

## BOOK REVIEWS

### GENERAL

*Patterns of Dominance.* By PHILIP MASON. New York, 1970. Oxford University Press for the Institute of Race Relations, London. Figures. Note. Index. Pp. xii, 377. \$11.50.

Racial conflict may well prove to be the central problem of the twentieth century. Professor Mason's book has been written with the current world crisis in race relations very much in mind, and he offers a renewed plea for a rational and comprehensive analysis of race contact and its consequences. To this task the author has brought considerable knowledge and insight based on direct experience and scholarly study of racial contact.

The dimensions of the present—and familiar—stage of conflict between racial groups, which is defined as a world-wide revolt against inequality, are discussed in the first of three sections into which the book is divided.

Perhaps the most important section is Part II which attempts to outline a provisional system of classification for the myriad examples of racial contact arising from the expansion of Europe. Drawing on the work of Michael Banton and P. L. Van den Berghe, Mason defines three categories of relationship: dominance, paternalism, and competition. In the case of dominance, a privileged group (European whites) occupies a position whereby it is able to subjugate another group, the members of which are defined by racial descent (Blacks, Asians, or Amerindians). The United States' South and South Africa are examples of dominance. Paternalism, as used herein, is to be distinguished from domination. In the paternal relationship there exists the possibility both of eventual release from control (decolonization) and of integration. Competition is restricted to contact situations in which group relations are essentially competitive; the place of coloured immigrants in Britain would be an example.

Considered in relation to the three basic orders of contact are the following variables: numerical proportion, conquest versus immigration, sexual attitudes, the nature of the territory, the nature of the conquered society, and the nature of the dominant society. The tendency to "fit" actual situations into a system of categories is avoided. Moreover, every situation is viewed in terms of its complexity; the variables do not apply in a uniform manner to any given example for any period. India and Burma under British rule had

roughly the same numerical proportions of rulers to ruled, but quite distinct differences in the sexual attitudes and behavior of the paternal British element.

As should be obvious, Professor Mason has undertaken a formidable task in analysis. The task is made even more difficult by the attempt to include a great variety of examples of contact societies at various stages of development. The attempt to be all-inclusive does succeed in its objective of indicating the awesome complexity of the problem. Such an emphasis, however, requires a comparable stress on clarity. Too often the method of exposition works against clarification, as evidenced by the tendency to qualify and amend basic propositions before they are fully propounded. In addition, each example of contact—India, the Caribbean, Brazil, and Australasia—is taken largely on its own terms; a systematic application of categories and variables would have helped to relate the case studies more closely to the classification system.

Two chapters are concerned with Latin America, one dealing with Mexico and Peru, the other with Brazil. The Latin Americanist will find the chapters of value for the comparative focus brought to bear on the area; the student of Brazil could well view the development of the country in relation to South Africa. Aside from the importance of a general comparative framework, the specialist will profit from a fresh perspective on Latin America by one who has an extensive knowledge of Africa and the Commonwealth.

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*The Amazon: The Story of a Great River.* By ROBIN FURNEAUX. Foreword by PETER FLEMING. New York, 1969. G. P. Putnam's Sons. Illustrations. Maps. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xiii, 258. \$6.95.

Robin Furneaux has written a good book for the general public on the history of the Amazon. It contains little that is new, but it is very readable, errors are at a minimum, and judgement is sound. The narration is woven around familiar personalities: Orellana, Ursúa and Aguirre, Father Samuel Fritz and other Jesuits, La Condamine, Humboldt and the naturalists, Theodore Roosevelt, and Colonel Fawcett. Other chapters describe the Amazon and its wildlife, and a section is given to the rubber boom, the Madeira-Mamoré Railway, and the Putumayo atrocities. However, the book is too brief, the region too large, to probe much beyond the highlights, and there is no connecting theme for what are essentially, independent essays.

This and other books on the Amazon covering similar ground