The negro races, a sociological study

Dowd Jerome
THE NEGRO RACES

A Sociological Study

VOLUME I

THE NEGRITOS, comprising The Pygmies, Bushmen and Hottentots of Central and South Africa

THE NIGRITIANS, comprising the Jôlofs, Mandingos, Hausas, Ashantis, Dahomans, etc., of the Sudan; and the Tibbus of the Sahara Desert: and

THE FELLATAHS of Central Sudan

By JEROME DOWD

NEW YORK
THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
LONDON: MACMILLAN & CO., LTD.
1907
Copyright, 1907,
by The Macmillan Company
PREFACE

The author submits to the public this volume as one of a series which he proposes to publish consisting of a sociological study of mankind from the standpoint of race. Up to the present time sociologists, in tracing the evolution of society, have constructed theories based upon data selected promiscuously from opposite quarters of the earth and from many different races. This method would suffice if the races of men had lived in the same environment and had undergone the same stages of development. But it will not suffice if the races have appeared upon the earth in succession and not simultaneously. If they have inhabited different zones and have been subject to different physical surroundings, it does not stand to reason that they could develop the same institutions and pass through identical stages of evolution. The author’s first object, therefore, is to establish the fact that each race has its distinctive institutions and special evolution corresponding to the locality in which it lives or has lived. The second object is to discover the factors and laws which explain the mental and moral characteristics and particular institutions of each general racial division, to the end that the principles and laws discovered may be applied to whatever is abnormal or retrogressive.

If the first few volumes of the series should seem to lay stress upon the physical environment, it is because that factor is always predominant in the early stage of development, and only diminishes gradually as man strengthens his intellect and adds to his knowledge. The environment first controls man, after which man controls the environment, and in any system of sociology, a consideration of the physical
forces acting upon man must precede a correct understanding of the later moral and psychological forces. In the opinion of Ratzel, a sociology from this point of view is very much needed. He says in his "Anthropogeographie,"\(^1\) that most sociological systems and doctrines consider man as independent of the earth, and that in modern sociology the ground plays such a small rôle that the works that deal seriously with it are exceptions.

The inability of modern civilizations to solve their perplexing and threatening political, industrial, familial and other social problems is due to a lack of application to those problems of the scientific methods which have wrought such marvels of progress in the domain of chemistry, physics, biology and medicine. When men turn away from empiricism in the study of social problems and begin to understand that the phenomena of the social world are the product of forces operating according to ascertainable laws, although of a kind different from those of the physical world, there will be strides forward in the social life as notable and full of blessings to the human race as the progress which has been made in any other domain. The world is not without great moral teachers who stir up and sharpen the conscience of the people but it needs a knowledge of the causes and effects of human activities and institutions, as revealed by science, to enable the moral forces to expend themselves in other than a blind and anarchic opposition. "In order to know how social actions operate as causes and produce effect," says Small, "it is necessary to have description and explanation of the social process, and of the structures and functions involved: for it is with reference to these that our moral judgments assume knowledge of cause and effect."\(^2\)

The author does not wish to be understood as attempt-

---

\(^1\) Vol. 1, p. 66.

\(^2\) "The Significance of Sociology for Ethics," Chicago, 1902, p. 8.
ing to write a history of the human races. That would be a task too ambitious for any one man to think of. But, since the sociologist accepts the facts and special laws established by the historian, ethnologist, anthropologist and other scientists, it is not impossible for him to embrace in his investigations, as Spencer has done, a wide range of phenomena. The work of bringing together the general principles derived by specialists in their respective fields, is an important one and, while seeming at first glance to be rather too comprehensive and wide in scope, is, in fact, very limited and definite and constitutes in itself a scientific specialty which requires an equipment, a grouping of data and a manner of treatment unlike what is demanded of any other specialist.

Sociology differs from many other sciences in one important particular. It is a science whose general conclusions are to be practically and directly applied by the citizens who vote and otherwise determine the destiny of States, whereas in most other sciences the general ideas are to be applied only by special industrial or professional classes of men. For example, it is not necessary for the medical specialist to address himself to the public, but only to practitioners, because a sensible man, instead of attempting to treat his own case, calls in a physician and submits to his discipline. On the contrary, in reference to social or political questions, every man, wise or foolish, is his own physician and bases his action upon his own judgment. Sociology therefore should avoid the use of technical terminology which may not be comprehended by the average man of intelligence, and should be treated in a style that is calculated to bring the general principles of the science into as wide an acquaintance as possible.

The writer has begun his study with the Negro Races simply because they represent the most primitive life and not at all on account of any special interest in the so-called Negro question or any desire to solve it upon preconceived
notions. However, it has seemed strange to the writer that the people of the United States, who have a large Negro population, should have attempted to deal with it, through all of these years, without having a knowledge of the sociological conditions of kindred populations in Africa. In view of the need of a more accurate and comprehensive understanding of the Negro in Africa as a basis for dealing with him in America, the writer has gone more into the details in his first and second volumes than he would otherwise have done.

The first volume seeks to portray and interpret the life of the Negritos, Nigritians and Fellatahs from the earliest times to the present, to show the conditions which existed or still exist, as an outcome of native surroundings, and to note the changes which have taken place in consequence of outside influences.

The second volume (already written) deals with Slavery and the Slave Trade in Africa and the Modern African Labor Problem; and attempts to show the general effects of slavery and the slave trade upon the industrial, social and moral status of the natives.

The third volume will deal with the Galla type of Negroes of East Africa, the Bantu of Equatorial and Southern Africa and the Negroes of America. Other volumes will deal with the American Indians, the Mongolians, Japanese, Chinese, Semites and Aryans.

Among those to whom the author is especially indebted for help in the initial volume of this proposed series, are Prof. W. I. Thomas, from whose lectures in the field of the natural races, the author has received much inspiration and many valuable suggestions; Prof. J. Franklin Jameson, from whose lectures upon Slavery in America and from whose general methods, the author has derived valuable and indispensable help; Prof. Albion W. Small and Prof. Frederick Starr, from whose lectures on Sociology and Anthro-
pology, the author has derived also valuable and indispensable help.

Among those to whom the author is indebted for help of a different but not less valuable and not less appreciated kind are, Dr. John F. Crowell, Dr. John C. Kilgo, Dr. Richard T. Ely, Prof. Paul S. Reinsch, Rev. Plato Durham, Mr. R. L. Durham, Prof. Edwin Mims, Mr. J. P. Caldwell and Mr. James H. Southgate.

Whatever merits may be found in the first volume of this work are to be attributed mostly to the fortunate circumstance which brought the author in contact with the above named benefactors.

*Charlotte, N. C., May 1, 1907.*