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De Antillianen. WILLEM KOOT & ANCO RINGELING. Muiderberg, The Netherlands: Dick Coutinho, *Migranten in de Nederlandse Samenleving* nr. 1, 1984. 175 pp. (Paper Dfl. 24.50)

The study of ethnic minorities in the Netherlands is characterized by a proliferation of predominantly descriptive publications. While studies of migrant groups have greatly increased over the past years, publications that analyze the social problems of ethnic groups from a theoretical point of view are lagging behind. So, we depend almost completely on descriptive studies for information on ethnic groups in the Netherlands. This is cause for concern because most of these studies leave unanswered major questions about relevant social issues.

The recent study by Koot and Ringeling is no exception to this general trend. To illustrate this, I will first summarize the contents and then cite two examples of limitations that are inherent in this kind of descriptive study. The book consists of three parts. The first, "Sociografie van de Nederlandse Antillen," deals with a variety of subjects including climate, education, and family structure in the Netherlands Antilles. The second part of the book, "De migratie van Antillianen," discusses patterns of migration in particular between the Netherlands Antilles and the Netherlands. In Part Three, "De positie van Antillianen in Nederland," the authors examine the position of Antilleans who migrated to the Netherlands. Attention is given in particular to their position in the fields of housing, education, and the labor market. Thus, the book provides data on a variety of important subjects. In this respect it can be considered as a source of useful material for those who need general information about this Dutch Caribbean society and its inhabitants both in their homeland and in the Netherlands.

However, the book has some limitations that are probably inherent in this kind of descriptive study. In terms of some of the most relevant social problems, it leaves major questions unanswered. I cite two examples. Referring to the policy of the Dutch Government concerning housing of Antilleans and their dispersion among the Dutch, the authors list a number of objections made by the Antilleans' organizations in the Netherlands. One of these objections is that "dispersion will not necessarily lead to integration. Studies in this field are not conclusive" ("Spreiding hoeft niet te leiden tot integratie. Onderzoekingen in deze richting leveren in elk geval geen eenduidige resultaten op" – p. 109). The authors simply report this statement of the Antilleans, without any comment or further analysis of the issue. This is surprising, since the link between dispersion and integration is one of the most

controversial issues in discussions among social scientists in the Netherlands.

Comparing Antilleans and Surinamese schoolchildren in the Netherlands, the authors conclude that the proportion of Antilleans who attend more academic types of schools exceeds that for the Surinamers (p. 114). Readers who expect to be told why the figure for Antilleans (43 per cent) greatly exceeds that for children from Suriname (26 per cent) will be disappointed. While the figures presented may be correct, the authors' statement makes no sense without further analysis of the data. This is because the authors fail to show that the groups are comparable in this respect. If, for example the social composition of the two groups differs greatly, the authors' conclusion may be misleading. It would have been wiser to discuss first the social composition and other relevant aspects concerning the two groups, before drawing such a striking conclusion.

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