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The racial perspective in equity studies in Cuba.

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The phenomenon of racial relations – understood as the specific ways in which individuals of different races interact and become integrated through historical, economic and socio-cultural factors, and which determine racial discrimination and prejudice that exists for each society and historical moment¹– has been handled in different manners within the revolutionary process starting in 1959 and even from the start of the armed struggle in 1953.

From the beginning of the armed struggle when Fidel defends himself in the tribunal prosecuting him for the assaults on the military bases of Moncada and Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, he pronounced his history-making speech that was later known as ***La Historia me Absolverá (History will absolve me)***. In it, he outlines the fundamental problems that the revolutionary power in Cuba should address. Although racial discrimination is not explicitly raised, the revolutionary project holds an expansive view of the people to include – implicitly – the blacks together with the exploited:

(...) to the six hundred thousand Cubans who are unemployed (...), to the five hundred thousand workers who inhabit miserable *bohíos* [cottages] (...), to the four hundred thousand industrial and agricultural workers whose savings have been stolen and, (...) to the one hundred thousand small farmers who live and die in lands that are not their own... (Castro, 1989: 69).

Subsequently, the Manifiesto No. 1, which was publicly issued by the Movimiento 26 de Julio, in August of 1955, the racism theme is broached with the necessity of “(...) establishing educational and legislative measures to finish with every vestige of racial discrimination” (Le Riverend, 1970: 106-107).

As early as the 22 of March of 1959, less than three months before the revolutionary triumph, Fidel declared to the assembled populace in La Habana that they should struggle “to end racial discrimination in the employment sphere” (Castro, 1959).

¹ Racism is “a social phenomenon derived from inter-racial relations, which generates prejudices and is structured on the basis of two co-dependent elements: one is constituted by a body of theoretical formulations (...) while the other is constituted by the social practice of such postulates and is identified as *racial discrimination* (...) Thus, racial discrimination refers to the behaviors exercised in social relations against groups affiliated to different races. Prejudice is a socio-psychological phenomenon in human behavior; it is an attitude that is formed as the individual becomes socialized and assimilates his cultural context by penetrating into his surrounding reality, giving meaning to its integrating elements in accord to the dependencies and necessities of the individual and the norms and values of the collectivity. Ma. Magdalena Pérez Álvarez, *Los prejuicios raciales: sus mecanismos de reproducción*. *Temas*, No. 7, jul-sept, 1966, p. 45.

After a few misgivings manifested by the press and from certain sectors of public opinion – which aroused in the midst of overwhelming support, Fidel was forced to hold a press conference on television where he called on “all men of good will to write, to raise the level of understanding, erasing resentment” (Castro, 1959 a). At this urging, multiple newspaper articles are then written.²

In December of the same year, Ernesto “Che” Guevara, one of the key leaders of the Revolution, addresses the universities at the auditorium of the Universidad Central de Las Villas, exhorting them to “dye themselves in white, black, and mulato” (Guevara, 1977: IV, 45).

The first Declaración de La Habana (1960), which is the core creed of the Cuban Revolution subscribed by the majority of the people and containing a true international projection, establishes as a principle the incompatibility between democracy and racial discrimination (Espina, Rodríguez, 2006: 45)³.

The second Declaración de La Habana (1962) affirms that Cuba was called to agitate for:

(...) the entrails of a continent that has witnessed to four centuries of slave exploitation (...) Cuba, the Latin American country where more than 100 000 small farmers have become the owners of the lands they till, (...) more than 600 000 scholarships have been issued to university students, illiteracy has been eradicated, **racial or gender discrimination have been suppressed**, gambling, vice and administrative corruption have been swept off, (...) has now been ejected from the Organization of American States (OAS) by governments which have not achieved a single one of these demands⁴.

Article 42 of Chapter V of the Cuban Constitution, approved in 1976 in a national referendum after ample discussion among the people, prohibited and penalized “discrimination on account of race, color, gender or national origin (Constitución, 1976).

At the same time, the revolutionary process enacted a set of measures that indisputably benefited the more needful sectors of the population. These measures were inspired by the concepts contained in ***La Historia me Absolverá***, among which are: urban reform, agrarian reform, literacy campaign, universal and free education for all minors, free health services for all people, full employment, as well as a set of actions geared to benefit special sectors such as domestic service workers, who were able to abandon such work in favor of state institutions; the elimination of racially based exclusions that existed in clubs and associations by virtue of their expropriation. All these transformations were geared towards the elimination of all the differences that existed in Cuban society.⁵

² To expand on this topic, see, V. Gómez Vasallo, Clarisbel. ***Conocimiento, relaciones interraciales y Revolución, Una mirada desde la Sociología***. Trabajo de Curso, Dep. de Sociología, Universidad de La Habana (Inédito), for which the author was the advisor.

³ See, Espina y Rodríguez, ***Taller Pobreza y Política Social en Cuba. Los retos del cambio económico y social***, jointly authored by DRCLAS and CIPS in 2003 in La Habana, and Gómez Vasallo, *Ibid.*

⁴ The letters in **bold face** are the author's.

⁵ Para una ampliación del tema de las leyes y medidas revolucionarias en este sentido, entre otros temas, V.: Espina, R. y P. Rodríguez. *Ibid.*, y Gómez Vasallo, Clarisbel. ***Conocimiento, relaciones interraciales y***

The elimination of private property over the fundamental means of production provoked important changes in the structure of the social classes, something that had profound implications in achieving racial equity by limiting racial discrimination in the labor sphere⁶ and also fostering inter-racial relationships in the more general social sphere with the creation of organizations of socio-political character: CDR, FMC, militias, student organizations, among others⁷.

Although the Revolution did not enact a specific law against racial discrimination, and while the enacted set of laws and measures do not resolve such a large problem as racial relations, the profound transformation in the inherited structure of the social classes in favor of the dispossessed classes – which caused the existing inequalities among the social strata to be minimized –, together with the overtly anti-racist political discourse that came from the top revolutionary leaders ended up eroding the social and ideological basis for racism and limiting discrimination to the most intimate social relations. At the same time, we must note Cuba's contribution on the international plane to the struggle against racism and other forms of domination and exploitation.

Given the solidarity of the people with the Revolution and the fact that the extant racism was residual,⁸ it was expected that the passage of time together with the implementation of socialist measures progressively more revolutionary, including the education of the new generations, would make racism disappear. Hence, the topic became taboo with a zone of silence and invisibility.⁹ The topic became inconvenient for discussion.

For many, in fact, racism in Cuba had been resolved already. This explains the publication of **El problema negro en Cuba y su solución definitiva** by Pedro Serviat in 1986, which argues the inexistence of racism in the country and the impossibility of its resurgence under socialism.

This racially undifferentiated policy on top of the asymmetric starting conditions of the different racial groups (disadvantageous for the poorer sectors where blacks and mestizos were over-represented), began to widen gaps disfavoring precisely the more colored groups even though, in general, the population benefited.

Revolución, Una mirada desde la Sociología. Trabajo de Curso, Dep. de Sociología, Universidad de La Habana (Inédito), del cual el autor de la presente ponencia fue tutor.

⁶ Mayra Espina, in her work *Política social en Cuba. Equidad y movilidad*, proposes other characteristics in the sub-model of peripheral socialism applicable to Cuba which include: centrality of equity and the promotion of equality as a value and an end of social polity and as a concrete expression of social justice; a class-based perspective on inequality, as a theoretical starting point, which implies the need for social policy to give preeminence to the ownership of the means of production and to the elimination of structures that generate possibilities of exploitation and exclusive appropriation of well-being by some social groups over the rest; universal character, centralized, unitary and planned of social policy; the assignment of basic necessities (work, health, free education) as rights of citizenship.

⁷ Alport proposes four conditions needed to diminish the conflicts and prejudices among racial groups: when the social groups are of equal status; when they pursue the same objectives; when they depend on each other; and when they interact together with the positive intervention of the authority give by law or custom.

⁸ In general, there was a tendency to use the term 'prejudice' instead of 'racism' in order to lower the profile of the phenomenon.

⁹ As Tomás Fernández Robaina called it in several public statement, it was a case of "deafness" as there always existed voices warning about the problem. In this sense, we might also say "blindness".

Given the lack of balance existing among the different racial groups – as well as among youth and women – in the executive ranks of various economic and political sectors – something which was revealed by the census in 1981, the Third Congress of the Cuban Communist Party in 1985 proposes:

(...) an adequate feminine representation in accord with their participation and contribution to the construction of socialism in our country, and the presence of the growing store of young and promising values born and matured in the Revolution. **The ethnic composition¹⁰ of the people, united to the revolutionary merit and to the proven talent of many citizens, which in the past were discriminated against on the basis of their skin color, must be justly represented in the executive cohorts of the PCC.** (...) This promotion of all the components and values of our society, and of their integration in the Party and its directive cannot be generated spontaneously¹¹.

From this analysis, a quota system was established for this triad –young, black, woman. In practical terms, its formalism provoked many blacks and mestizos, promoted or not, to be discriminated against since, on occasions, the racial distinction sufficed for the occupational or political promotions, which goes counter to what the analysis says. Besides, in the analysis and implementation of this measure, the problems dealing with structural representation were dealt with on a limited basis as were those of subjective character, which affected to a large extent in their lack of effectiveness.

This complex process very briefly outlined here is reflected in the bibliography published in this later period subsequent to 1959¹². If one undertakes a light infométrico study, one may observe whether the topic of racism and its psychological and behavioral correlation – the prejudice and racial discrimination- are the themes that get emphasized at the outset in Cuban publications, in the sense of their existence and the struggle against this phenomenon in the new socio-economic conditions created by the Revolution. As the revolutionary process goes on, this specific topic begins to disappear in Cuba with references made only to history, folklore and the contributions of black people to the national and Latin American culture, or in books and articles – like the already mentioned Serviat, to the extinction of racism in Cuba. This situation is prolonged until the end of the 1980s.¹³

Towards the end of this decade, under the heated discussions provoked by the 3rd Congress of the Party, and following the continuity of a line of work somewhat abandoned by the Instituto Cubano de Antropología,¹⁴ the study of racial relations in Cuba begins in their contemporary expressions through a project named **Racial**

¹⁰ The document confuses ethnicity with race.

¹¹ The letters in **bold face** are the author's.

¹² See, Biblioteca Nacional "José Martí", **Bibliografía de Temas Afrocubanos** (1986) and **Cultura Afrocubana** (1994), both compiled by Tomás Fernández Robaina

¹³ To inquiry further in the topic, see Barcia Zequeira., *El tema negro en la historiografía cubana del siglo XX*, in *Revista Del Caribe*, Santiago de Cuba, no. 44, 2004, pp. 102-110, which goes beyond the historiographic limits and Gómez Vasallo, *Ibid.*

¹⁴ At that time Centro de Antropología.

Relations and ethnicity in contemporary Cuban society,¹⁵ whose general objective was the study of racial relations in Cuba under different settings, and to verify the existence of socio-racial inequalities and of racism in its expressions of prejudice and discrimination. It fundamentally established three topics for investigation: the relationships in the social and labor context of the class and racial structure, the ethno-cultural characterization of the racial groups in the Cuban population, and the expressions and survival factors of racial prejudice within the family, workplace and student life. As such, it could be deemed to be a renewal in the attention paid by the social sciences in Cuba.¹⁶

The final results of these investigations by the Instituto Cubano de Antropología were presented to the scientific community in 1999 and in 2003. Their merit, if any, was to confirm the presence of racism in Cuba¹⁷ –despite the conditions created to limit its activity–, not only as an inheritance but also as a phenomenon associated by the gaps left by the Revolution along these lines and which, in the conditions of crisis during the 1990s, generate new racial prejudices and discrimination in different settings of the Cuban society.

Despite this confirmation and the importance that the racial phenomenon has in our society, not all the investigations incorporated this theme in their perspectives. The racial variable had to wait for a while to let the political discourse recognize the phenomenon of racism before it could appear in an integrated fashion within the social investigations. In particular, in studies dedicated to analyzing equity and the structure of class with a vision focused upon the racial problem, and particularly upon social mobility, this variable has not received a lot of attention. Even in a text such as the **Changes in the social class structures**, the racial variable appears only rarely in passing.

The investigations by the Instituto Cubano de Antropología are precisely the ones that have provided the guidelines on the relationships in the racial and social class structure in the workplace setting¹⁸, since until the time of its publication this topic was one of the most neglected in the studies of the race problem in Cuba. The team producing this study inquired into the structural aspects of this problem as well as the subjective and symbolic ones. (Among other results from this team, see, Rodríguez, García, Carrazana: 2003).

The 1990s crisis and racial relationships.

From the political crisis suffered by the socialist camp including the Soviet Union, Cuba suffered a crisis with profound implications not only in the economic sphere but also in the structure of the social class where the process continued to widen the gaps left behind by previous periods.¹⁹ In addition, the reforms undertaken to face this crisis,²⁰ produced deep changes and began to create new conditions—such as the opening to foreign capital and the expansion of the mixed sector of the

¹⁵ The author directed the project in its second edition.

¹⁶ Gómez Vasallo, *ibid.*

¹⁷ In his article about Emerson, Martí says that “science confirms what the spirit possesses”.

¹⁸ Integrated by Pablo Rodríguez Ruiz, Lázara Carrazana Fuentes and Ana Julia García Rally. In her Master’s thesis, Carrazana Fuentes has studied racial and labor mobility.

¹⁹ To study further these gaps, see Mayra Espina, a work included in this seminar.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

economy, expansion of the possibility for independent work²¹ – in which the racial gap also adopted new forms of expression.

Investigations by the Instituto Cubano de Antropología during the 1990s and early 2000s confirm the existence of these gaps, new and inherited, and the subjective implications. As a synthesis, these results demonstrate an under-representation in the emerging and traditional sectors of the economy. In the first one, which is more advantageous given the possibilities to garner foreign currency, there is an over-representation of whites in the ranks of executives and professionals while blacks and mestizos are only a majority in the ranks of the workers providing indirect services to tourism. However, in the traditional sector, blacks and mestizos maintain a significant presence among the professionals and technicians, and constitute the majority among the workers.

In regards to the remittances from family and friends living overseas, the study confirmed the existence of differences among racial as well as occupational groups since the major receptors are workers in the emerging sector (with the two groups in the opposing sides being the professionals in the emerging sector and workers in the traditional sector with their black and mestizo majority). Another element points to regional gaps, with the largest receptors of remittances being the residents of La Habana who are favored over those of Santiago de Cuba. All of these aspects are related to the historical racial structure of Cuban migration. (Espina and Rodríguez, 2006; Rodríguez, García and Carrazana, 2003).

In terms of the urban spaces and housing as more representative elements of the racial gaps, the study confirms the presence of whites in neighborhoods with better housing conditions, and the presence of blacks and mestizos (from a racial perspective) and of workers (from an occupational perspective) in housing with the worse living conditions, primarily *solares* and *ciudadelas*. Beyond the intrinsic housing conditions and their spatial location, an aspect not sufficiently valued is their association with certain possibilities opened up by the economic reforms, such as “independent work, self-employment and micro-enterprises, primarily family centered, in identified activities (restaurants, rental of rooms, for instance)”²² where a better home provides augmented possibilities.

In the plane of inter-relationships in all their expressions²³, two basic tendencies arise within the context of racial relations, in general, one being the intra-racial relations among all groups, and the other in the preference by whites to establish such relations (Espina, González and Pérez, 2003).

Certain global statistics also confirm the racial gap in Cuban society or some of its implications. The census carried out in 1981 and 2002 present the population by skin color.

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POPULATION BY SKIN COLOR

²¹ Ibidem.

²² Mayra Espina, Ibid.

²³ The studies encompassed relationships among couples, friends and neighbors as well as those established among students and peers.

CEN-SUS	Total	Whites	%	Blacks	%	Mulatos o Mestizos	%
1981	9 723 605	6 415 468	66,00	1 168 695	12,00	2 139 442	22,00
2002	11 177 743	7 271 926	65,05	1 126 894	10,08	2 778 923	24.86

This is one of the most discussed statistics furnished by the census, although the one in 2002 showed an increase in the number of mestizos and a decrease in the number of blacks with respect to the numbers in 1981. Social science specialists consider that the numbers should show a greater number of subjects classified as blacks and mestizos or mulatos. This issue could arise due to the method utilized in the Census to classify racial information. The Census takers were instructed to "write the information down without questioning those present during the interview, and to ask the question with respect to those absent, if there were grounds to be doubtful. In this way, the subjects were classified as whites, blacks, and mestizos or mulatos" (Oficina Nacional de Estadísticas, 2002: 138-139).

Although the utilized method – perhaps there is no other for racially categorizing an individual in our conditions during a census – refers to "the concept of race as commonly understood by the population²⁴" can present some deficiencies since in the processes of deciding racial affiliation –whether exo-affiliation, granted by an individual to another subject, or endo or auto-affiliation, granted by an individual to himself – several factors are put into play, not only the color of the skin but also other phenotypic characteristics such as hair, eyes, nose, facial features, as well as other genotypical elements, closely related to the first set, and those with a social, cultural and affective contents. Besides, the process of racial auto-affiliation constitutes an important variable in the processes of exo-affiliation. The process of racial auto-affiliation is part of a larger process that constructs the identity of a human being and it indisputably appears as the basis of all processes of racial affiliation that an individual establishes and, hence, orient him in his personal relationships.

To provide backing to the racial auto-affiliation during the field investigation of **Racial relations and ethnicity in contemporary Cuban society**, the interviewed subjects offered spontaneously different arguments which can be summarized as follows: first, the subject's own racial characteristics, his phenotype; the racial characteristics of his parents or other ancestors (skin color, type of hair and facial features are mentioned most often), his genotype, and the social milieu where he grew up. There were particular cases, such as children of single or divorce mothers, where the subjects affiliated themselves according to the maternal racial group.

This process of racial affiliation becomes more complex, primarily in those individuals whose phenotype may resemble those of the more extreme racial groups. As may be seen in the following table prepared from a sample of mestizo subjects in the cities of La Habana, Santiago de Cuba y Santa Clara:

²⁴ Oficina Nacional de Estadísticas, *ibid.*

AUTO-AFFILIATION OF THE SUBJECTS

Racial Affiliation of the Subject	W	B	M	Total
W	88			88
B		44		44
M	26	90	116	232
TOTAL	114	134	116	364

Source: Sample obtained in the cities of La Habana, Santiago de Cuba and Santa Clara for the project **Racial relations and ethnicity in contemporary Cuban society**.

It turned out that the only group that had no correspondence between auto-affiliation and that assigned by the investigator (or exo-affiliation) was the mestizos²⁵ due to the great phenotypical variability that exists in the country, primarily in Santiago de Cuba and La Habana. In Santa Clara, where there was a strong tendency for mestizos to declare themselves blacks, superior to the choice of seeing themselves as mestizos, the explicit criteria was the existence of only two races, white and black. There were individuals whose mixture was evident while others who closely resembled blacks. Nonetheless, members of either group would indistinctly associate themselves as blacks or mestizos, reason enough to affirm that the phenotype was not the only element for this lack of correspondence.

Among the subjects who auto-affiliated as blacks, some of the criteria used was *“my father is black”, “my family is black”, “I live here... in the solar”*. In the case of whites, who were fewer in the sample, there was no reluctance to recognize that a close relative, parents or grandparents, were mestizos or even blacks: *“I have some of black in me... look at my body...”*, expressed a mestizo woman who auto-affiliated as white and who, subsequently, declared her maternal grandmother as black.

From these results we can infer that two factors weigh heavily in auto-affiliations among blacks: the genotype and the socio-cultural aspects; whereas among whites, phenotype was predominant. In the last cases, different regional traditions can be influencing the racial exo-affiliation. The popular perception, something that could be observed in Santiago de Cuba, allows for a greater degree of flexibility in the oriental provinces. (Espina, González, Pérez, 2003).

This is not a small problem since from a true racial affiliation we can understand many of the phenomena which are produced in Cuban society.

The tendency for whites to be over-represented in higher education is another element which widens the racial inequality gap. By the end of the 1980s, a greater proportion of black students finished their studies upon reaching ninth grade, while

²⁵ To obtain this sample, investigators visited the homes on more than one occasion, almost always three, for more than two hours on the average. From the close rapport between the investigator and the family, where photo albums of weddings, birthdays would show members of the family not residing in the home, it was possible to assign a more accurate racial affiliation of the individual. The investigator would ask the subject about his racial affiliation, added what he observed in terms of the phenotypical characteristics of the subject and, finally, wrote down the conclusion based upon all the family data that he had obtained.

mestizos had a strong presence in technical school and whites were the majority in the universities. In the Institutos Pre-universitarios en el Campo (a modality of mid-level studies which does not require a high degree of merit-based achievements to gain entry and whose quality is comparatively inferior in vocational preparation), the proportion of blacks and mestizos reached 51%, while in the Institutos Pre-universitarios Vocacionales de Ciencias Exactas (which, in contrast to the previous modality, have high requirements for entry and performance) it reached 40 %. (Domínguez y Díaz, 1997)²⁶.

A study carried out with the students entering higher education during 2004 confirms the over-representation of whites to this modality of study. (González, 2006).

Access to day-time higher education according to skin color

From those who take the test						
Skin Color	Test takers	%	Enter	%	Do not enter	%
Whites	12704	62.65	8883	69.92	3821	30.08%
Blacks	2543	12.54	1301	51.16	1242	48.84%
Mestizos	5032	24.81	2847	56.58	2185	43.42%
Total	20279	100,00	13031	64.26	7248	35.74%
From those who enter						
Skin Color	MES	%	INDER	%	MINSAP	%
Whites	5158	58.07	918	10.33	2807	31.60%
Blacks	630	48.42	228	17.52	443	34.05%
Mestizos	1355	47.59	444	15.60	1048	36.81%
Total	7143	54.82	1590	12.2	4298	32.98%

Source: Table constructed on the basis of data from Centro de Estudios para el Perfeccionamiento de la Educación Superior. Base de datos de Ingreso, 2004. Obtained from Niuva Gonzáles, 2006.

Today, there exist new programs denominated Programas de la Revolución, among which we find universal university education. As part of this one, each municipal dependency obtains a university with specific careers targeted for students in other programs – social workers, teachers, unemployed youth – where blacks and mestizos have a high degree of participation. But these are young programs which have not been sufficiently studied.

Another investigation using data from the Household Surveys in La Habana demonstrated that the 1 and 2 deciles (groups with the lowest income levels) are

²⁶ We thank the information provided by Doctor Mayra Espina.

disproportionately composed of black and mestizo families. Moreover, in these deciles we find 36% and 29% of the families whose schooling level is inferior to 9 years. In contrast, approximately 68% of the families in decile 9 (which begins to include the groups with the highest income levels) are white, and only 18% of these households have a schooling level inferior to 9 years. (See, Añé L, Ferriol A, Ramos M, 2004).

Occupation by skin color of the population above 15 years of age does not present marked differences among the racial groups, although the percentages to the interior of these groups (97.11 %, 97.01 %, 96.68 %, for whites, blacks and mestizos, respectively) do show a better figure for whites in comparison with the other two groups.

ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION ABOVE 15 YEARS OF AGE BY ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND SKIN COLOR

	CUBA	WHITES	%	BLACKS	%	MULATOS OR MESTIZOS	%
TOTAL	4 424 650	2 829 741	63.95	528 571	11.94	1 066 338	24.09
EMPLOYED	4 291 766	2 747 970	64.02	512 809	11.94	1 030 987	24.02
UNEMPLOYED	132 884	81 771	61.53	15 762	11.86	35 351	26.60

Source: Censo de población y vivienda, 2002.

The occupational distribution by race, data for which could be obtained only for 1995, shows widespread participation of whites in all occupations; something that is normal given that this group (PEA) in Cuba is the majority. In contrast, statistics show that black men are primarily employed in construction, transportation and communications, while (primarily black) women work in the agriculture and cattle sector, transport and communication. All of these occupations provide the lowest salaries. (For more details, see, Catasús, Valle and San Marfil, 2000). From this we can infer the presence of blacks in economically disadvantageous positions due to the inequalities in their ability to accede to better ones.²⁷

In addition to the racial gap, there exists a territorial gap, where we see an over-representation of blacks and mestizos in the rural zones

POPULATION BY SKIN COLOR ACCORDING TO RESIDENCIAL ZONE

	BOTH	URBAN	%	RURAL	%
TOTAL	11 177 743	8 479 329	75.85	2 698 414	24.15
WHITES	7 271 926	5 522 013	75.93	1 749 913	24.07

²⁷ The author thanks Viviana Togore for this information.

BLACKS	1 126 894	959 081	85.10	167 813	14.90
MESTIZOS O MULATOS	2 778 923	1 998 235	71.90	780 688	28.10

Source: Censo de población y vivienda, 2002.

Investigator Lucy Martín, who has followed the processes of racial dynamics in the rural zone, asserts that the tendencies “betray a gradual ‘darkening’ in the rural zone”²⁸.

Despite the obvious advances made by each racial group, primarily by blacks and mestizos, the inherited gaps which have not been addressed in a differentiated fashion²⁹ and those that opened up during the conditions of crisis and reforms during the 1990s have allowed the reproduction of disadvantages not only in the economic sense but social as well.

²⁸ See work included in this seminar.

²⁹ In a diagnostic study about racial relations carried out among formal and informal community leaders in three popular councils of La Habana, those in position of leadership in the Popular Council and the government considered that there should be an explicit program towards those groups in the same way that there exists one for infants, youth and women.

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