Homogenization in multiculturality

Contours for creation of sustainable nation



Dr Shardhanand Harinandan Singh

Colofon

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Preface by Prof. (Dr.) Shailendra Naresh Kulkarni



Rector and Professor,

European Institute of Management and Technology,

September 2023, Zurich, Switzerland.

The theme of the G20 summit in 2023 was. The G20 is an intergovernmental forum of the world's strongest economies comprising 19 sovereign countries, the European Union (EU), and the African Union (AU). In this year of pathbreaking progress made by the leaders of the G20, this phenomenal book by the versatile Dr Shardhanand Harinandan Singh is a timely testimony to the ever-growing requirements of a more homogenous world.

Amid the intricate tapestry of our globalized world, where diversity is a defining characteristic of our societies, the concept of "Homogenization in multiculturality "may seem like an enigmatic paradox. However, precisely within this paradox, we find the essence of our human journey. Moreover, "Homogenization in multiculturality" in a plural ethnic society is a testament to the enduring power of dialogue and understanding. It underscores the importance of empathy, tolerance, and cross-cultural communication in nurturing harmonious coexistence. In a world where divisiveness and ethnocentrism can threaten the social fabric, this book serves as a beacon of hope, reminding us that a pluralistic society can flourish when built upon the principles of inclusivity and mutual respect.

At first glance, one might perceive homogeneity as countering the vibrant multiculturality shaping our communities. Multiculturality elaborates on differences, recognizing the myriad cultural, ethnic, and social backgrounds that enrich our shared human experience. However, Homogenization suggests a commonality that transcends these differences, a unifying thread that binds individuals within a diverse society. In the intricate mosaic of our world, where borders blur, cultures intertwine, and identities evolve, the concept of "Multiculturality in a Plural Ethnic Society" takes Centre stage.

Dr Shardhanand Harinandan Singh, PhD, is an 80-year-old columnist, essayist, political analyst, retired change- psychologist and social educator. He has been actively involved in the Global Girmitya Community studies in recent years. He belongs to the fifth generation of his maternal grandparents, who entered Surinam in 1895 as indentured servants. After the teacher training in Paramaribo, he and his wife Mila left for Rotterdam in September 1967. In addition to his full-time job, he completed social pedagogy at the University of Leiden. Having had the opportunity to interact with him, I can testify to his zeal, ingenuity, and deep-rooted sense of responsibility toward society.

Drawing from his experience in Suriname, the author explores the principal concept, unveiling the nuanced interplay between homogeneity and diversity in our multicultural societies. The term "plural ethnic society" denotes a tapestry of human experiences where individuals from various ethnic backgrounds coexist, interact, and shape the collective narrative. It is a world where diversity is celebrated and embraced as an inherent part of the

social fabric. In this vibrant tapestry, the threads of culture, language, tradition, and heritage come together to weave a rich narrative that spans generations.

As we delve into the pages of this thought-provoking book, we are invited to contemplate the intricate dynamics at play when homogeneity intersects with multiculturality. We explore questions at the heart of this complicated subject: How does homogeneity manifest within diverse populations? What role does it play in fostering social cohesion or potentially stifling individuality? How do communities balance the need for unity with the imperative of preserving cultural identities? We are asked to ponder the questions at the heart of this intricate social web: How do diverse ethnic communities coexist? What challenges and opportunities emerge in such a dynamic setting? How do individuals navigate the complex terrain of identity, belonging, and cultural preservation?

In examining these questions, this book provides valuable insights, shedding light on the intricacies of multiculturality in plural ethnic societies. It guides us through the stories of real people living at the intersection of cultures, providing a window into their experiences, struggles, and triumphs. We are reminded that a common humanity unites us all within this diversity.

This book is a compelling testament to the multi-dimensionality of human societies. It traverses the stories of communities and individuals navigating the complex terrain where homogeneity and multiculturality converge. We are offered glimpses into the lives of those who bridge cultural divides and find common ground amid diversity. This book serves as a reminder that in embracing both homogeneity and multiculturality, we can build societies that are not only diverse but also harmonious, where unity and individuality coexist in beautiful synergy. This exploration will inspire new perspectives and conversations, creating a more inclusive and cooperative global community.

I wish the readers and the author a plethora of food for thought. After all, we are 'One Earth, One Family, One Future'. d deep-rooted sense of responsibility towards society.

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Picture: Kalaga VSSS Gunneswara Rao, june 25, 2021, https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/vasudeva-kutumbakam-kalaga-vsss-gunneswara-rao/

Summit G20 India, 2023: Vasudeva Kutumbakam: 'One Earth, One Family, One Future'.

वासुदेव कुटुम्बकम

The standard spelling is Vasudeva kutumbakam.

Preface

Multiculturality is a phenomenon associated with transnational immigration processes. Multiculturality is the end product of more kinds of immigration in countries worldwide. Over the last half-century, this phenomenon has become permanent in several countries in Europe and other continents with colonial history. Moreover, increasing wars and conflicts in and between countries catalyze global flight migration in the twenty-first century.

In the past, this was due to the growth of former migrant workers with families, the influx of large groups of people from former colonial territories, and the influx of refugees and asylum seekers in countries such as the Netherlands, Belgium, France, and England. A wide range of social issues has arisen in these societies. Manifestations of racism, ethnic profiling, exclusions, intolerance, neighbourhood problems, etcetera have gradually become more visible. However, multiculturality is the end product of more kinds of immigration in several countries in Europe and other continents with colonial past.

The structure of this book is a triptych, namely the past, present and future of societies with transnational migration history. In the past, this was due to the growth of former migrant workers with families, the influx of large groups of people from former colonial territories, and also the influx of refugees and asylum seekers in countries such as the Netherlands, Belgium, France Multiculturality is a phenomenon associated with transnational immigration processes. Multiculturality is the end product of more kinds of immigration around the world. Over the last half-century, this phenomenon has become permanent in several countries in Europe and other continents, too. Moreover, increasing wars and conflicts in and between countries catalyze global flight migration in the twenty-first century.

In the past, this was due to the growth of former migrant workers with families, the influx of large groups of people from former colonial territories, and the influx of refugees and asylum seekers in countries such as the Netherlands, Belgium, France, and England. A wide range of social issues has arisen in these societies. Manifestations of racism, ethnic profiling, exclusions, intolerance, neighbourhood problems, etcetera have gradually become more visible. Unfortunately, such issues have not been adequately managed despite compliance with existing legislation. The integration policies pursued in the countries concerned have yet to lead to lasting sustainable solidarity and interethnic connections. This means that the problem persists and intensifies. It is striking that identical issues continue in the countries that have been colonized, while these are societies of immigrants only. However, there is a big difference in multiculturality between the two kinds of countries.

Solution models must lead to more solidarity and interethnic connections between citizens from diverse backgrounds. The impression is that certain hidden obstacles on the path of sustainable society building still need to be sufficiently recognized, identified and discussed. Too quickly, people hang the problem on the impact of the colonial past on current societies. That could be possible, but it has yet to be studied. The problem is more complicated, with deep roots in the personal mind and collective awareness of citizens themselves. The challenge lies in the fact that these roots are exposed and systematically addressed in discussion groups, locally, national and transnational. These activities can contribute to the openness to achieve national awareness about personal identity for all citizens in a country. For instance, are the descendants of indentured servitudes from India, Indonesia and China all

Surinamese? Or do they prefer being called Hindustani-, Indonesian, and Chinese Surinamese? This question has not yet been resolved in this country's fraternization policy.

What is central to this study is the paradigm of cultural homogenization. Through this paradigm, one can better understand how different values and norms within cultures can be transformed into similar values and standards, as expected for all in a diverse society. The knowledge gained can lead to new insights contributing to targeted policy and action on sustainable nation creation. That will not happen by itself. However, homogenization of individual awareness means influencing the collective consciousness, too. Changing the world means changing personal attention. As a field of research, Suriname has been chosen to discuss pronounced multiculturality and nation creation. Suriname reflects the ethnic diversity of the world's population. However, this national study symbolically acquires a global confession, especially for all countries with multiculturality worldwide.

However, I thank God for giving me the power to publish this work in my 80th year. This was unthinkable without the support of helpful family and people around me. Previously, my wife was an inspiration for my writings and publications. I dedicate this book to my late Mila.

Bromki dyari = colourful flower garden



Art and culture as a strategy for shaping multicultural society.

Photo: Autar, Mahesvari (2023). Endless India, 150-year Hindustani Immigration, DesiYup, October 28, 2023, Doelen, Rotterdam, #immigration #music #experience #150jaar#rotterdam.

Quote: Homogeneity comes if we fight for it together.

Table of Content

Preface by Prof. (Dr.) Shailendra Naresh Kulkarni 3
Preface 6
Introduction 11
Chapter 1 What's going on? 15
1.1 The background of the study object 15
1.2 What is the central problem statement? 17
1.3 Explanation of concepts 20
1.3.1 Social homogeneity and homogenization 20
1.3.2 Ethnic heterogeneity 23
1.3.3 Multiculturality and Multiculturalism. 24
1.3.4 Diaspora 25
1.3.5 Dislocation 27
1.3.6 Relocation 28
1.4 Social integration by homogenization 29
1.4.2 Comments of scholars on Durkheim's ideas. 31
1.4.3 Various models to apply to integrate. 32
Summary 33
Chapter 2 Formation of multiculturality in Suriname 34
2.1 Indigenous people as paleo-immigrants 34
2.2 Afro-Surinamese immigrant communities 36
2.2.1 Physical and mental mutilation 36
2.2.2 Horrible transports 39
2.2.3 Numbers of transports 40
2.3 The post-slavery colonial past 43
2.3.1 Hindustani with Indian immigration background. 43
2.3.2 Descendants of Javanese indentured servants 45
2.3.3 Chinese Immigration and Descendants 47
Summary 49
Chapter 3 Interethnic concerns within the diversity of Suriname 50
3.1 Diversity as a competitive factor 50
3.2 Confusion about slavery reparations. 51
3.3 Global apologies for the colonial past 52
3.4 Relationship between slavery and indentured labor 54
Summary 56
Chapter 4 Difficulties in declaration of sovereignty and fraternization politics 57

4.1 History of Surinamese Sovereignty 57
4.2 Fraternization policy 59
4.3 Roots of exodus in fragile sovereignty and fraternization. 62
Summary 64
Chapter 5 Hindoestani indentured - and post indentured periods 65
5.1 To the land of Shri Rama 65
5.2 Deception in recruitment or deliberately chosen emigration 69
5.3 Crimes against humanity notwithstanding Tract 72
Summary 75
Chapter 6 Ancestral indentured and post-indentured episodes 76
6.1 Some preliminary remarks. 76
6.2 Focus on my patronal ancestors. 77
6.3 Focus on maternal ancestors. 81
Summary 84
Chapter 7 Sarnamization in processes of integration and emancipation 85
7.1 Factors on Sarnamization by first-generation in post-servictude 85
7.2 Identification of factors in sectors of Sarnamization 87
7.3 Promotion of Sarnamization by next generations 89
Summary 91
Chapter 8 Descendants of Indian post-indentured period in The Netherlands 92
8.1 Foundation of Lalla Rookh Netherland 92
8.2 Progress and Innovative Developments. 93
8.3 Visualization of the Sarnamization process in the Netherlands 96
Summary 97
Chapter 9 Practicality 98
9.1 Homogeneity in multiculturality. 98
9.2 Institutes for Practical Feasibility 100
9.2.1 Scientific study on slavery and indentured labour. 100
9.2.2 Inclusivity of transformational educative programs 101
9.3 Role of the church in homogenization. 101
9.4 Neighborhood Welfare Activities. 102
9.5 Art and culture as a soft power intervention for shaping society. 103
Summary 103
Chapter 10 Final consideration with conclusions and recommendations 104
10.1 Conclusions 104
10.2 Recommendations 105

Summary of the book. 107
Biodata 110
Explementary notes: 111
Reverences 116
Appendix 124
Postscript 136



Machine at a sugarcane plantation

Source: https://annemariekootstra.reislogger.nl/foto/album/machine-suikerrietplantage.484579

Introduction

Globally, the movement of groups and individuals from one location to another is over a hundred thousand years old [1]. However, in the final phase of the last ice age, many inhabitants moved from the Asian continent to various areas of the American continent. They permanently took residence in those regions. Groups of migrants could occupy a space in tribe banishment and shelter it as their habitat. Back then, there was no question of border control by people in the countries of arrival. Nature commonly had established its way of demarcating areas. Finally, Asian immigrants have moved into tribal groups in several regions on three American continents and become indigenous people. Certain tribes, such as Suriname and Guyana, lived more than twelve thousand years ago in the Guyanese region. They were named Paleo-Indians. Therefore, they are the first immigrants in these regions of South America and have been called indigenous or native people. However, in today's increasingly globalizing world, the issue of immigration and social integration occupies an essential place in various countries. Worldwide attention is on cultural homogenization in nations with ethnic diversity.

Until pre-Columbian times, the countries mentioned before had a population of monocultural composition. However, diversity existed among indigenous groups in terms of language and traditions. When the Spanish navigators invaded this region in 1492, they thought they had ended up in India or Hindustan. The locals found they got the names Indians and Indigenous. In reality, these residents were Paleo immigrants from Asia.

In the sixteenth century, numerous settlers from various European countries came. They took possession of all kinds of territories on this continent. These invaders drew their borderlines through the area and gave them their names. Suriname was initially owned by England and eventually became the colony of the Netherlands after a battle in February 1667 on the Suriname River. These Dutch settlers have ruled Suriname for at least three centuries. They left a particular impact on the citizens and their society even after the independence in 1975.

Initially, the settlers tried to enslave natives on their plantations along the Suriname rivers. This slavery could not stand for a long time. The rapidly marginalizing natives did not take the forced labour for long and successfully fought against the settlers for their freedom. For the plantation founders, there was no choice but to look for a replacement for the forced indigenous workers. That unleashed an unprecedented transoceanic human trafficking that lasted for centuries. Large numbers of enslaved citizens from Africa have been torn from their native land and moved transoceanic to American continents as commodities. This horrific form of dislocation of people from Africa who have been colonized for centuries has left many traumas in their collective minds. Still, in the present generation, concussions are aware in the collective consciousness of descendants globally.

Moreover, the colonized mind has been transmitted orally from generation to generation. After the worldwide abolition of slavery, the system of indentured labour in Asian countries started. Chinese, Hindustani, Javanese, Portuguese servitudes, and a small group of other citizens ended up in these regions. As a result of transoceanic migrations, the formation of Multiculturality in colonized countries increased significantly and became permanent. In this book, the focus lies on multiculturality in the ethnic plural society of Suriname. In this country, the share of Netherlands influences on ethnic diversity has been enormous. In

addition to the Dutch language as the official language, all kinds of state institutions are based on The Netherlands' visions, values, and norms. Because of my familiarity with Suriname, I have chosen this country as an object of contemplation. The insights gained from the study can also be useful to other countries with colonial pasts. The core idea is searching for strategies in this study to benefit the homogenization processes in Multiculturality focused on creating a nation. For this study, the object of observation is the past, present, and future of the multiculturality in the Republic of Suriname. The results of the examination may also apply to other countries with multiculturality.

Keywords: Multiculturality, post-slavery, post-indentured, homogeneity, diaspora, dislocation relocation, integration, homogenization, collective awareness, nation creation, Sarnamization.

Countries that have been colonized became societies that endured Multiculturality. As written before, this resulted from centuries-long transoceanic displacement of people from Africa and Asia to the American continents. However, ethnic diversity appears to play an essential role in the case of nation creation. The citizens generally seem to be not immune from interethnic racism and discrimination. As mentioned, in the last part of the previous ice age, tribes moved to various areas in the Americas. However, the current societies of the colonized countries, for example, Suriname, stand for the challenge of establishing lasting togetherness and solid social bonds within a multi-ethnic population. In the last five decades, this country's governments have attempted nation creation but with less success than was expected. It is suspected that effective methods that could lead to creating a sustainable nation have yet to be found. This needs to be improved by socio-educative instruments and techniques.

The problem of togetherness in Multiculturality also prevails in countries that have been colonized, such as The Netherlands, England, France, and Belgium. A predominantly white Europe slowly took on the character of Multiculturality, mainly based on the wave of immigration since the second half of the twentieth century. Here, the governments concerned have constantly tried to pursue an integration policy that was in line with dominant social ideas, values, and norms for existing society.

For example, in the seventies of the last century, the Dutch government wanted to avoid as much as possible that the country became an 'immigration land’. The focus was on a return policy to send foreign citizens home immediately.

It became increasingly clear to rulers that Multiculturality in their society became permanent. Under pressure from welfare workers from various immigrant groups, there was a realization that a remigration policy was not a realistic option. Yet it was a fiction but not a fact. The assimilation policy that was applied to the integration of Indonesian Dutch people at the time of independence from Indonesia was firmly rejected by the mentioned welfare workers. An integration policy of marginalization aimed at separating the groups of Moluccans was equally disliked. Since 1975, the Dutch government began understanding its policy on integrating immigrants from the formal colonial regions. Since 1976, ethnic diversity has been essential in Dutch social integration policy. This resulted from a joint arrangement of welfare organizations for citizens from abroad.

On the other hand, recent international studies in Suriname show that interethnic relations between Afro-Surinamese and Hindustani Surinamese are under intense pressure. That means that for half a century, the fraternization policy in this country has not resulted in togetherness and sustainable interethnic relations in this multicultural society. The mentioned studies show that the perception level among Afro-Surinamese towards the Hindustani Surinamese is the lowest in the classification rank. Yet, daily practice shows that the reverse is the case in this country, too. The research confirms that the fraternization policy pursued has yet to lead to sustainable relations between citizens in Suriname. There is a high suspicion that there needs to be a consensus on an acceptable profile for a personal image of national identity. Without this, creating a sustainable nation will be very complicated for everyone in every country.

However, in this publication, theories and visions of society building that can contribute to solving crucial problems beyond constructing a sustainable nation balanced on diversity in ethnic plural societies will be selected. Yet concepts such as sustainable and balanced solidarity refer to homogeneity and homogenization to remain flat in dynamic relations between ethnic groups and communities. To this end, scientific literature in physical and digital forms has been selected for study. The following chapters have been written for the argument.

In Chapter 1, the limitation of the problem field takes place, followed by the central question. Countries that have been colonized, as well as those that are colonized, face pressing questions related to Multiculturality in the last fifty years. Many of them relate to problems in creating a balanced and sustainable society. Often, there needs to be more knowledge and skills available for targeting and disclosing situations caused by immigration. After formulating the central question, the concepts related to the problem are presented.
The core paradigms are social homogenization' and multiculturality.

Chapter 2 gives a picture of the history of the transformation process from mono-culturally to Multiculturality focused on the Surinamese population during the colonial government of the Netherlands. This lasted from the mid-seventeenth to the middle of the twentieth century. The first inhabitants of this country were paleo immigrants, called Indigenous or natives. They were enslaved for some time. After the indigenous enslavement, the Afro-enslaved immigrants were transported to Suriname for plantation work. For post-slavery colonialism, the system of indentured labour was created. Chinese, Hindustani and Javanese indentured servitudes were brought in from Asia. A few Portuguese indentured labourers are also part of the Dutch colonial past. Together, their descendants are the current citizens in Suriname and make a unique multiculturality in this part of the South American continent.

Chapter 3 addresses interethnic concerns in multicultural countries with colonial pasts. Several aspects are discussed: diversity as a factor of competition, reparations after excuses for slavery history, and recent global developments linked to slavery from Africa and indentured labour from former British India are passing the revue.

Chapter 4 illustrates worries around the Surinamese independence in 1975 and the use of fraternization policy to maintain the ethnic balance after sovereignty in the country. Around that time, almost half of the population left Surinam permanently. Unfortunately, a solid basis through fraternization policy could not be established till today.

Chapter 5 deals more extensively with the history of Hindustani immigration in Surinam as a part of post-slavery colonialism. Why and how many indentured servitudes have been shipped from India from June 1873 till May 1916 are illustrated here. Some questions are crucial. Were the indentured servants tricked into going to Surinam? Why is only 1/3 of the 34,000 servitudes repatriated? What were the pull and push factors for these migrations? Some stories of crossing the transoceanic Kalapani are highlighted, too. The systematic violation of rules in the Tract of 1870 is considered horror. Even in this disguised form of post-slavery, settlers have structurally committed crimes against humanity. This is illustrated with examples. However, two-thirds of these servants never needed to be repatriated.

Chapter 6 indicates several relocation factors related to the permanent settlement of many indentured servitudes in Suriname. Why do these persons not repatriate after indentureship is suggested here? Some aspects of how their descendants fared so far are highlighted, such as Sarnamization and Hindostanization in Suriname and the Netherlands.

Chapter 7 covers the visualization of the migration background of my patronal and maternal ancestors. Unfortunately, a story about my patronal grandfather, who left Bihar/Utra Pradesh in India in 1895, did not end happily. In contrast, the immigration history of my maternal ancestors at the same time has been a successful one. Both stories give an average picture of the arrivals and settlements of Indian indentured labourers between 1873 and 1920. Most were able to establish a successful existence in this country far away from Hindustan.

Chapter 8 is dedicated to the founding of the ‘Lalla Rookh Foundation Netherland’ in 1976. The need for this national welfare organization and achieving its objectives are presented in the context of diversity and social integration in Multiculturality. In the large influx of mainly Hindustani-Surinamese immigrants from the former Dutch colony around its independence in 1975, this foundation has committed itself to an integration policy while maintaining its cultural (Sarnami) identity. The spirit of "homogenization in multiculturality" was implicitly embedded in this policy. The theories of the French scientist Émile Durkheim inspired it.

Chapter 9 transfers the core idea of Émile Durkheim about social homogeneity into practically applicable possibilities, for example, in education, arts, science, and religious practice. This relates to the central theme of the study. Namely to establish homogeneity in a plural society. This idea inspired me to promote homogenization in communities with Multiculturality. I deliberately chose homogenization as a paradigm and omitted this as a suitable strategy for social intervention in creating a sustainable nation based on ethnic diversity in societies.

Chapter 10 presents some conclusions and recommendations for public policymakers and scientific scholars in Multiculturality with ethnic diversity.

Quote of Emile Durkheim

People's norms, beliefs, and values comprise a collective consciousness or a shared way of understanding and behaving. The collective consciousness binds individuals together and creates social integration.

Source: Dan Krier, Iowa State University, Sociological Theory: Emile Durkheim and Social Solidarity

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