

政治文化としてのステレオタイプ：
ガイアナにおける民族的住み分けの事例から

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Stereotypes as a political culture:
A case study from the ethnic segregation in Guyana.

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Summary

It is a purpose of this article to analyze the use of stereotypes and its political dimensions in the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, the former British Guiana. I take into consideration the phenomenon of ethnic segregation between the Africans and the East Indians and the ways of explaining for the reasons why they prefer to live separately.

Guyana is a plural society composed of "six peoples", the two major of which are the so called Africans and the East Indians. Both were introduced by the European colonists as sugar plantation laborers one after the other. They were kept apart as culturally different racial groups under the colonial divide-and-rule administration. The East Indians mainly occupied the rural plantation areas and dedicated to agricultural activities, while the most of the Africans lived in villages and cities and dedicated to the untrained wage labors or some professional works.

Despite the ethnic segregation imposed by the colonial administration, it was once said that these ethnic groups lived side by side with peace, even sometimes intermixed. However, in expectance of the independence from the colonial regime, the Africans and the East Indians got into violent confrontations and separated each other in early 1960s. After this experience on, both ethnic groups tended to live separately each other. Moreover, assuming the government after independence, the People's Progressive Party took preferential policies for the Africans. This ethnically oriented nation building policy reinforced the ongoing ethnic segregation, although the East Indians preferred not to protest it

in violent ways and to live as separately as possible.

In this paper, I describe how separately the ethnic groups in Guyana have lived, presenting some statistical data. First of all, I analyze the population censuses taken before the independence, and next I show my field data and interviews about the ethnic segregation, both of which are based on my field research in August, 1992. I describe Anandale village as an example for a normal East Indian village so as to show to what extent the people live separately, and how they account of it. Also I take Belle Air Garden as another example for reviewing the segregation process after the independence.

These statistical data apparently show a tendency for ethnic segregation. But they do not explain why people continue to live separately. So in this paper, I focus on the stereotipic comments on the ethnic segregation particularly by the East Indians: how they explain the reasons for living separately from the Africans.

Analyzing their accounts, it will be showed that ethnic segregation is not always a result of ethnic confrontation, but a social realism, which provides a model for living under ethnic discrimination. On explaining the ethnic segregation, most East Indians never fail to use ethnic stereotypes. In using derogatory stereotypes, they express an imagery superiority in compensating their political inferiority. The ethnic segregation must be a social fact in this purpose. In this sense, ethnic stereotypes have political dimensions. Especially for the East Indians they are an unique way of expressing political opinions in a social system, in which it is severely restricted for them to compete politically in fairness.

From the ecological point of view, segregation is a social mechanism for various groups to coexist in a closed system without having major conflicts. And from the sociological point of view, it is an

institution for restricting interactions among the groups on the person-to-person level. However in actuality it is impossible to limit socio-politically interactions between the Africans and the East Indians in Guyana. The stereotypes break this dilemma. It puts limits on social interactions without restricting them on formal base. It is an informal social system of structuring interactions. We may say that the stereotypes in Guyana are not always a form of ethnocentrism, but a social framework for acting as cosmopolitan.