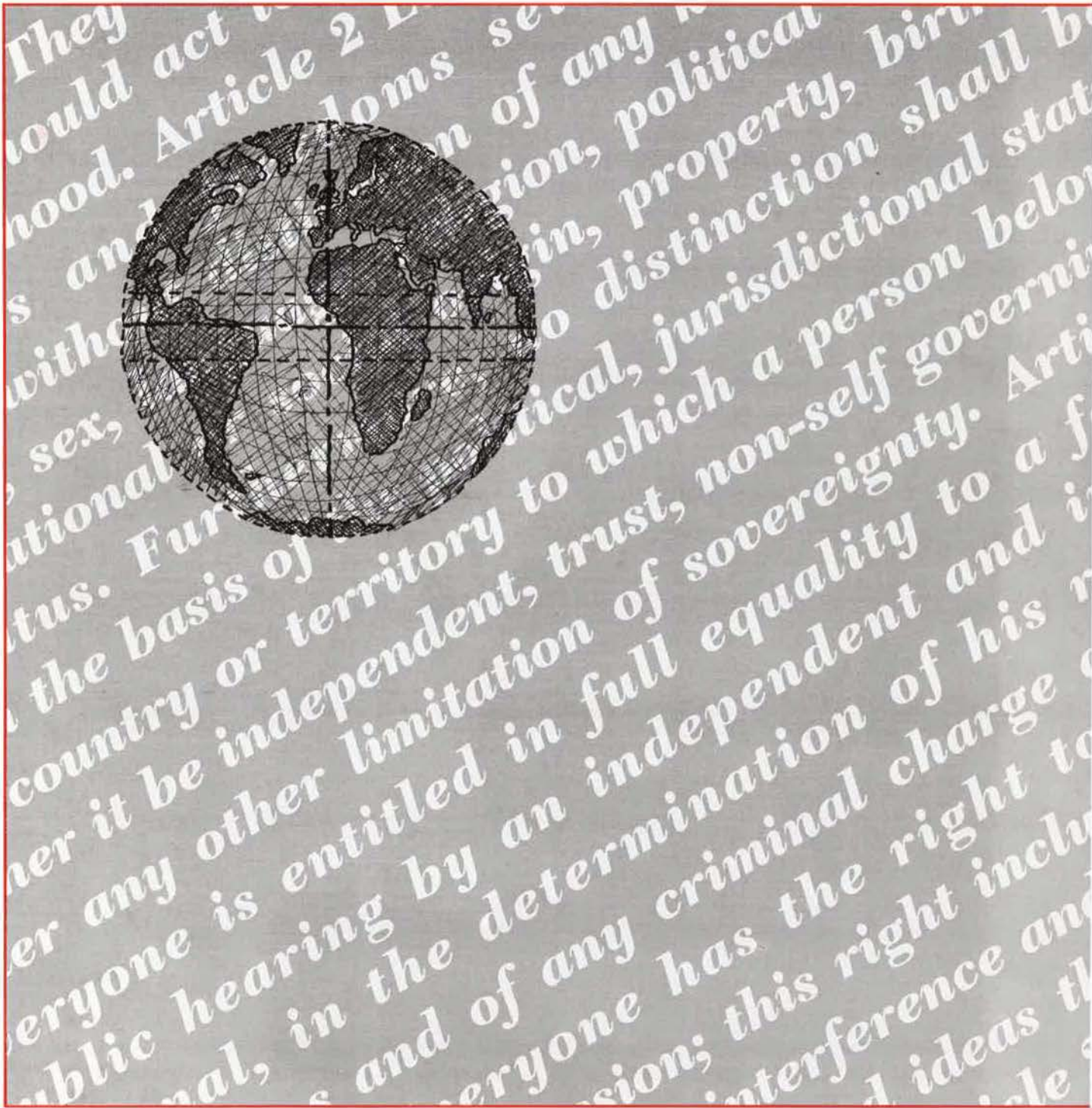


THE SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY OF MINORITIES

A MINORITY RIGHTS GROUP INTERNATIONAL REPORT • THE SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY OF MINORITIES



BY HENRI TAJFEL



THE MINORITY RIGHTS GROUP

is an international research and information unit registered in Britain as an educational charity under the Charities Act of 1960. Its principal aims are –

To secure justice for minority or majority groups suffering discrimination, by investigating their situation and publicizing the facts as widely as possible, to educate and alert public opinion throughout the world.

To help prevent, through publicity about violations of human rights, such problems from developing into dangerous and destructive conflicts which, when polarised, are very difficult to resolve; and

To foster, by its research findings, international understanding of the factors which create prejudiced treatment and group tensions, thus helping to promote the growth of a world conscience regarding human rights.

The Minority Rights Group urgently needs further funds for its work. Please contribute what you can. MRG is eligible to receive a covenant from UK taxpayers.

THE SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY OF MINORITIES

by Henri Tajfel

Henri Tajfel was born into a Jewish family in Poland and was educated in several European countries. During the Second World War he served in the French Army, was captured and remained a prisoner-of-war in Germany until 1945. After the war he worked on rehabilitation projects in France, Belgium and Germany. He settled in the UK in 1951 and later taught at the universities of Durham and Oxford before becoming Professor of Social Psychology at the University of Bristol. He also held visiting appointments in universities in the USA, Canada, France, Netherlands, Italy and Israel and served as a President of the European Association of Social Psychology. He died in May 1982.

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The Social Psychology of Minorities

by Henri Tajfel

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**From the Universal Declaration
of Human Rights,
adopted by the General Assembly
of the United Nations
on 10th December 1948:**

Article 1

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 10

Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Article 19

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20

(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

(2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

I. THE SCOPE AND THE LIMITS

The study of the relations between social groups within any society must first take into account the 'objective' conditions of their co-existence; that is, the economic, political, social and historical circumstances which have led to – and often still determine – the differences between the groups in their standards of living, access to opportunities such as jobs and education, or the treatment they receive from those who wield power, authority or sometimes simply brute force. But as John Rex (1970) wrote in his book on race relations, these objective conditions are always associated with widespread 'subjective definitions', stereotypes and belief systems. Our purpose here is to look at these various subjective aspects of the relations between minorities and majorities, to assess their importance in the total picture and to see how they contribute to the general pattern of the relations between the groups. Being a member of a minority presents the individuals concerned with the psychological requirements to adapt to the present situation or to do something in order to change it. The adaptations and the strategies for change which are possible are *finite* in their number and variety. We shall attempt to discuss here some of those which appear to be the most frequently used and the most important.

The 'subjective definitions' must be taken into account in the general analysis of racial or any other intergroup relations, since they are likely to contribute to the pattern of these relations and to changes in them. These subjective definitions, belief systems, identifications, cognitive structures, likes and dislikes, and the behaviour related to them are the special province of the social psychologist. The social psychology of minorities must focus upon them, without denying in the least that the analysis of the 'objective' conditions of the development of social relations between groups must come first and foremost in our attempts to understand the nature of these relations. It is nevertheless true that human social behaviour can only be properly understood if we are able to get to know something about the subjective 'representations of social reality' which intervene between conditions in which social groups live and the effects of these conditions on individual and collective behaviour. This is like a spiral: the history and the contemporary features of social, economic and other differences between social groups are reflected in the attitudes, beliefs and views of the world held by members of these groups. These 'subjective' effects of social conditions are reflected in turn in what people do, in how they behave towards their own group and towards others. The resulting forms of 'ingroup', 'outgroup' and 'intergroup' behaviour contribute, in their turn, to the present and the future of the relations between the groups; and so it goes on. Thus, although we shall be dealing here with no more than one 'frozen moment' in what is a complex and continuously changing situation, this moment often proves to be quite crucial in affecting the shape of what is to happen.

II. WHAT IS A MINORITY 'GROUP'?

In asking this question, we are not concerned with definitions of social groups (or categories) in terms of the economic, social, cultural or other criteria by which they can be distinguished. Instead, we wish to know what are

the psychological effects of these 'objective' factors on the people involved: do they or do they not feel themselves to be members of a particular social group which is clearly distinguished *by them* from other such groups? And what are the effects of these 'feelings' (of belonging or not belonging) on their social behaviour?

But before these questions can be discussed, we need to relate them to the solid realities of social differentiations. The 'feelings' of being a member of a group do not float in some sort of a social vacuum; and the corresponding belief systems cannot be properly understood if one considers them without taking into account their direct and intimate ties with the social realities of people's lives.

There are many definitions of social minorities which have been proposed by sociologists, political scientists and others. We shall retain here the set of criteria suggested by Wagley and Harris (1958), as quoted by Simpson and Yinger (1965) in their book on *Racial and cultural minorities*. According to these authors:

'(1) Minorities are subordinate segments of complex state societies; (2) minorities have special physical or cultural traits which are held in low esteem by the dominant segments of the society; (3) minorities are self-conscious units bound together by the special traits which their members share and by the special disabilities which these bring; (4) membership in a minority is transmitted by a rule of descent which is capable of affiliating succeeding generations even in the absence of readily apparent special cultural or physical traits; (5) minority peoples, by choice or necessity, tend to marry within the group' (Simpson and Yinger, p.17).

It is interesting and important to see that *numbers* do not play much of a part in this definition. Some numerical majorities – as, for example, in South Africa – conform to all the five criteria, while some numerical minorities – such as Afrikaners in the same country – probably only conform to the fifth: they tend to marry within the group. Again, members of women's liberation movements in this country and elsewhere would argue that women are a 'minority' in the sense outlined above, although they would obviously not fit some of the criteria, and often are not a numerical minority. The principle guiding the definition selected by Wagley and Harris (and many other social scientists) is not to be found in numbers but in the social *position* of the groups to which they refer as minorities.

This is a sensible approach to the problem. Quite apart from the fact that certain kinds of social disabilities, shared by certain kinds of people, are more important in understanding what happens to them and what they do than are numerical considerations, it would also be very difficult to adopt a meaningful frame of reference based on numbers. The 'social' definition is more important and much more flexible. For example, the separatist movement in Quebec is a minority movement within Canada. At the same time, as the political and social changes which recently occurred in Canada gather momentum, the problems of the English-speaking minorities in Quebec (particularly of those recent immigrants whose native language was neither French nor English, and who adopted English on their arrival) are becoming more acute (see Berry, Kalin and Taylor, 1977). In some ways, the French-speaking Quebecois still conform to the Wagley and Harris description as a 'subordinate segment' in a 'complex state society'; in other ways, they constitute a majority which is beginning to create some of the usual problems for its own minorities.

The psychological criterion for referring to certain social groups as minorities is clearly stated by Wagley and Harris. They are 'self-conscious units' of people who have in common certain similarities and certain social disadvantages.

But this psychological criterion is not as simple as it may appear. Some sociologists make a sharp distinction between what they call a 'social group' and a 'social category'. For example, Morris (1968) defined ethnic groups as 'a distinct category of the population in a larger society whose culture is usually different from its own'. He added that members of ethnic groups '... are, or feel themselves, or are thought to be, bound together by common ties of race or nationality or culture' (p.167). This he distinguished from 'a mere category of the population, such as red-haired people, selected by a criterion that in the context is socially neutral and that does not prescribe uniform behaviour' (p.168). By contrast, a genuine group must consist of people 'recruited on clear principles, who are bound to one another by formal, institutionalized rules and characteristic informal behaviour'. In addition, these groups must 'be organized for cohesion and persistence; that is to say, the rights and duties of membership must regulate internal order and relations with other groups'. Having already once recognized the psychological criteria that people must 'feel themselves' or must be 'thought to be' similar to each other and distinct from others in certain ways in order to be considered as an ethnic group, Morris comes back to the 'internal' characteristics of an ethnic group membership by stating that 'members usually identify themselves with a group and give it a name' (p.168).

These clear-cut distinctions can be very useful for thinking about *some* minorities; but they may present problems if one considers many fluid and changing social situations in which men and women slowly acquire *in common* their beliefs, reactions, feelings and attitudes about their special status in a wider society. As distinct from a 'category', a social group must be, according to Morris, cohesive and long-lasting; it must also have an accepted system of internal regulations. But 'categories' and 'social groups' understood in this sense sometimes represent, respectively, the beginning and the end of a long social psychological process. There are many cases in between: a collection of people, consensually designated by a majority as somehow 'different', may begin by not accepting this difference, or by denying its interpretation. It may be a long time before this 'outside' consensus results in creating clear-cut group boundaries, formal institutionalized rules and the specific features of informal social behaviour to which Morris referred. And yet, all this time the 'feeling' of membership, of belongingness, of a common difference from others will continue to develop. The internal cohesion and structure of a minority group may sometimes come *as a result* of this development of an awareness of being considered as different. As a matter of fact, it is precisely this *development* of a special kind of awareness that some people within minorities are sometimes trying hard to achieve through social action, through initiating social and political movements.

Some years ago I had an opportunity of seeing a clear example of this kind of development. With the help of the Institute of Race Relations (as it then was), an essay competition was organized for African, Asian and West Indian students in this country on the subject of their attitudes towards the 'colour' problem before they had come here and the changes in these attitudes which occurred as a result of their experiences in Britain (cf. Tajfel and Dawson, 1965). One of the most striking common features in the essays of the students from the West Indies was their preconception at home that, on coming to Britain, they would be reaching the shores of the 'mother country', that a common language, a similar education, and a social background similar to that of many indigenous British students, would ensure their immediate acceptance and an

easy adaptation to their new surroundings. The 'feeling' of being different (because treated as such in many subtle and unsubtle ways) led slowly to the development of a new group identity. One of the major social categories to which they felt they had belonged under-went, for many of them, a drastic revision. As some of them wrote, their black consciousness was born here, in what they now considered a white man's country, rather than the welcoming land of their cultural heritage. 'Black skin' happens to be a socially relevant criterion for distinguishing between groups of people; red hair is not, or at least not yet. But in principle any characteristic common to a collection of people is capable of acquiring its socially relevant value connotations and thereby its power to determine social differentiations. The resulting feeling of common membership of a minority comes, in many cases, long before the individuals involved have been able to construct for themselves a cohesive and organized 'group' or even to develop special modes of 'characteristic informal behaviour' for their internal usage. Very often, of course, the process is reversed, or it progresses simultaneously in two parallel directions: a group is perceived as separate and different both from the inside and from the outside. But even here, there is no easy psychological dichotomy between a 'mere category' and a genuine 'social group'. It is usually a matter of complex interactions between the 'internal' and the 'external' criteria of group membership, of the conditions in which the 'felt' membership of a group or a category leads to various forms of social action, social conscience, systems of attitudes and beliefs, individual or collective strategies. In order to consider this variety of issues, we must turn our attention to these 'internal' and 'external' criteria of minority membership and the relationship between them.

III. THE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL CRITERIA OF MINORITY MEMBERSHIP

As we have seen, many of the definitions of minorities include a reference to the 'subjective' characteristics of their membership, such as stereotypes, belief systems, self-consciousness, identifications, etc. In other words, for a minority to become a distinguishable social entity, there must be amongst some, many, most or all of its members an awareness that they possess in common some socially relevant characteristics, and that these characteristics distinguish them from other social entities in the midst of which they live. But, as it is clear from the sociological definitions we discussed earlier, these 'socially relevant characteristics' must be of a certain kind in order to produce the self-awareness of being a 'minority' in the sense of the term we discussed earlier. After all, in some ways all complex societies consist of nothing but minorities: professional, regional or age groups, political affiliations and any number of others. It is only when being assigned and/or assigning oneself to a particular social entity leads at the same time to certain perceived social consequences which include discriminatory treatment from others and their negative attitudes based on some *common* criteria (however vague) of membership that the awareness of being in a minority can develop.

The crucial term in all this is 'in common'. In order to understand the psychological realities of 'feeling' a member of a minority, it is important to make a clear distinction between *individual* differences and *group* differences. Although a lot of people may be red-haired, or obese or of small stature, they are unlikely to acquire an awareness of being 'members' of corresponding 'minorities'. These

characteristics, although shared by large numbers of people, retain their *individual* significance in a person's life. It would be very difficult to think of detrimental 'group' social consequences following upon obesity, left-handedness or stammering. Obviously, any of these individual features can acquire an enormous importance in a person's life; and, just as obviously, they may create for such people a number of social handicaps. And yet, we are much less likely to find in a newspaper an item which would start: 'A fat man, (or a stammerer), Mr. X., it helping the police with their enquiries . . . ' than 'A Pakistani, Mr. X., . . . ' etc.¹

Where, then, is the difference? In order to clarify its social psychological significance, we must undertake a brief discussion of some aspects of social categorizing. To make sense of the complexity of our social environment, we tend to categorize people into groups, or 'types' or 'kinds' on a large number of varying criteria. These social categorizations enable us to draw conclusions about people (rightly or wrongly), even when we know little about them apart from their category 'membership', to attribute some 'causal' meaning to their behaviour, to make predictions about their future behaviour; these categorizations also help us to find our own place in the confusing network of social relationships. In other words, to place someone in a social category often means that we can (or think we can) draw inferences about him or her on the basis of what we know (or think we know) about the general characteristics of the category to which they belong.²

The difference between an 'individual' attribute, such as fatness, and one which designates the membership of a minority, such as 'a Pakistani', is that the former is not a characteristic of a person from which *other* social inferences can easily be made. One type of inference which is usually *not* made from 'fat' is quite crucial for the understanding of the different social consequences of various kinds of categorization. It has to do with *other* characteristics of *other* people who are in the same category. 'Fatness' or 'stammering' or 'small stature' are not used as criteria in a social typology. Socially relevant characteristics of other people who share the same attribute are randomly related to that attribute; in other words, they have very limited implications for the social attributes of others who share the same characteristic.

The result is that fat people, or short people, or people using a certain kind of toothpaste, are collections of individuals, while Pakistanis or (at one point of time) long-haired teenagers, or ex-inmates of prisons are, or may easily become minorities. The three examples just mentioned are similar in some important ways and different in others. The similarities are that all these designations are associated with widespread negative stereotypes about the people involved; 'stereotypes' consisting of a number of *other* characteristics assigned to all, or most, of those who share the attribute. The differences are in the degree of acceptance by the people involved that they are indeed bound together in some important ways which distinguish them from people in other social categories.

This acceptance of being *together* in a low-status minority depends upon a large number of social and psychological conditions which can only be briefly discussed here. In many cases, there is a long history of social or cultural differences between the minority and other groups in the society. It is easy to find examples of categories which are definitely 'groups', in the sense that they conform to all the sociological criteria which we discussed earlier. The South Moluccans in Holland, the Arabs in Israel, the German-

speaking inhabitants of Alto Adige in Italy, the racial groups in South Africa, the Kurds in Iraq, the Maronites in the Lebanon, are obvious examples. But, once again, it is important to remember that, psychologically speaking, we are dealing here with a continuum and not a simple and clear-cut distinction. The awareness of being a member of a separate minority group and the identification with it following upon this awareness depend upon the *perceived* clarity of the boundaries separating in common the members of that group from others.

In turn, the perceived clarity of these boundaries depends upon the existence and wide diffusion in the group of certain beliefs about themselves and the wider society. Three systems of belief are particularly important in this respect. The first is that the criteria of their pervasive categorization as 'separate' from and by others are such that it is impossible, or at least difficult, for a member of the minority to move out *individually* from the group and become a member of the 'majority' indistinguishable from others. In other words, it is the belief that individual social mobility (e.g., becoming a teacher, a lawyer, a doctor, a factory manager, a foreman) will not affect, in many important social situations, the identification of the individual by others as a member of the minority. The second and related belief is that this assignment by others to a certain group, largely independent as it is of the individual differences between the people so assigned as long as they share the defining criterion of the minority (e.g. colour of skin, descent, language, etc.) has certain social consequences which are common to all, or most, members of the group. The third system of beliefs concerns the minority members' *own* views about their common differences from others.

We have already discussed one way in which these views about separateness may develop. This is when they are mainly imposed from the outside, when they result from social categorizations created and consistently used by 'others'. This was the case of the West Indian students mentioned earlier: they arrived in Britain expecting that they would merge with other students, that the criterion subsequently separating them from others, the skin colour, was not relevant to their social integration in the new environment. It is only after a long period of time that they must have reached the painful conclusion that, independently of who and what they were as individuals, they could not fully 'pass' or merge because of this common defining criterion. It is only then that a new affiliation — the 'black consciousness' — has begun to develop for many of them. Once this happens, a minority enters a spiral of psychological separateness in which the 'outside' social categorizations are associated with their 'inside' acceptance by the group in a mutually reinforcing convergence.

The second case concerns a minority which already has a tradition of separateness created by its cultural, social and historical differences from others. The belief that 'passing' or leaving the group is impossible or difficult may then be determined not only by the constraints imposed by others but also powerful social pressures internal to the minority. This has often been the case with religious minorities of various kinds, with some national or ethnic minorities, with political or ideological movements.

Finally, there are some minorities which, although they are aware of their cultural, social, political or historical differences, claim at the same time the right to shed some or most of these differences as and if they wish to do so. If no continuing obstacles are laid in their path, these minor-

ities may merge sooner or later into the surrounding society even while maintaining some of their special characteristics. The Scots living in England or the Catholics in Britain and in the United States can probably serve as examples here. In such cases, the psychological constraints, both internal and external, on leaving the group weaken with time, and the dilution of the sociological criteria of social disadvantages and discrimination is associated with the weakening of the major psychological condition for the existence of a minority: the perception of the existence of clear boundaries confining the group.

The story is very different when, for whatever reasons, the claims of the minority to merge if, when and how they wish are met by strong social and psychological resistance from the outside. We shall come back to this issue when discussing the psychological strategies employed by minorities to deal with these problems. For the present, it will be sufficient to say that this conflict between the push outwards from the minority and the creation of barriers by others may create, in time, a new consciousness of belonging, give a new strength to old affiliations, and it may finally lead to powerful internal constraints against leaving the group.

To sum up: we distinguished between three general sets of conditions which all lead to the appearance or strengthening of 'ingroup' affiliations in members of minorities. In the first of these, a common identity is thrust upon a category of people because they are at the receiving end of certain attitudes and treatment from the 'outside'. In the second case, a group already exists in the sense of wishing to preserve its separate identity, and this is further reinforced by an interaction between the 'inside' and the 'outside' attitudes and patterns of social behaviour. In the third case, an existing group might wish to dilute in a number of ways its differences and separateness from others; when this is resisted, new and intense forms of a common group identity may be expected to appear.

This group identity, made up of the affiliations with it of its members, can be considered psychologically as consisting of cognitive, evaluative and emotional components. The cognitive component is in the individuals' awareness that they are members of a social group which is clearly and distinctly separate from other groups. In the case of the kind of minorities which concern us here, it is crucial — as we have seen — that this awareness be associated with the belief that — for whatever reasons — it is not easy to divest oneself of the membership of the group and to 'disappear' in the society at large. The evaluative component consists of the value connotations associated with the membership of the minority. In the case of minorities which are socially disadvantaged and/or perceived as such by their members, a complex interaction between several kinds of evaluations must be taken into account. One set of value judgements results from the assessment of the minority's social position and circumstances as compared with other identifiable groups or with the 'majority' in general. The second type of evaluations consists of favourable or unfavourable judgements about the characteristics of the group. The third type has to do with the way an individual feels about his membership of the group. Therefore, an unfavourable judgement about the minority's position in the society at large can be related for an individual either to positive or to negative judgements about the characteristics of the group and about his membership of it. The simplest case would be when all these evaluations are negative and exit from the group is not particularly difficult. But when such exit is difficult or impossible — as

is the case with most of the minorities which concern us here — a whole range of individual attitudes, reactions, adaptations and strategies can be expected to occur. We shall discuss in the following sections some of those which are socially the most frequent and important.

The end-results of these various networks of evaluations present some general similarities. Nevertheless, their psychological history and its possible effects on actions and attitudes may be very different, as we shall try to show later. The major similarity consists in many cases of the development of an emotional investment in one's membership of the minority. Group 'affiliations' or group 'identity' can perhaps best be understood as blanket expressions concealing the complexity of the relations between the awareness that one is a member of a group which is clearly separate from others; the diversity of the evaluations associated with this awareness; and the strength and nature of the emotional investments that derive from these evaluations and, in turn, contribute to them.

IV. FROM SOCIAL STABILITY TO SOCIAL CHANGE: THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF MINORITY MEMBERSHIP

Let us begin with two truisms of general application: no social group consists of individuals who will all react in the same way to conditions in which they live; and no social group is an island — in the same sense in which 'no man is an island'. A social group can only exist as such because it is inserted into a social system composed of many other groups. The relations — social and psychological — between minorities and other groups in society vary continuously, as a function of social conditions changing with time and of the diversity of the groups by which the minorities are surrounded. Also, each social group has its own internal structure which places different individuals in different social positions; and each group has a considerable range of individual differences in personality, abilities, social roles, family backgrounds, achievements, opportunities and luck. How, then, is it possible to talk blandly about *the* psychological effects of minority membership?

The simple answer is that this is not possible. It cannot be assumed in any discussion of these effects that facile generalizations would emerge which could be applied to all, most or even many members of one or another minority group. All the 'effects' we shall be describing apply to *some* members of *some* minorities, and a variety of patterns can be found within any one minority. All that can be achieved is to identify some patterns which appear more important than others because they are adopted by a variety of people in a variety of groups in a variety of circumstances. The generalizations of social psychology are (thankfully) limited by the creative and boundless diversity and flexibility of human social behaviour.

These reservations must be kept clearly in mind when we think about the social behaviour, attitudes, feelings and affiliations of people who belong to minorities. In a sense, a 'social psychology of minorities' has no more of a claim to a separate existence than would have a 'social psychology of majorities'. Or rather, its claims must be modest from the outset, and they need to be based on clearly stated preliminary assumptions. This is why we embarked earlier upon a lengthy discussion of what, psychologically speaking, 'is' a minority. The preliminary assumptions on which the remainder of this paper is based

are quite simple, and they are closely related to our previous discussion: members of minorities, as defined earlier, have some problems in common; there is only a limited number of possible psychological solutions (or attempts at solutions) to these problems; the kind of solution adopted is closely related to the social conditions in which minorities live.

To these three assumptions can be added one wide and tentative generalization. The development of the relations between large-scale social groups (ethnic, national, cultural, social, etc.) since World War II has been profoundly affected by two continuing processes which seem to pull in opposite directions and yet — paradoxically — complement each other. This is the simultaneous growth of interdependence and differentiation between social groups. There has never been a time before when economic and political interdependence has been so clearly present and visible in our everyday affairs, nor has there ever been before such widespread awareness that decisions taken or conditions prevailing at great distance from our own backyards are likely to affect directly and, at times, immediately the fabric of our daily lives. This growth of interdependence — and of its general awareness — has increased the complexity and created new entanglements in the forms, nature and networks of intergroup conflicts. Examples would be superfluous. It is enough to open any daily newspaper to find instances of deep and direct mutual involvements which transcend geographical distances, cultural differences, or the diversity of economic and political systems. These involvements are not mainly confined, as they often used to be, to the secret conclaves of the political decision-makers and their tortuous strategies. They affect us directly, and are *perceived as doing so* by increasing numbers of people in ever wider areas of the world.

This growing awareness of interdependence has evolved together with a world-wide push towards differentiation originating from minorities which are often at great distances from each other geographically as well as in their cultural and historical diversity. There is one crucially important element which is common to many of these movements towards differentiation: the new claims of the minorities are based on their right to decide to be different (preserve their separateness) as defined *in their own terms* and not in terms implicitly adopted or explicitly dictated by the majorities. The increasing interdependence has led to ever wider multi-national economic and political structures; it has also resulted in a backlash of demands for decentralization coming from smaller social entities which wish to preserve their right to take their own decisions and keep their own 'identity'.

This trend towards differentiation often represents, socially and politically, a rejection of the status quo by groups which perceive themselves as separate and socially disadvantaged. This rejection also represents an important psychological development. As the French sociologist, Colette Guillaumin (1972), argued in her excellent book about racist ideologies, an important cleavage between social majorities and minorities is in the fact that, as she put it, 'a majority is a form of response to minority groups: its existence can only be conceived through the absence of clear-cut, limiting criteria as distinct from groups which are explicitly categorized and narrowly defined. Or, in other words, the membership of a majority is based on the latitude to deny that one belongs to a minority. It is conceived as a freedom in the definition of oneself, a freedom

which is never granted to members of minorities and which they are not in a position to give to themselves' (p. 196, translated from the French).

Although it is doubtful that this characterization can be indiscriminately applied to *all* social minorities, Guillaumin makes an important point about the social psychological aspects of many majority-minority situations. As we have seen earlier, minorities are often defined on the basis of criteria originating from, and developed by, the majorities. They are different in certain ways which are socially important, but they are different from something which, itself, need not be clearly defined. The contemporary trend towards differentiation represents an explicit rejection of these one-sided definitions. It represents an attempt to create or preserve criteria of group definition which are not imposed from the outside. Rather than consisting of departures from the 'norm', these newly developing criteria reflect attempts to develop a positively valued identity for the group in which its 'separateness' is not compounded of various stigmas of assumed inferiorities. Social action is often closely related to these redefinitions of who and what one is. We shall return later to the psychological 'strategies' adopted by minority groups in order to achieve these new definitions of themselves.

This powerful and world-wide push to achieve a positive differentiation represents one extreme of a social psychological continuum of the minorities' attitudes towards their position in the wider society — a continuum which moves from the total acceptance to the total rejection of that position. No doubt, most minorities are somewhere in the middle of that continuum, nearer one or the other of its extremes. The important questions are as follows: what are the psychological determinants and effects of acceptance and rejection? What are the psychological processes contributing to, and resulting from, a transition from acceptance to rejection?

(a) The transition from acceptance to rejection

We start with the second of these two questions because, in considering it, we can already begin to discuss in a preliminary way some aspects of acceptance and rejection. An acceptance by the minority of its social and psychological inferiority must first be looked at in the framework of 'objective' social conditions — but an analysis of such conditions is a job of sociologists, economists, historians and political scientists. It is therefore beyond the scope of our discussion here. There is little doubt, however, that the prime condition for the maintenance of a status quo of inequality, formal or informal, is the unequal distribution of power — political, economic or military. Two major psychological correlates of this unequal distribution of resources help to ensure the maintenance of its stability: the perception of the system of inequalities as being *stable* or *legitimate* or both simultaneously.

It is important to stress at this point that we are concerned here with the *perceived* stability or legitimacy of the prevailing relations between groups rather than with their formal and institutional characteristics or the realities of physical or economic power. Thus, from a social psychological perspective, the perceived stability of a system of intergroup relations consists of an absence of cognitive alternatives to the existing situation. As far as the minority groups are concerned, this implies that, at the 'acceptance' extreme of our continuum, there is no *conceivable* prospect of any change in the nature and the future of the existing inferiorities. Although some exceptional

individuals may be able to improve their position and mode of life within the existing situation, and they may even be accepted and highly respected by some members of the majority, this does not affect the position of their group as a whole; as a matter of fact, such individuals are explicitly seen on both sides of the boundary as more or less surprising exceptions to the general rule. Their breaking through some of the barriers separating the groups has two important characteristics: they are often still regarded by the majority as remaining in some important ways specimens of the social category to which they originally belonged; and, whatever they may be or might have become is not seen as generalizing to other, more 'typical', members of the minority. Examples of these attitudes of the majority which remain unchanged, despite the outstanding achievements of some minority individuals, go far back in history. They can be found in the descriptions provided by Sherwin-White (1967) of reactions in imperial Rome to revolts by Greek and other slaves. Longinus who, as Sherwin-White wrote, was 'a severe and inhuman legalist' felt that 'you can only control the foreign scum by fear'; but

'... the kindly Pliny, famous for his humanitarian attitude towards his servants, betrays exactly the same reaction as Longinus when he relates the murder of Lucius Maredo. This man had been a master of exceptional brutality. It was no great surprise when his slaves attacked him in his bath and flung him on to the furnace to finish him off. The household was duly punished, and Pliny, like Cassius, approved. He ends the account with an interestingly irrational out-burst: "See what dangers and insults we are exposed to. You cannot hope to secure your safety by kindness and indulgence. They murder us indiscriminately, out of sheer criminality."' (p.84).

Another interesting example, even if in part fictitious, is provided in William Styron's novel *The confessions of Nat Turner*. Turner was the leader of what was 'in August 1831, in a remote region of south eastern Virginia . . . the only effective, sustained revolt in the annals of American Negro slavery'. He had outstanding personal qualities which led to relations closer than usual and, in some ways, at a more equal level than usual, with some members of his master's family. But this had no effects upon the general attitudes in the family towards the master-slave relationship.

Thus, it is highly unlikely that the perceived stability of the existing relations between a majority and a minority can be seriously affected by the opportunity afforded to a few exceptional or exceptionally lucky members of the minority to escape the inflexibility of the system. Something else is needed to shake the acceptance of what appears as inevitable. The building up of 'cognitive alternatives' to what appears as unshakeable social reality must depend upon the conviction, growing at least amongst some members of the minority, that some cracks are visible in the edifice of impenetrable social layers, and that therefore the time has come to push *as a group*. This pushing as a group can take a number of forms, including *unexceptional* individual social mobility encouraged by visible changes in the system. We shall return to these issues later. In today's conditions, there is very little doubt that, whatever may have been the reasons for the first appearance of visible cracks in one or another system of rigid stratifications still existing in the contemporary world, the growth of the mass media of communication has helped enormously to transplant from one social location to another the *perceived possibility* of causing new cracks. This is one of the ways in which the increasing interdependence, which we discussed earlier, has also led to increasing trends towards differentiation.

The perceived stability of the system (i.e. the absence of realistic alternative conceptions of the social order) is one important foundation of the various patterns of acceptance by the minority. The perceived legitimacy of the existing order is at least as important. Daniel Bell (1977), writing in *The Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought*, defined legitimacy as 'the rightful rule or exercise of power, based on some principle (e.g., consent) jointly accepted by the ruler and the ruled' (p.491). The *Concise O.E.D.* describes 'legitimate' as, amongst other things, lawful, proper, regular, logically admissible. In the case which interests us here, that of a social order based on clear-cut differences between the majority and a 'lower' minority, the perceived legitimacy would therefore imply an acceptance (or consent, in Bell's terms) of the differentiation as based on some principles acceptable to both sides and accepted by them. This was presumably the case for some of the social divisions in the feudal societies or in the Indian caste system at the time when they were still very stable. When, for whatever reasons, this consent begins to break down, an interaction between three forms of legitimacy must be taken into account: 'the legitimacy of the intergroup relationship as it is perceived by the disaffected group; the legitimacy of this relationship as it is perceived by the other groups involved; and an "objective" definition (i.e., a set of rules and regulations) of legitimacy, whenever such a thing is possible' (Tajfel, 1976, p.298).

There is little doubt that an unstable system of social divisions between a majority and a minority is more likely to be perceived as illegitimate than a stable one; and that, conversely, a system perceived as illegitimate will contain the seeds of instability. It is this interaction between the perceived instability and illegitimacy of the system of differentials which is likely to become a powerful ingredient of the transition from the minority's acceptance of the status quo to the rejection of it. It is, however, possible — at least in theory, but also probably in some concrete contexts — that perceived instability and illegitimacy need not always be inseparable to begin with (see Turner and Brown, 1978), even if it is true that, sooner or later, one is likely to lead to the other. It is, for example, conceivable that a certain kind of social or political order is so powerfully maintained by those in charge that it appears very stable, however deeply held are the convictions about its illegitimacy. In a recent television programme broadcast for the tenth anniversary of the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, one of the exiled Czechs was asked in an interview whether he believed that a return of any form of the 'Prague spring' was possible, at least in the foreseeable future. His answer was negative. In this case, as in the case of the minorities which see the system as illegitimate but extremely stable, a conception of the illegitimacy of the situation will continue to exert its powerful influence on actions, attitudes, beliefs and affiliations in the teeth of what appears as unshakeable. The converse can also occur: a system of differentials affecting a minority may retain, at least for a time, its perceived legitimacy even when it is seen as unstable. But although we have a good deal of evidence, both from 'real life' and from some experimental studies in social psychology (e.g., Turner and Brown, 1978; Caddick, 1978; Commings and Lockwood, 1977), that a system of relations between social groups seen as illegitimate will lead to the rejection of the status quo by the disadvantaged group, there is less convincing evidence that the same would happen in a system perceived as legitimate but unstable. The psychological importance in the determination of social actions of their perception as legitimate or illegitimate is further

confirmed (at least in our culture) by a very large number of social psychological studies on inter-individual aggression. Although it would be preposterous to equate a minority's rejection of its status with 'aggression', the weight of evidence from these studies is sufficiently impressive to appear relevant to a variety of large-scale social situations (see Billig, 1976, for a detailed review). It must, however, be stressed again that a theoretical separation of perceived instability and illegitimacy cannot be taken very far without losing touch with social reality. Very often they merge, either from their very inception, or because each of them can contribute to changes in the social situation in a way which causes the other to make its appearance. It is then that, as we said earlier, a rapid transition from acceptance to rejection by the minorities of their status and of their beliefs about the 'inferiority' of their group can be safely predicted to occur.

(b) Patterns of acceptance

'Social position carries with it certain experiences, attitudes, and activities not shared by people at other levels, which do modify self-evaluation and general out-look on life . . . It therefore seems valid and useful to talk of a person's social personality; meaning that part of his make-up which is contributed by the society in which he lives and moves and which he shares in large measure with all other persons living under the same condition. This social personality is obviously different from his personal temperament or psychological individuality, which is developed by another set of factors entirely' (Warner, Junker and Adam, 1941, pp. 25-27).

This description of a 'social personality', written nearly forty years ago, is still largely valid today, although many of us would find it difficult to agree with the sharp distinction made by the authors between what 'is contributed by the society' and what is 'developed by another set of factors entirely'.

We are more likely today to conceive these different sets of factors, the 'individual' and the 'social', to be almost inseparable and interacting very closely from the beginning of an individual's life, one setting the stage for the development of the other, one creating or inhibiting the potentialities or the restrictions determined by the other (see, for example, Bruner and Garton, 1978). Be this as it may, Lloyd Warner and his colleagues were right in stressing the importance in a person's life and 'make-up' of 'what he shares in large measure with all other persons living under the same conditions'.

People who are members of the kind of minorities with which we are concerned here share one difficult psychological problem which can be described, in its most general terms, as a conflict between a satisfactory self-realization and the restrictions imposed upon it by the realities of membership of a minority group. 'Satisfactory self-realization' is a hopelessly vague, synthetic term which can mean so much that it is in danger of meaning very little at all. We shall therefore confine ourselves here to one of its important aspects. We shall assume, both on the basis of common experience and of an endless stream of psychological studies, that it is a fairly general human characteristic to try to achieve or preserve one's self-respect and the respect of others; that it is important for most of us to have and keep as much of a positive self-image as we can manage to scrape together; and that having to live with a contemptuous view of oneself, coming from inside or from other people, constitutes a serious psychological problem.

A person's self-image is essentially based on certain kinds of comparisons, and it consists to a large extent of the outcomes of these comparisons. The comparisons may go in a number of directions such as: one's expectations, wishes or hopes as related to the achievement, actual or subjectively assessed; a person's past as related to the present; one's characteristics (again, objectively ascertainable or subjectively assessed) as related to those of other people with whom meaningful comparisons can be made (cf. Festinger, 1954). These latter inter-individual comparisons can also have an important temporal dimension, in the sense that their outcomes may change, in a direction favourable or detrimental to oneself, as people and circumstances change with time. And finally, there are the comparisons rooted in the membership of groups to which one belongs, particularly when this membership is highly important and salient in an individual's life. These comparisons are then made with other social groups or their individual members, the choice of objects of comparison being, once again, determined by their salience, relevance or importance to an individual's life. We said earlier that 'no group is an island'. Because of the multiplicity of interdependent 'objective' relations between social group co-existing in a complex society,

'the characteristics of one's group as a whole (such as its status, its richness or poverty, its skin colour or its ability to reach its aims) achieve most of their significance in relation to perceived differences from other groups and the value connotation of these differences. For example, economic deprivation acquires its importance in social attitudes, intentions and actions mainly when it becomes "relative deprivation"; easy or difficult access to means of production and consumption of goods, to benefits and opportunities, becomes psychologically salient mainly in relation to comparisons with other groups; the definition of a group (national, racial or any other) makes no sense unless there are other groups around. A group becomes a group in the sense of being perceived as having common characteristics or a common fate only because other groups are present in the environment' (Tajfel, 1978).

These value-loaded comparisons with other groups or their individual members may become an important aspect of a person's self-image, particularly so when he or she belongs to a minority which is considered to be clearly separate from others and (explicitly or implicitly) 'inferior' to them in some important ways. We discussed earlier certain relationships between the 'external' and the 'internal' criteria of minority membership. As long as the external criteria and the value connotations associated with them continue to predominate, as long as the membership of a minority is defined by general consensus as a departure from some ill-defined 'norm' inherent, as Guillaumin wrote (see previous section) in the majority, the self-image and self-respect problems of minority individuals will continue to be acute.

A large number of clear examples of this has been found in many studies about the phenomenon known as 'ethnocentrism'. The term was extensively used by William Graham Sumner in his book on *Folkways* written in 1906, and has since then gained wide currency in the social sciences and elsewhere. As he wrote:

'Ethnocentrism is the technical name for this view of things in which one's own group is the centre for everything, and all others are scaled and rated with reference to it . . . Each group nourishes its own pride and vanity, boasts itself superior, exalts its own divinities, and looks with contempt on outsiders. Each group thinks its own folkways the only right ones, and if it observes that other groups have other folkways, these excite its scorn. Opprobrious epithets are derived from these differences . . . For our present purpose the most important fact is that ethnocentrism leads a people to exaggerate and intensify everything in their own folkways which is peculiar and which differentiates them from others' (pp. 12-13).

This 'universal syndrome of ethnocentrism' turned out to be considerably less universal than Sumner assumed it to be three quarters of a century ago (see LeVine and Campbell, 1972, for a recent review of some of the evidence.) An enormous amount of work has been done, since Sumner wrote, on the forms, conditions and development of ethnocentrism. The 'differentiation from others' to which he referred can be understood as fulfilling two main functions, one for the group as a whole and one for its individual members. For the group as a whole, it 'strengthens the folkways', that is, it contributes to the continuation of the group as an articulate social entity. For individual members of the group, positively valued differentiations from others contribute favourably to their self-image and boost their self-respect. As I wrote elsewhere, this amounts to saying to oneself; 'We are what we are because *they* are not what we are.'

One of the important exceptions to the world-wide generality of ethnocentrism has been found in the attitude towards themselves, their own group and other groups displayed, under certain conditions, by members of minorities. The conditions are usually those previously discussed: a general consensus in society about the nature of the characteristics attributed to the minority; some measure of acceptance, within the minority, of these defining criteria derived from the outside; the absence of well-established alternatives which would be based on the idea that the present situation is not legitimate and not necessarily permanent; the difficulty of 'passing' from the stigmatized group to another one; the fact that some instances of successful individual social mobility out of the minority group have not affected the nature of the generally established relations and differences between the minority and the others. But these are the 'maximum' conditions. It will be seen later that a reversal of ethnocentrism (i.e., the devaluation of themselves and of their groups by members of minorities) can also occur in social conditions which present much less of a drastic social division between the minorities and others. Social differentiations between groups, even when they take on fairly subtle forms, are reflected, as we shall see, with an amazing sensitivity in the attitude of the people who are adversely affected.

On of the extreme forms of this internalization by members of minorities of the 'outside' views about them has been well described by the eminent black American psychologist, Kenneth Clark (1965), when he wrote:

'Human beings who are forced to live under ghetto conditions and whose daily experience tells them that almost nowhere in society are they respected and granted the ordinary dignity and courtesy accorded to others will, as a matter of course, begin to doubt their own worth. Since every human being depends upon his cumulative experiences with others for clues as to how he should view and value himself, children who are consistently rejected understandably begin to question and doubt whether they, their family and their group really deserve no more respect from the larger society than they receive. These doubts become the seeds of a pernicious self- and group-hatred, the Negro's complex and debilitating prejudice against himself . . . Negroes have come to believe in their own inferiority.'" (As quoted in Milner, 1975, p.100).

This belief in one's own inferiority is, as Clark wrote, a complex and important issue; but it is no less crucial to understand the many and important exceptions to it and the conditions in which it is likely to disappear. We shall return to this issue in the next section of this paper, concerned with the minorities' 'patterns of rejection'. For the present, we must look in a little more detail at this acceptance of inferiority and the effects it has on the lives

of those suffering from it. This is by no means confined to the social contexts in which the recognition of a minority member as such is immediate and certain (as is the case for skin colour) or in which a very large proportion of the minority are confined to *de jure* or *de facto* ghettos. For example, the phenomenon of the 'Jewish self-hatred' has been known for a long time (Karl Marx was one of its more famous victims), and contributed in important ways to Jean-Paul Sartre's *Reflections on the Jewish question*, first drafted in 1944, when the shock of the Nazi mass murders was still stunning the conscience of the world. Sartre's reflections about self-hatred are not very different from those of Clark.

'It is not the man but the *Jew* that Jews try to know in themselves through introspection; and they want to know him so that they can deny him. . . This is how can be explained the special quality of Jewish irony which is most often used against the Jew himself and which is a perpetual attempt at looking at oneself from the outside. The Jew, knowing that he is being watched, gets there first and tries to look at himself with the eyes of others. This objectivity applied to himself is yet another ruse of inauthenticity: while he contemplates himself with the detachment of someone else, he feels in effect detached from himself, he becomes someone else, a pure witness' (translated from the 1948 French edition, pp. 117-118).

The process starts from early childhood, and evidence of its existence comes from many countries and many cultures (see Milner, 1975, for an excellent recent review). In the late 'thirties, the Clarks (1939) published the first of a long series of studies demonstrating that black children in the United States could be directly and objectively shown to have serious identity, identification and group preference problems already at the age of six or seven, or even earlier. The methods used by Clark and Clark, and in many subsequent studies, consisted of presenting each child 'with a variety of dolls or pictures representing the various racial groups in the child's environment', and then asking the children a number of questions about which of the dolls they looked like, which ones they would prefer to have for a friend, to play with, to be at school together, etc. It was found that the minority children (for example, the blacks in America, the Maoris in New Zealand, children of the various 'coloured' minorities in Britain) sometimes mis-identified themselves in the tests (i.e., they said they were 'more like' the white than the black doll) and that most of them 'preferred' in various tests the white to the other dolls. Doubts have been raised, on methodological grounds, about the validity of the first of these findings – concerning mis-identification of the child's own group membership. But there is a considerable weight of evidence, from several countries including Britain, supporting the findings about marked 'outgroup preference' of the minority children at ages from six or so until eleven, and sometimes well beyond. Even in a study on children of Asian origin conducted in Glasgow by Jahoda and his colleagues (1972), in which all possible care was taken to counteract such 'artifactual' effects, as, for example, the experimenter being a member of the majority, (it was, in this case, 'a charming and attractive' young Indian woman), by the age of ten the children shifted their preferences towards the majority. This study is mentioned here because it probably presents a *minimum* of the effects as compared with many of the others.

In a large-scale study conducted in England, Milner was able to confirm and extend many of the previous findings, from America and elsewhere, about the development of these 'outgroup preferences' in children from racial minorities (see a detailed description in Chapter 4 of his book). In a series of studies on Maori and Pakeha (European-descended) children conducted by Graham Vaughan in New Zealand

over a period of more than ten years, a similar pattern of outgroup preferences emerged for the Maori children (see, for example, Vaughan, 1978a). As Milner summarized it, the research by Vaughan has shown that the Maori children favoured other-race children when assigning desirable or undesirable attributes to members of their own and other groups; preferred other-race figures as playmates; and preferred other-race dolls to 'take-home'. At the same time, recent favourable changes in the social environment of the Maori children had a drastic effect in the direction of *reducing* the disparagement of their own ethnic group in their responses to the tests (see Vaughan, 1978b). A similar effect, which can again be ascribed to variations in the social conditions, has been found by Morland (1969) who compared Chinese children in Hong Kong with the American black and white children. Hong Kong is, in Morland's words, a 'multi-racial setting in which no race is clearly dominant'. He found that preferences for their own group were displayed by 82 per cent of the white American children, 65 per cent of the Hong Kong Chinese and only 28 per cent of the black Americans.

It is, of course, difficult to establish solid links of evidence between this early rejection by children of their own group and its effects on their later development and behaviour. 'Longitudinal' studies on this subject, which could trace such a development in the same individuals over a number of years, are very difficult to organize and conduct. We can only guess, and our guesses can be helped by what we know of the deleterious effects of the 'self-hatred', about which Clark and Sartre wrote, in some adult members of minorities. Alienation from the society at large is often the result of social conditions, such as poverty, unemployment, family disintegration, overcrowding, etc.; but the search for some possibilities of regaining self-respect can also be a contributing factor to 'deviant' social behaviour. Withdrawal from the wider community's system of norms, values, prescriptions and achievements, and the creation of groups which have their own values, divergent from those which are generally approved, is one *possible* effect (not by any means confined to minorities) of what is now fashionably called a 'search for identity'. This withdrawal is rooted in the *acceptance* by the minorities of the image of themselves imposed by the society at large; and it may result in turn in the *rejection* of this image through means which are, at best, ineffective in changing the social situation, and, at worst, reinforce the existing stereotypes and divisions.

This kind of active withdrawal from the society's community of mutual respect represents one of the transitions between acceptance and rejection to which we referred earlier as the two extremes of a continuum in the behaviour and attitudes of minorities. We must now return to a description of some other forms and conditions of acceptance of 'inferiority'. The work of Vaughan on the effects of social change on the self-images of the Maori children and the comparisons made by Morland between children from different social environments provide important indications of the high sensitivity shown by minority children to the fluctuations in the prevailing social images of their group. But there is some evidence that this sensitivity goes even further and that it extends to situations in which members of the minority are not easily identifiable, and where the tensions are (at least on the surface) less acute.

The first example comes from Israel. At present, well over 60 per cent of the Israeli Jewish population consists of immigrants, or descendants of immigrants, of Middle Eastern or North African origin; most of the remainder are of European descent. The early pioneers and the

founders of the state belonged overwhelmingly to the latter category. There were also some clear-cut social, cultural and educational differences between the two main waves of immigrants, those who came from Europe and those from the Arab countries who, on the whole, arrived later. By the mid-sixties, most of the children from both groups, who were then ten years old or less, were born in Israel. Although serious attempts and strenuous efforts were made by the public authorities to promote social, economic and psychological integration, the cultural and socio-economic differences and the underlying intergroup tensions remained unresolved — despite the clear perception by an overwhelming majority of the population of a common danger from the outside threatening them all. It was at about that time that my colleagues and I were engaged in a research project on the development of national attitudes in children (aged about seven to eleven) in several European countries. One of the methods we used to test the children was exceedingly simple. Each child was shown twenty photographs of young men, presented one by one, and asked to place each of them into one of four 'posting' boxes respectively labelled: 'I like him very much'; 'I like him a little'; 'I dislike him a little'; 'I dislike him very much' (children who had reading difficulties were helped in the test). In a second session, some two or three weeks later, the same child was presented with the same photographs and two posting boxes which were labelled 'English' and 'Not English' in England (or 'Italian' and 'Not Italian' in Italy, 'Austrian' and 'Not Austrian' in Austria, etc.). The same set of photographs was shown in all the countries. Nearly two thousand children were tested; half of them had the 'like-dislike' session first and the 'nationality guessing' session later; for the other half, this order was reversed. We found, in several European countries, very high correlations between the two kinds of assignments made by the children: photographs which were 'liked' tended to be placed in the own nationality box, independently of the order of the two sessions.

These findings raised a number of questions which cannot be discussed here. What is, however, of direct interest to the present discussion is a replication of the study which was made in Israel. A different set of photographs was used, half of which were of young Israelis of Oriental origin and half of European origin. Of the several hundred children who were tested, half were also from one of those two groups and half from the other. The general correlation between 'liking' and the assignment to 'Israeli' was one of the highest we found anywhere (it was not, however, significantly higher than in the data from England). However, both groups of Israeli children (the 'Oriental' and the 'European') showed a strikingly similar pattern in their reactions to the two corresponding categories of photographs: the 'Oriental' photographs were 'liked' less than the 'European' ones; they were assigned less frequently to the category 'Israeli'; and both these trends increased as a function of the age of the children. A subsequent study in Bristol on a group of adults who were not familiar with Israel showed that they were able to guess correctly, at a frequency higher than could have been expected by chance, which of the same set of photographs were 'Oriental' and which 'European'. There were, therefore, some general physiognomic differences between the two categories of photographs. But, at the same time, these differences were nowhere nearly as clear as in the studies on racial groups in Britain, America, Hong Kong or New Zealand; and, most of all, it must be remembered that a substantial majority of Israeli Jews *are* by now of 'Oriental' origin, and therefore the

physiognomy of the photographs could not have been in any sense 'alien' to the children.

This preference, shown by both groups of children, for people from one ethnic category over those from another represents a striking example of the acceptance by a 'minority' of their status and image in the society. The tension between the two groups in Israel is undoubtedly not as acute as in some of the other countries in which studies were made about the minority children's preferences for the 'outgroup'; and yet, the 'Oriental' children show a high sensitivity to the social context which creates these tensions.

The subtle effects of a social or political situation on the children's attitudes towards their own and other groups can go even further. The Scots who live in England can hardly be considered a 'minority' in the sense of the term adopted in this discussion, although many of them retain their Scottish affiliations and cherish the traditional aspects of their Scottish identity. The Scots who live in Scotland are even less of a 'minority'. On the other hand, there are certainly some Scots who feel that, within the wider context of the United Kingdom, they have, *as a national group*, a number of grievances which must be redressed. Although these grievances cannot be related to any marked discrimination or prejudice against those Scots who chose to live in England, there exists in the culture of the two peoples a tradition of a historical differentiation between them which favoured the English. This tradition was reflected, in a rather unexpected way, in the studies on children's national attitudes which we discussed earlier. There was one odd exception to the general finding in several countries that the children sorting the photographs 'preferred' those which they assigned to their own national group, or that they assigned to their own national group those which they 'preferred'. The Scottish children, tested in Glasgow and asked to sort the photographs into 'Scottish' and 'Not Scottish', did not conform to the general pattern: there was no sign of a greater 'liking' for the photographs categorized as 'Scottish'. It occurred to us that the *implicit* comparison these children may have been making when sorting the photographs was not between 'Scottish' and some undefined non-Scottish foreigners, but between 'Scottish' and 'English'. Three additional studies were conducted in order to test this possibility. A further group of children in Glasgow were asked to sort the same photographs into 'Scottish' and 'English'; yet another group in Glasgow divided them into 'British' and 'Not British'; and a group of English children in Oxford also categorized them into 'Scottish' and 'English'. The results were fairly clear-cut; 'British' photographs were preferred to the 'Not British' in Glasgow; the 'English' to the 'Scottish' in Oxford; and no preference was shown in Glasgow for the 'Scottish' ones over the 'English'. As a matter of fact, there were even some indications of a preference in the opposite direction. (See Tajfel *et al*, 1972.)

These studies were conducted more than ten years ago, and it is fully possible that if they were to be repeated today, when some of the attitudes in Scotland reflect the worldwide upsurge of ethnic and national affiliations, the results would have been very different. But this is not the point; or rather — if these findings were *not* replicated — this would probably lend even more weight to the accumulating evidence that the social and cultural influences associated with the fluctuations of the relations between human groups have a direct and subtle impact on the sensitivities of the children.

In the case of the Scottish-English relations, there is some evidence that the impact continues with adults, or rather

that it did at about the time when the studies on children were conducted. Lambert and his colleagues (1960) at McGill University in Montreal took advantage, some twenty years ago, of the fact that one of the major differences between the main ethnic minority in Canada, the Franco-phone population of Quebec, and the majority, was that of language. They devised for their studies a method which came to be known as the 'matched-guise technique'. Several French-English bilingual speakers were asked to read in both languages the same 'neutral' short passage of prose. The recordings of all these readings were then played to groups of French — and English-speaking Canadians who were informed that each of the passages was read by a different person. The study was presented as part of a research concerned with the ways in which personal characteristics of people are assessed from their voices alone. In this way, two interesting sets of data could be obtained simultaneously. First, it was possible to see if there were any differences in the judgements of the *same* person when he spoke French or English. And, second, the method offered the possibility of a direct comparison of these differences as seen by the groups of the Francophone and the Anglophone 'judges'.

The results of these initial studies, replicated several times in later years, were of undoubted interest from the point of view of the minority's acceptance of a general 'social image' of themselves. The English group found the English voices superior to the French in seven traits out of the total of fourteen about which they were asked to pass their judgement. These were: height, good looks, intelligence, dependability, kindness, ambition and character. They found the French superior to the English in sense of humour only. The French group found the *English* voices superior on *ten* traits out of fourteen. In addition to height, good looks, intelligence, dependability, ambition and character, these included leadership, self-confidence, sociability and likeability. They considered the French voices as superior only in religiousness and kindness. The detail of the judgements is probably not very important, nor — as in the case of the Glasgow children — is it likely that they would be the same today, at the height of the development of the Quebecois separatism. The general pattern is, however, important, since it showed the transposition of the social image of the minority, prevailing in the 'fifties, onto its members' comparative assessment of their fellows' *personal* characteristics. Very similar results were obtained in subsequent studies, employing the same method, in which clear-cut differences in accents were used instead of different languages. This was the case, for example, for groups of Jews in the United States and also, in a study conducted by Cheyne in 1970 in this country, in which he used Scottish and English accents in his recordings. It is equally interesting to note that a similar study conducted some years ago in Tel Aviv and Jaffa amongst Arab and Jewish high school pupils yielded very different findings: each group judged themselves to be invariably superior to the other.

It would be a mistake, however, to exaggerate the importance of all these findings, whether concerned with children or with adults, as indicators of serious problems of *personal* identity amongst members of minorities. Their common element is that the judgements made in these studies by members of minorities about their own groups are requested in contexts which are directly and explicitly comparative with the majority. There is, as we have seen, substantial evidence that in such conditions an unfavourable self-image has come to be internalized. But not all 'natural' social contexts include the need or the requirement for

intergroup comparisons, and a person's idea about himself or herself is at least as much (and probably much more) dependent upon continuous and daily interactions with individuals from the same social group. When this group happens to have its own strongly integrated norms, traditions, values and functions, a 'negative' self-image elicited in comparisons with other groups need not by any means become the central focus of an individual's identity. This is why one can remain happy and contented inside a ghetto, as long as this ghetto has not become socially disintegrated. An excellent example of this can be found in the Jewish *shtetls* which led, at the turn of the century, their isolated lives in Russia and elsewhere in eastern Europe. The internal norms and cultural prescriptions of these small communities together with their tremendous power in guiding the lives of their members have been reflected and beautifully transmitted in the short stories of Sholem Aleichem and other writers of the period. The 'deviant' groups, to which we referred earlier, can serve as another contemporary example, providing that they can manage to create a mini-culture which is powerful enough to protect the self-respect of their members from the cold winds of disapproval blowing from the outside.

But it remains true that, fundamentally, this internal minority protection of individual self-respect is yet another facet of the minority's *acceptance* of the status quo. It is, as we have said earlier, a form of withdrawal from the society at large, a delicately poised and hard-won equilibrium which can be easily destroyed. In this kind of a situation, a community (or a deviant group) must manage to be virtually sealed off from the outside world in those aspects of their lives which really matter to them; and, in turn, those aspects of their lives which really matter are bound to be selected, in the long run, on the criterion of their safe insulation from comparability with other people who become inherently different, and thus partly irrelevant. The question is: for how long can they remain irrelevant unless the difficult achievement of social and psychological isolation is maintained? When it cannot be, the practical implications of a comparative (and negative) self-image come again to the fore. Irwin Katz, an American social psychologist, has done a good deal of work on the academic achievement of black pupils in segregated and mixed schools. Some of his earlier conclusions, based on the work done in the 'sixties, may well have to be revised today; but this does not detract from their importance in suggesting what happens in situations of intergroup contact and comparison, when comparisons have to be made in terms of criteria generally accepted by the society. Here are some examples: '... where feelings of inferiority are acquired by Negro children outside the school, minority-group newcomers in integrated classrooms are likely to have a low expectancy of academic success; consequently, their achievements motivation should be low'. Or: 'Experiments on Negro male college students by the author of his associates have shown that in work teams composed of Negro and white students of similar intellectual ability, Negroes are passively compliant, rate their own performance as inferior when it is not, and express less satisfaction with the team experience than do their white companions.' Or again: 'Among Florida Negro college students, anticipated intellectual comparison with Negro peers was found to produce a higher level of verbal performance than anticipated comparison with white peers, in accordance with the assumption that the subjective probability of success was lower when the expected comparison was with whites' (Katz, 1968, pp. 283 - 284).

There exists, however, a half-way house between the two extremes, one of which is the psychological isolation from the surrounding society, such as was the case of a Jewish *shtetl* in Tsarist Russia or for some deviant groups in today's large cities, and the other the damaging acceptance by the minority of the majority's prevailing images. As we have seen, the first of these extremes is a psychological withdrawal from comparisons with others which is made possible by the development of separate and socially powerful criteria of personal worth; the second is the result of a social (and consequently, psychological) disintegration of a group and of its inability to create an articulate social entity with its own forms of interaction, its own values, norms and prescriptions. Needless to say, most of the minorities fall somewhere between these two extremes. Their identity is then simultaneously determined by the socially prevailing views of the majority and by the psychological effects of their own cultural and social organization. Cases of that nature are still near to the 'acceptance' end of our acceptance-rejection continuum. The continuous and daily interactions with the outside world, and the consequent *psychological* participation of a group in the system of values and the network of stereotypes of the society at large create a degree of acceptance by the minority of its deleterious image; at the same time, *some* measure of protection is offered by the social and cultural links surviving within the group. A good example of this is provided in David Milner's research in England, in which he compared the negative self-images of the West Indians and the Asian children. His description of the differences in the cultural background and the corresponding initial attitudes toward the host society is as follows:

'It seemed likely that the British component of the West Indians' culture, and the "white bias" in the racial ordering of West Indian society, would enhance their children's orientation and positive feeling towards whites in this country. In addition, the West Indians' original aspirations to integrate ensured more contact with the white community - and its hostility - than was experienced by the Asian community. Not only did the Asians' detached stance *vis-a-vis* the host community insulate them to some extent, they also had entirely separate cultural traditions which provide a strong sense of identity. In the American studies many black children internationalized the racial values that were imposed on them by the dominant white group, such that they had difficulty in identifying with their own group, and were very positively disposed towards whites. For the reasons discussed, it seemed likely that this response to racism would be more prevalent among West Indian children than among the Asian children.' (pp.117-118).

The comparisons, in Milner's work, between the two categories of children showed that 'while the Asian and the West Indian children equally reproduce white values about their groups, they do not equally accept the implications for themselves... the derogatory personal identity is less easily imposed on Asian children. It is as though the same pressure simply meets with more resistance' (p.138).

And herein lies the problem. For how long can this partial resistance be maintained in succeeding generations? The cultural pressures from the surrounding society are bound to become more effective, the cultural separateness to decrease. The Asian minorities in this country, or any other minorities anywhere which live in the kind of half-way house to which we previously referred, have at their disposal a limited number of *psychological* solutions to their problems of self-respect and human dignity. Some of these solutions are, at least for the present and the foreseeable future, simply not realistic. The first is that of a *complete* assimilation, of merging in the surrounding society. This is not possible as long as the attitudes of prejudice and the realities of discrimination remain what they are. The second is that of a cultural and psychological insulation from

others. This again is not possible, for two reasons at least. One is that the new generations cannot be expected to remain immune to the increasing pressures of the surrounding cultural values and social influences. At the same time, the economic and social requirements of everyday life make it both impossible and undesirable to withdraw from the network of entanglements with the outside society together with its pecking order of stereotyped images. Thus, in the last analysis, 'psychological' solutions must give precedence to social and economic changes. Minority groups cannot respond to the outside images by the creation of their own counter-images floating in a social vacuum. They must rely on the creation of social changes from which new psychological solutions can derive. Some of the 'patterns of rejection', which we shall discuss next, are relevant to this issue.

(c) Patterns of rejection

The focus of much of the previous discussion was on the effects that the psychological status of minorities has on the ideas of personal worth and dignity, on the self-image and the self-respect of their individual members. As we have seen, these effects exist with particular clarity in situations which elicit direct comparisons between members of the minority and the majority. But there is little doubt that they do not entirely disappear even in the psychologically 'safer' social interactions confined to the minority itself and its separate cultural prescriptions.

Underlying this centrality of a positive self-image and of its erosion was the conception that *social comparisons* are crucial in the development of our image of ourselves. In the relations between minorities and majorities (or between any other distinct social groups), the comparisons between the groups, or between individuals clearly identified as belonging to one group or another, make an important contribution to this image of oneself. In situations of considerable intergroup tension or conflict this can become, for a time, one of the most important facets of this image. This is one of the reasons why comparisons which are made in such situations are often associated with powerful emotions. Even differences between groups which might be emotionally neutral to begin with may then acquire strong value connotations and a powerful emotional charge. This is often the case with nationalism. Almost anything can be thrown into this boiling stew: differences "between languages, landscapes, flags, anthems, postage stamps, football teams . . . become endowed with emotional significance because they relate to a superordinate value' (Tajfel, 1974, p.75). The importance of these intergroup comparisons is also well exemplified in the large number of industrial conflicts which have to do with differentials. As Elliot Jaques exclaimed in desperation in a letter to *The Times* (Oct. 29, 1974): 'Is it not apparent to all that the present wave of disputes has to do with relativities, relativities and nothing but relativities?' We found in some laboratory experiments (e.g., Tajfel, 1970) that the establishment of a *difference* between two groups in favour of their own was often more important to the schoolboys with whom we worked than the absolute amounts of monetary rewards that they could get. Starting from the results of these studies, Brown (1978) found a similar pattern when doing research in a large factory with shop stewards belonging to different unions. As we know from common experience and from many sociological and psychological studies, 'relative deprivation' can be, within limits, a more important determinant of attitudes and social behaviour than are the 'absolute' levels of deprivation

(see Runciman, 1972; Tajfel, 1978 for more extensive discussions of this issue).

As we have seen in the previous section, the 'comparative' self-image of members of minorities is often derogatory. The question is: what can they do about it? This is by no means a 'theoretical' or an 'academic' issue. In the preface to his book on *Ethos and Identity*, Epstein (1978) recently wrote:

' . . . I found myself asking how such groups manage to survive as groups at all, and why they should strive so consciously to retain their sense of group identity. At the same time, I am keenly aware that if I achieved any insight into these situations it was because they touched some chord of response that echoed my own ethnic experience as a Jew of the Diaspora. Reflecting on all this, the one major conviction that emerged was the powerful emotional charge that appears to surround or underlie so much of ethnic behaviour . . . ' (p.XI).

There is little doubt that personal problems of worth, dignity and self-respect involved in being a member of a minority, and shared with others who are in the same situation, are an important ingredient of this high 'emotional charge'. I have defined elsewhere the 'social identity' of individuals as consisting of those aspects of their self-image and its evaluation which derive from membership of social groups that are salient to them; and, in turn, much of that self-image and of the values attached to it derive from comparisons with other groups which are present in the social environment. These comparisons are rarely 'neutral'. They touch a 'chord of response' which echoes the past, the present and a possible future of 'inferiority'. It is therefore not surprising that emotions and passions will rise in the defence of one's right to have and keep as much self-respect as has the next man or woman.

As we asked earlier: what can the minorities do about it? One obvious answer for some of their members is assimilation to the majority, whenever this is possible. Assimilation, as Simpson (1968) wrote,

' . . . is a process in which persons of diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds come to interact, free of these constraints, in the life of the larger community. Wherever representatives of different racial and cultural groups live together, some individuals of subordinate status (whether or not they constitute a numerical minority) become assimilated. Complete assimilation would mean that no separate social structures based on racial or ethnic concepts remained' (p.438).

There are many variants of this process, psychologically as well as socially. From the psychological point of view, a distinction can be made between at least four kinds of assimilation. The first, which would present no particular problems to the assimilating individuals, is when there are no constraints to social mobility imposed by either of the two groups involved. But whenever this happens (as has been the case, for example, for some immigrant ethnic groups in the United States), the minority ceases to exist as such, sooner or later. There is a psychological merging in which, even when the defining label is maintained and invoked from time to time, it has lost most of the characteristics which define a 'minority', both psychologically and socially. Individual assimilation has then become the assimilation of a social group as a whole, the case to which Simpson referred as the disappearance of 'separate social structures based on racial or ethnic concepts'.

The second kind of assimilation presents more difficulties to the assimilating individual. This is when, although the people who moved from one group to another may well interact in their new setting in many ways which are 'free of constraints', they have not been fully accepted by the majority. Paradoxically, they are regarded as still typifying

in some important ways the unpleasant characteristics attributed to their group and at the same time as 'exceptions' to the general rule. A classic example of this kind of situation was provided between the late eighteenth century and very recent times in some European countries with a strong tradition of antisemitism. Despite this, a number of Jews managed to break through the barriers of prejudice and discrimination, and some even achieved very high positions in the 'outside' society. But the breaking of the barriers by some did not succeed in breaking them for the group as a whole nor did it eliminate the widespread prejudice. At the turn of the century, the Dreyfus affair in France provided a dramatic case history of this inherent ambiguity. This was one of the turning points for the Viennese journalist Herzl, one of the founders of Zionism, in his search for alternative solutions for the Jewish minorities in Europe.

Dreyfus was probably a good example of the psychological problems encountered in this kind of assimilation. His identification with the majority, as a Frenchman and an officer in the army, not different from any other Frenchman, was total. A little later, the German-Jewish industrialist and statesman Rathenau, who was assassinated by right wing nationalists in 1922, when he was minister for foreign affairs, was able to write, no more than twenty years before Hitler's accession to power: '... what made the conquerors the masters, what made the few capable of subduing the many was fearlessness, toughness and a purer spirit; and there is no way of preserving these advantages during period of tedious inaction or of protecting the nobler blood against interbreeding... Thus has the earth squandered its noblest racial stocks...' (as quoted by James Joll in the *T.L.S.*, 25 Aug., 1978).

We cannot speculate here about Dreyfus' or Rathenau's possible emotional problems caused by their total adherence to their identity as members of the majority. It is, however, a fair assumption that, as long as the subordinate minority is conceived by others (and sometimes also from the inside) as inherently different and separate, assimilation, even when free of many constraints, is likely to create personal conflicts and difficulties. One of its well-known effects, is the leaning-over backwards in the acceptance of the majority's derogatory views about the minority; and this is probably another determinant of some of the Jewish 'self-hatred' to which we referred in the preceding section of this paper. A more drastic example can be found in the acceptance by some inmates of concentration camps during World War II, who belonged to many ethnic or national groups, of the attitudes, values and behaviour of their jailers.

What is more important from the point of view of wider generalizations about the social psychology of minorities is that, in conditions of marked prejudice and discrimination, the assimilation of the few does not solve the problems of the many. It is an uneasy compromise, in those who have succeeded in assimilating, between the acceptance and the rejection of their inferior status as members of the minority. Rejection, because they have attempted to leave behind them some at least of the distinguishing marks of their 'inferiority'; acceptance, because they must often do this by achieving and emphasizing a psychological distance between themselves and other members of their previous group. It needs to be stressed once again that this kind of compromise remains uneasy and full of potential personal conflicts only when no more than a small back door is open for a passage from one group to another, when most of the members of the subordinate groups are

firmly kept in their place, and when the existing prejudice and discrimination are not markedly affected by the presence of a few 'exceptions' who are often considered to 'prove the rule' in one way or another. It is because of these personal conflicts that the French colonial policies of selective cultural assimilation, based on stringent criteria for deciding which members of the native populations could be considered as more or less French, proved to be a breeding ground for discontent and revolt amongst some of those who passed the tests. Frantz Fanon was one of the more famous examples; so were Aimé Césaire, a poet from Martinique, and Léopold Senghor, also a poet and later the President of Senegal, who both developed the idea of *négritude*, a positive conception of Negro identity.

The third kind of assimilation presents problems similar to the previous one but made more acute by the fact that it is 'illegitimate'. In the case of Dreyfus, Rathenau, Fanon, Césaire or Senghor, everyone knew that they were Jews or Negroes. Hiding one's origins in order to 'pass' is a different matter altogether. The innocuous forms of it are quite frequent in countries such as Britain or the United States where changing one's name does not present much of a legal difficulty and can often get one off the hook of being foreign born or of foreign descent. There was a time in England when a physician called Goldsmith could get more easily his first job in a hospital than one called Goldschmidt. The same was true in, for example, some banks and some of the more 'exclusive' large commercial emporia. It is, however, a very different matter when 'passing' is illegal, as it is in South Africa or was in Nazi Germany, or when it must imply a total and very careful hiding of one's origins, as in the case of light-skinned Negroes in the United States.

The 'illegitimate' forms of assimilation lead to an identification with the new group and a rejection of the old one which are sometimes even stronger than in many cases of 'legitimate' assimilation. Paradoxically, this might occur even when assimilation is in the opposite direction — from the majority to the minority. Arthur Miller, in his novel *Focus* written in the early 'forties, provided a beautifully analyzed fictitious account, and the American journalist J. H. Griffin supplemented it with a counterpart of real experiences in his book *Black Like Me* (1962). The hero of Miller's story is a fairly antisemitic 'average' American who must start wearing spectacles because of his declining sight. This makes him look like a Jew. He finds it impossible to persuade anyone around him that he has not been until now a wolf in sheep's clothing, a Jew who successfully 'passed'. His whole life is changed as a result, he encounters discrimination in many of his basic daily activities, and for a time struggles vainly proclaiming his innocence. He finally gives up and makes a conscious choice of a strong Jewish identification. Poetic licence allowed Miller to use a few initial improbabilities to set his stage. But his subsequent analysis rings true and it is confirmed by the account of Griffin who chemically darkened his skin in order to see, from the other side of the fence, what it was like, in the late 'fifties, to *feel* a black in a Southern state. His subsequent attitudes were not very different from those described by Miller.

To sum up in returning to the more usual forms of 'illegitimate' assimilation: the threats and insecurities of their new lives undoubtedly contribute to the attitudes of those who managed to 'pass' and constantly face the danger of being unmasked. One of the precautions they can take is to proclaim their dislike of the 'inferior' minority. It does

not take much to set this pattern into motion. In a recent experimental study (soon to be published) conducted in a classroom with schoolgirls, Glynis Breakwell managed to create two groups of different status, the assignment to higher or lower status being based on the level of performance in a fairly trivial task. At the same time, it was possible to cheat in order to find oneself in the 'higher' group. The 'illegitimate' members of the higher group showed, in some of the subsequent tests, a more marked differentiation in favour of that group than did its legitimate members. It must be hoped that the study also served as a useful educational experience for its participants: complete anonymity was preserved, but in a subsequent 'debriefing' session the purpose and implications of the study were carefully explained to them.

The fourth kind of assimilation is so different from those previously discussed that it is probably inappropriate to use the same term in referring to it. Some sociologists call it 'accommodation', and John Turner (1975) discussed its social psychological aspects in terms of what he called 'social competition'. The ambiguities and conflicts of the simultaneous acceptance and rejection of minority status, present in the second and third forms of assimilation which we have just discussed, do not usually make their appearance here. 'Accommodation' or 'social competition' consist of the minority's attempts to retain their own identity and separateness while at the same time becoming more like the majority in their opportunities of achieving goals and marks of respect which are generally valued by the society at large. There are usually two important preliminary conditions, one or both of which are necessary for this 'social competition' to occur. The first is that the previous successful assimilation by *some* individual members of the minority has not affected, or has not appeared to affect, the *general* inferior status of the minority and the prevailing negative attitudes towards it. The second consists of the existence of strong separate cultural norms and traditions in the minority which many or most of its members are not willing to give up. The first of these conditions cannot remain for long unrelated to the attempts, within the minority, of creating the second; we shall return later to a discussion of some forms of this relationship. From the psychological point of view, their common elements are, once again, in the attempts to create or preserve a self-respect associated with being a member of a social group which does not get its due share of respect from others; and in trying to achieve this, *in part*, through establishing comparisons with others which will not remain unfavourable on the criteria which are commonly valued by all groups in the society.

The development of black social movements in the United States since World War II provides an example of several of these processes simultaneously at work. Some of the earlier leaders of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (N.A.A.C.P.) believed that the way ahead was in the assimilation in the wider society of as many blacks as possible and that this would finally lead to the label 'black' becoming more or less irrelevant to a person's status or social image. Although there is no doubt that this kind of integration has made great strides in the last thirty years or so, both socially and psychologically, it is also true that prejudice, discrimination and the differences in status and opportunities have by no means disappeared. An important aspect of the militant black movements of the 'sixties has been a new affirmation of black identity best reflected in the famous slogan: 'Black is beautiful'. There is the affirmation here that the black minority does not have to become like the others in order to 'merit' the granting

to it or equal economic and social chances and opportunities.

On the contrary, there is a stress on a separate cultural identity, traditions and roots which found its most popular expression in the novel of Alex Haley and the television film based on it. There is also the rejection of certain value judgements which have hitherto been implicitly accepted inside the minority. This is the case with the negative cultural connotations of blackness. It is not only that having black skin does not matter and should be forgotten' in a genuinely free human interaction. The declared aim is not to neutralize these traditional and deeply implanted value judgements but to reverse them.

In other words, this is a movement towards 'equal but different'; though it would be highly misleading, for a number of obvious reasons, to equate it with the similar slogan of the South African apartheid. Underlying this kind of social movement (of which there are by now many examples amongst minorities all over the world) are certain psychological issues which need further discussion.

We have previously characterized 'social competition' as based on the minority's aims to achieve parity with the majority; but in other ways, the minority aims to remain different. As we have seen, in some cases, such as for the black Americans, this kind of movement develops after the attempts to obtain a straightforward integration into the wider society have been perceived by some as a failure. This means that, in the eyes of some people, the expectation or the hope that there is a chance to integrate *as individuals* and on the basis of individual actions alone has more or less vanished. The remaining alternative, both for changing the present 'objective' social situation of the group and for preserving or regaining its self-respect, is in acting in certain directions not as individuals but as members of a separate and distinct group. In conditions of rigid social stratification this can reach very deeply. Beryl Geber conducted some years ago research on the attitudes of African school children in Soweto, the African township near Johannesburg, in which very serious riots occurred in recent times. One of the tasks the children were asked to complete was to write their 'future autobiography'

As Geber reported, in many of these autobiographies, the *personal* future was tightly bound up with the future of the Africans as a whole, with future personal decision and actions which aimed not so much at the achievements of individual success as at doing something, as a member of the group, for the group as a whole.

These attitudes towards the present and the future, based on group membership rather than on individual motives and aspirations, are diametrically different from those which underlie the attempts at individual assimilation. They imply that, in addition to obtaining some forms of parity, efforts must also be made to delete, modify or reverse the traditional negative value connotations of the minority's special characteristics. In social competition for parity, the attempt is to shift the position of the *group* on certain value dimensions which are generally accepted by the society at large. In the simultaneous attempts to achieve an honourable and acceptable form of separateness or differentiation, the problem is not to shift the group's position within a system of values which is already accepted, but to change the *values* themselves. We must now turn to a discussion of this second aspect of 'equal but different'.

There is now a good deal of evidence (cf., for example, Lemaine, 1974, 1978) that the achievement of some forms

of clear differentiation from others is an important ingredient of people's ideas about their personal worth and self-respect. This is true in many walks of life, and – predictably – it becomes particularly marked when individuals or small groups of people are engaged in creating new forms of human endeavour – for example, in art or in science. The race amongst scientists to be the 'first' with a discovery (see, for example, the account by Watson in *The double helix*, 1968) is not only explicable in terms of a hope to reap the rewards and honours which may be awaiting the winner. To be creative is to be different, and there have been many painters and composers who endured long years of hardship, derision, hostility or public indifference in defence of their right or compulsion to break out of the accepted moulds. At the same time, differentiation from others is, *by definition*, a comparison with others. The creation of something *new* is not possible unless there is something *old* which serves as a criterion for the establishment of a difference from it. No doubt, this powerful tendency to differentiate has sometimes led, in science and also in the 'mass' culture, to the creation of worthless fads whose only notable characteristic is their 'shock value', their capacity to appear as clearly different from what went on before. It is this same tendency which also sometimes results in the attempts by the aspiring innovators to magnify and exaggerate small or trivial differences between what they are doing and what has been done by others.

Whether genuinely creative or not, these are some of the examples of the process of social comparison upon which, as we have said earlier, must be based most of the attempts to create, achieve, preserve or defend a positive conception of oneself, a satisfactory self-image. This is true of social groups as well as of individuals. In the case of minorities, this 'social creativity' may take a number of forms. For groups who wish to remain (or become) separate, and yet obtain equality, this creation of *new* forms of comparison with the majority will be closely associated with social competition which we have previously discussed. Sometimes, when direct social competition is impossible or very difficult, social creativity of this kind may become, for a time, a compensatory activity, an attempt to maintain some kind of integrity through the only channels which remain available.

In principle, there are two major forms of the minorities' social creativity, and although they often appear together in 'real life', it is still useful, for purposes of our discussion, to distinguish between them. The first is to attempt a re-evaluation of the *existing* group of characteristics which carry an unfavourable connotation, often both inside and outside the group. We have already seen an example of this with 'Black is beautiful'. The second is to search in the past of the group for some of its old traditions or separate attributes, to re-vitalize them and to give them a new and positive significance. A version of this can also be the *creation* of some new group characteristics which will be endowed with positive values through social action and/or through an attempt to construct new attitudes.

There are many examples of each of these forms of attempting to achieve a new group distinctiveness. A strong emotional charge often accompanies movements towards a re-establishment of equal or high status for the separate language of an ethnic minority. The national language easily becomes one of the major symbols of separateness with dignity, of a positive self-definition (see Giles, 1977 and 1978 for extensive discussion). This has been the case in Belgium, in Quebec, in the Basque country, in a predom-

inantly Swiss-German *canton* containing a French-speaking minority which fought for secession; it was also an important ingredient of several nationalist movements which were faced, in the central and eastern Europe of XIXth century, with attempts at cultural Russification or Germanization by the governing authorities from Petersburg, Vienna or Berlin. In cases when this leads to a general acceptance of bilingualism, both official and public, the results can be sometimes a little paradoxical. In the Friesian region of The Netherlands one can see, on entering some villages, *two* identical signposts offering information about the name of the village; this is so because it happens that the name is the same in Dutch and in Friesian. Some years ago, at the time of the intense battle in Belgium for establishing the social and cultural parity of Flemish with French, it was sometimes easier in Antwerp to obtain information when asking for it in English than in French, although it was quite obvious that the respondent's French was much better than his or her English. These anecdotal examples reflect a deeper and more serious psychological reality: if one considered no more than the possible 'objective' advantages, social, political or economic, which may flow from the re-establishment of a high or equal status for an ethnic minority's language, one would miss the crucial part that it plays as one of the most evident and powerful symbols of distinctive identity. The increasing predominance of French in Quebec (which, in some cases, even blots out the official policy of bilingualism) may well create some new 'objective' difficulties in a continent so overwhelmingly dominant by another language; and yet, the separatist linguistic pressure remains steady in the Province.

It may be useful to return briefly from these linguistic considerations to 'black is beautiful'. As I wrote some time ago:

'The very use of the term "blacks" in this text, which would have had very different connotations only a few years ago already testifies to these changes. The old interpretations of distinctiveness are rejected; the old characteristics are given a new meaning of different but equal or superior. Examples abound: the beauty of blackness, the African hair-do, the African cultural past and traditions, the reinterpretation of Negro music from "entertainment" to a form of art which has deep roots in a *separate* cultural tradition. . . . At the same time, the old attempts to be a little more like the other people are often rejected: no more straightening of hair for beautiful black girls or using of various procedures for lightening the skin. The accents, dialects, sway of the body, rhythms of dancing, texture of the details of interpersonal communication – all this is preserved, enhanced and reevaluated' (1974, pp. 83-84).

The interesting aspect of this list of newly evaluated attributes is that some of them have not been, by any means, negatively evaluated in the past. Negro music and dance, or Negro prowess in athletics have long been a part of the general stereotype, used both inside and outside the group. But they were perceived as largely irrelevant to the *rest* of the Negro image; in some subtle ways they probably contributed to the general stigma of inferiority. A similar phenomenon appears in antisemitism. As Billig (1978) recently pointed out, there are many examples in the publications of the National Front of Jews being referred to as impressive in their achievements, 'intelligent', capable of great solidarity and self-sacrifice, etc. This only serves to enhance the dire warnings about their plot to take over the world. The evaluations attached to any presumed attributes of a minority cannot be properly understood when they are considered in isolation. Their social and psychological significance only appears when they are placed in the context of the general conceptual and social category of which they are a part. Their meaning changes

with the context. This is why some of the well-intentioned efforts to present minority groups as having various 'nice' attributes have often failed to produce a decrease in prejudice.

The second major form of the search for a positive distinctiveness finds again some of its striking examples in the domain of language. The attempts to revitalize the use of Welsh are a crucial part of Welsh nationalism. But perhaps the most dramatic example known in history is Hebrew becoming, in a period of no more than about thirty years, the undisputed first (and often the only) language of well over two million people. Once again, it is easy to point to the concrete need for having a common language in a country to which people came, in the span of one or two generations, from all over the world and from many cultures. And yet, there have been some controversies in the early years as to whether modern Hebrew should continue to be written in its own alphabet or whether Latin alphabet should be adopted. The latter solution would have been an easier one for a number of reasons. The first alternative, backed by cultural tradition and, at the same time, strengthening the distinctive new identity, was finally chosen.

Ethnic minorities in which national movements develop usually have at their disposal the possibility of backing their claims by returning to the past. Language is only one of these distinctive traditions emerging from recent or remote history. The claim for a new separate unity *now* can be made much more effective in the minds of people if it is supported by ideas about the existence of a separate unity in the distant past. And thus, each of these movements must rely on a combination of myths, symbols and historical realities which all help to stress the *distinctive* nature of the group and its right to continue its distinctiveness. In his book on *The Nationalization of the Masses*, the historian George Mosse (1975) discussed what he called the 'aesthetics of politics'. Taking the example of the development of mass nationalism in Germany in the XIXth and XXth centuries, to which he referred as 'the growth of a secular religion', he also wrote: 'As in any religion, the theology expressed itself through liturgy: festivals, rites and symbols which remained constant in an ever-changing world' (p.16). In all this, the internal unity of a national 'group' can become indissolubly linked to its *inherent* and *immutable* differences from others. At this point, nationalism is capable of shading into racism. But, in the case of many national movements growing inside ethnic minorities, this need not be the case, and very often it is not. With the creation and revival of distinct symbols, of cultural traditions, of modes of social behaviour sanctified by a real or a mythical past, and of new stereotypes stressing the differences between the 'ingroup' and the 'outgroup', the enhanced separate identity of the group can become powerfully reflected in the feelings and attitudes of its members. As we have already seen, this is closely linked to the image they have of their *personal* integrity, dignity and worth.

There are, however, minority groups which cannot find very much in the past in the way of symbols and traditions of a separate identity. The differences from others must then be created or enhanced, and re-evaluated in the present, as soon as possible. Women's liberation movements went through some developments, whose nature can be attributed to the overriding need for creating a conception of *different* but equal. In the early times, when the suffragettes made the headlines, the main idea in relation to men seems to have been that 'whatever you can do, I can

do better' (or at least as well). This was therefore a fairly pure form of John Turner's 'social competition' in which two groups aim to achieve the same goals by the same means. The increasing sophistication of the movement, particularly as it developed in the last ten years or so, shifted the stress to a synthesis of social competition with the conception of a differentiation *in* equality (see, for example, Williams and Giles, 1978). In these more recent developments, there is still a continuing insistence that there are many jobs which women can do as well as men, although they are often debarred from them by the past and present sex discrimination and the corresponding dominant public attitudes partly determined by the way we socialize our children.³

There is, however, also the insistence that many of the things women traditionally do, or are uniquely capable of doing, have been debased and devalued in society. This is, therefore, once again, an attempt to re-evaluate the differences rather than to become more like the 'superior' group. This strategy is justified by some evidence (see Williams and Giles, *op.cit.*) of a psychological connection between an increase in the number of women taking a particular job and a decrease in the social status or prestige of the job.

An interesting parallel of this search for new dimensions of equal comparison can be found in a semi-experimental study conducted by the French social psychologist, Gérard Lemaine (see Lemaine *et al.*, 1978, for a recent account in English). A competition to build huts was arranged between two groups of boys at a summer camp, but one group was given less adequate building materials than the other. Both groups were aware of the discrepancy which was based on an explicitly random distribution of resources between them. Consequently, the 'inferior' group did two things: first, they built an inferior *hut*, but they surrounded it with a small garden. Then, they 'engaged in sharp discussion with the children from the other group and the adult judges to obtain an acknowledgement of the legitimacy of their work. Their arguments were approximately as follows: we are willing to admit that the others have built a hut and that their hut is better than ours; but it must equally be admitted that our small garden with its fence surrounding the hut is also a part of the hut and that we are clearly superior on this criterion of comparison' (translated from the French).

This example contains at least three important implications for our discussion. The first is that certain social conditions resulting in the 'inferiority' of a group lead to genuine social creativity, to a search for new constructive dimensions of social comparison. The second is that one of the major problems likely to be encountered by minority groups engaging in this kind of creativity is in gaining a *legitimization* of their efforts. This legitimization has two sides to it. First, the newly created or newly evaluated attributes of the minority must gain a wide and positive acceptance inside the group itself. This may often prove difficult, as it can only be done if and when the patterns of acceptance by the minority of their 'inferiority', which we discussed earlier, can be broken down. What is likely to prove even more difficult is obtaining from other groups the legitimization of the new forms of parity. In addition to the conflicts of objective interests, which are often bound to be involved, the positively valued 'social identity' of the majority and of its individual members depends no less on the outcomes of certain social comparisons than do the corresponding conceptions in the minority. One is back to 'we are what we are *because* they are not what we are', or as good as we are. Some of

the cyclical changes in fashions used to reflect this need of 'superior' groups for marking their continuing differentiation from others. If a certain style or details of dress, clearly pointing to the 'superior' status of the wearer, began to be imitated by those 'from below', appropriate changes were made (see Laver, 1964). Unfortunately, social changes of more profound impact are not as easy to invent as changes in fashion; and therefore, some of the new 'creations' by minorities must be stopped or denied their validity rather than walked away from.

Finally, our discussion implies a possible *inevitability* of certain forms of competitive or conflicting intergroup social comparisons and actions if and when minorities are ready to reject their inferior status and the ideas about their 'inferior' attributes. As long as complex societies exist, distinct social groups will continue to exist. As we have seen, intergroup differences easily acquire value connotations which may be of profound personal importance to those who are adversely affected; but the preservation and defence of certain outcomes of these comparisons are also important to those who benefit from them in the 'social image' they can create for themselves. This is not quite like an irresistible force encountering an immovable object, because neither is the force irresistible nor is the object immovable; social situations rarely, if ever, end up in this kind of suspended animation. But the seeds of conflict and tension are always there, although it is scientifically superficial as well as dubious to attribute them to some vaguely conceived, inherent human tendencies of social 'aggression'. We are not dealing in this field with haphazard and unorganized collections of individual aggressions.

There are no easy solutions in sight. It is true that different social groups may be able to derive their self-respect and integrity from excelling in different directions which are not directly competitive. But, in the first place, these different directions are also very often socially ranked

according to their prestige; and, secondly, the self-respect of any group *must* be based, in many important ways, on comparisons with other groups from which a favourable distance must therefore be achieved or maintained.

These fairly pessimistic conclusions have not taken into account the unavoidable persistence of conflicts of objective interests between social groups. But perhaps it is here that, paradoxically, we can place some of our hopes for the future. The present conditions of interdependence also imply that few social conflicts between groups can be of a 'zero-sum' variety, all gain to one of the parties, all loss to the other. In the present conditions, there is always bound to be some distribution of gains and losses across the line. This being the case, it may be useful to see in each intergroup situation whether and how it might be possible for each group to achieve, preserve or defend its vital interests, or the interests which are perceived as vital, in such a way that the self-respect of other groups is not adversely affected at the same time. We must hope that the increasing complexity and interweaving of conflicts between groups will lead to a progressive rejection of simple 'all-or-none' solutions, of the crude divisions of mankind into 'us' and 'them'. To achieve this we need less hindsight and more planning. There is no doubt that the planning must involve two crucial areas of human endeavour: education, and social change which must be achieved through genuinely effective legislative, political, social and economic programmes. This will not be easy and starchy-eyed optimism will not help; nor will good intentions alone, however sincere they may be. But there is no doubt that the solution of the social and psychological problems which concerned us here is one of the most urgent and fundamental issues which will have to be directly confronted in a very large number of countries (of whatever 'colour' or political system) before the century is over.

Footnotes

¹ The following item (by no means exceptional) appeared in *The Times* of 6 Sept., 1978: 'A young British hitch-hiker was charged with murder by the police at Katerini, south of Salonika, today . . . Mr. X, aged 20, a British passport-holder of Sinhalese extraction, whose home is in Birmingham, was remanded in custody pending trial. He is accused of killing one of two gypsies who attacked his girl companion . . . he and Miss Y., aged 20, of Solihull, Birmingham, had been hiking to Salonika. They were picked-up by two gypsies driving a small pick-up van . . . The Britons were forced out of the car by one gypsy holding a double-barrelled shot-gun, while the other attacked the girl.' The Sinhalese and the two gypsies are identified as such. For Miss Y., who, judging from her name, is a member of the 'majority', no other identification, apart from her provenance from Birmingham, seems necessary. In the case of Mr. X., also from Birmingham, we are additionally informed of his 'extraction'. We do not know whether the two gypsies are Greek (or any other) 'passport-holders'. It is apparently enough to know that they are gypsies. (See Husband, 1977, for a review of evidence and a discussion about newspaper reports of this kind).

² A good example of the use of social categorizations for reducing the cognitive complexity of the social environment is provided in the field work of the social anthropologist Clyde Mitchell (1970) as reported in A.L. Epstein's book on *Ethos and identity* (1978). 'Categorization . . . is a common reaction in a situation where social relationships are of necessity transitory and superficial but at the same time multitudinous and extensive. In such circumstances people seek means of reducing the complexity of social relations with which they are confronted. They achieve

this by classifying those around them into a restricted number of categories . . . Mitchell . . . was able . . . to show how Africans on the Copperbelt were able to reduce the hundred or so ethnic groups represented in the urban population to a mere handful of categories. In this way we are presented with a model of social relations among urban Africans in one of its aspects, a kind of overall "cognitive map" by reference to which the African in town charts his way through the maze created by the fact that so many of those with whom he is in contact, direct or indirect, are total strangers to him' (pp. 10-11). (For a more extensive discussion of social categorizing see Tajfel, 1969, 1978.)

³ That this direct social competition is still fully justified is clearly shown in a recent research report from the United States (summarized in the *Newsletter of the Institute for Social Research*, University of Michigan, Spring 1978): 'In 1975 the average hourly earnings of white men were 36 per cent higher than for black men, 60 per cent higher than for white women, and 78 per cent higher than for black women . . . But findings from the Survey Research Center's Panel Study of Income Dynamics clearly shows that . . . average differences in . . . qualifications account for less than one-third of the wage gap between white men and black women, less than half of the gap between white men and white women, and less than two-thirds of the gap between white men and black men'. In addition, ' . . . differences in what economists call "attachment to the labour force" explain virtually none of the differences in earning between and women . . .' (p.7).

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