

Blatant and subtle prejudice: dimensions, determinants, and consequences; some comments on Pettigrew and Meertens

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Abstract

Although it has become common to suggest a conceptual distinction between traditional and contemporary forms of prejudice, Pettigrew and Meertens have actually attempted to distinguish the two empirically and developed measures to gauge each. Replication of their study, on the distinction between blatant and subtle prejudice, discloses a number of methodological flaws that have led to debatable substantial conclusions. We found two distinct measures, however, substantially different from the ones proposed by Pettigrew and Meertens. Our model shows, by all available indices, a better fit to the data: a first broad factor labelled general prejudice, and a small second factor labelled perceived cultural differences. The first factor is well explained by a number of social characteristics; the second is rather poorly explained and has a rather poor discriminatory power. The first one has strong effects on some consequential variables whereas the second has hardly any effects. Other evidence, considered to be crucial by Pettigrew and Meertens, contains other methodological flaws, i.e. the neglect of interdependent items. After this correction, their piece of evidence turns out to be artificial. As a benefit to future research, we try to clarify conditions for distinguishing empirically and conceptually between traditional and contemporary prejudice. Copyright © 2001 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

INTRODUCTION

Unequivocal assertions of the inferiority of ethnic and religious groups have sharply declined from the 1940s, at least in the United States (Schuman, Steeh, & Bobo, 1985). However, some European

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countries have shown increasing ethnic intolerance (Coenders & Scheepers, 1998; Winkler, 1999) and many researchers and politicians fear that these phenomena are just the tip of the iceberg. It has frequently been suggested that a newer, more subtle form of prejudice has taken the place of older, more blatant forms of bigotry.¹ As yet, there have been only a handful of efforts to distinguish the two empirically. We will focus on the most influential in European research, proposed by Pettigrew and Meertens in a series of papers (Meertens & Pettigrew, 1997; Pettigrew, 1991; Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995).

The merit of Pettigrew and Meertens' project is that, instead of drawing merely verbal distinctions, it attempts the actual effort of distinguishing empirically between these two forms of prejudice. Their conclusion, in 1995, was quite cautious, stating that 'more experience with the scales is necessary before a choice can be made between three possible [factorial] structures' (Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995, p. 71). However, in 1997 they suggested, less cautiously, that 'Subtle prejudice against outgroups can be measured reliably and separately from the more traditional form of blatant prejudice' (Meertens & Pettigrew, 1997, p. 54). Other researchers have applied these measurements, without too many reservations (Hamberger & Hewstone, 1997; Robinson, Shaver, & Wrightsman, 1999; Wagner & Zick, 1995). Pettigrew and Meertens themselves present their scales in other publications also as being incontestable (Meertens, 1997; Pettigrew, 1997, 1998). In this contribution, however, we take their cautious statement, dating back to 1995, as an invitation to provide evidence for alternative structures of their scales, their dimensions, determinants, and consequences.

Replication of their analyses, taking advantage of exactly the measures they employed and drawing on precisely the same data, reveals a number of methodological flaws. These flaws, as we shall show, have led to debatable conclusions as to (1) the dimensions, (2) the determinants, and (3) the consequences of different forms of prejudice. However, replicating their analyses helps to reach an overarching constructive rather than critical objective: to specify what is required conceptually, operationally and empirically if the two forms of prejudice are to be distinguished validly and reliably.

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

Pettigrew and Meertens claim that their conception of 'blatant' prejudice is derived from repeatedly emerging components centred on 'an antipathy based upon a faulty and inflexible generalization' (Allport, 1958, p. 10) and expressed in 'opposition to intimate contact with the outgroup' and 'perceived threat from and rejection of the outgroup' (Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995, p. 58). By contrast, their conception of 'subtle' prejudice, though drawing on previous research, is an original contribution. Subtle prejudice, as they conceive it, also rests on an antipathy to an outgroup but it additionally consists of three components: the defence of traditional values, the exaggeration of cultural differences, and the denial of positive emotions (Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995, pp. 58–59). The upper panel of Figure 1 reproduces the items in their measure of blatant prejudice; the lower panel, the items in their measure of subtle prejudice. Although we will not stress the issue, the classification of some of the items seems rather arbitrary.²

¹Compare Verberk (1999) for an extensive overview. Contemporary racial attitudes are, for instance, referred to as: 'symbolic racism' (Kinder & Sears, 1981; McConahay, Hardee, & Batts, 1981; McConahay & Hough, 1976; Sears, 1988; Sears & Kinder, 1985); 'new racism' (Barker, 1981; Verkuyten & Masson, 1995); 'everyday racism' (Essed, 1984, 1991); 'aversive racism' (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1991; Gaertner & Dovidio, 1977, 1986); and '*laissez-faire*' racism (Bobo, Kluegel, & Smith, 1997).

²For example, Pettigrew and Meertens identify, as a measure of blatant prejudice, 'Most Turks living here who receive support from welfare could get along without it if they tried'. This item, worded exactly the same except for referring to blacks rather than Turks, has been used for two decades by Kinder and Sears (1981) as a measure of symbolic racism. And an item measuring anti-intimacy, i.e. another aspect of blatant prejudice, in Pettigrew and Meertens' contribution ('I would not mind if a Turkish person who had a similar economic background as mine joined my close family by marriage') is highly similar to an item previously developed by Kleinpenning and Hagendoorn (1993) and Kleinpenning (1993) to tap aversive racism. It is, to say the least, confusing to take items previously developed to assess one form of racism and present them—without justification or indeed notification—as measures of a different form of racism.

THREAT AND REJECTION ITEMS (Blatant Prejudice)

1. Turks have jobs that the Dutch should have. (strongly agree to strongly disagree).
2. Most Turks living here who receive support from welfare could get along without it if they tried. (strongly agree to strongly disagree).
3. Dutch people and Turks can never be really comfortable with each other, even if they are close friends. (strongly agree to strongly disagree).
4. Most politicians in the Netherlands care too much about Turks and not enough about the average Dutch person. (strongly agree to strongly disagree).
5. Turks come from less able races and this explains why they are not as well off as most Dutch people. (strongly agree to strongly disagree).
6. How different or similar do you think Turks living here are to other Dutch people like yourself – in how honest they are? (very different, somewhat different, somewhat similar, or very similar).

INTIMACY ITEMS (Blatant Prejudice)

1. Suppose that a child of yours had children with a person of very different colour and physical characteristics than your own. Do you think you would be very bothered, bothered, bothered a little, or not bothered at all, if your grandchildren did not physically resemble the people on your side of the family?
 2. I would be willing to have sexual relationships with a Turk. (strongly agree to strongly disagree) (reversed scoring).
 3. I would not mind if a suitably qualified Turk was appointed as my boss. (strongly agree to strongly disagree) (reversed scoring).
 4. I would not mind if a Turkish person who had a similar economic background as mine joined my close family by marriage. (strongly agree to strongly disagree) (reversed scoring).
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TRADITIONAL VALUES ITEMS (Subtle Prejudice)

1. Turks living here should not push themselves where they are not wanted. (strongly agree to strongly disagree).
2. Many other groups have come to the Netherlands and overcome prejudice and worked their way up. Turks should do the same without any special favour. (strongly agree to strongly disagree).
3. It is just a matter of some people not trying hard enough. If Turks would only try harder they could be as well off as Dutch people. (strongly agree to strongly disagree).
4. Turks living here teach their children values and skills different from those required to be successful in the Netherlands. (strongly agree to strongly disagree).

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES ITEMS (Subtle Prejudice)

- How different or similar do you think Turks living here are to other Dutch people like yourself (very different, somewhat different, somewhat similar, or very similar)?
1. In the values that they teach their children?
 2. In their religious beliefs or practices?
 3. In their sexual values or sexual practices?
 4. In the language that they speak?

POSITIVE EMOTIONS ITEMS (Subtle Prejudice)

- Have you ever felt the following ways about Turks and their families living here (very often, fairly often, not too often, or never)?
1. How often have you felt sympathy for Turks living here? (reversed scoring).
 2. How often have you felt admiration for Turks living here? (reversed scoring).
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Figure 1. The blatant and subtle prejudice items of Pettigrew and Meertens

Relying on this classification, Pettigrew and Meertens proceed in two steps. They began with a pool of fifty items and then, by unspecified procedures, winnowed the number to twenty, more specifically: 10 items to measure blatant and 10 items to measure subtle prejudice. First, separate sub-scales of subtle and blatant prejudice were constructed on the basis of exploratory factor analyses on each set of

10 items separately, taking advantage of independent probability samples in France, the Netherlands, Great Britain and (former) West Germany (Reif & Melich, 1991). Each of the sets turned out to be factorially complex, at least not one-dimensional.³ Then, a confirmatory factor analysis was undertaken on the items, assessing a variety of competing models: a one-factor model, an uncorrelated two-factor model, a correlated two-factor model and a second-order hierarchical model (Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995, pp. 65–66). In all models, except for the first one, items they considered to measure blatant prejudice were constrained to load on a distinct factor and items they considered to measure subtle prejudice were constrained to load on another factor. Though results were somewhat unstable across national samples, a set of two factor models demonstrated superior fits, leading them to conclude that the two forms of prejudice, though correlated, are empirically distinguishable.

Some features of their factor analyses are difficult to understand.⁴ We like to focus, however, on Pettigrew and Meertens' claim to have distinguished two 'types' of prejudice on the basis of their factor analysis. In fact, they performed exploratory factor analysis on the 'blatant' and the 'subtle' items *separately*. Then, in the next step, they constrained their confirmatory factor analysis to insure that no items that they believe measure blatant prejudice can load on the subtle factor and no items that they believe measure subtle prejudice can load on the blatant factor. This procedure is made explicit (see Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995, p. 65, note 3). Separately analysing items hypothesised to measure two types of prejudice simply begs the question of whether the two types of prejudice are empirically distinguishable in an analysis on all items jointly. It is necessary therefore to reanalyse the pool of prejudice items but then without the constraints they imposed, except for one constraint: there should be two distinct factors, a crucial hypothesis for which Pettigrew and Meertens provided convincing theoretical arguments. If analysis of all items jointly shows that items Pettigrew and Meertens consider to indicate blatant prejudice refer to one distinct factor and items they consider to indicate subtle prejudice refer to another distinct factor, there is 'empirical justification for conceptualizing blatant and subtle as two types of prejudice' (Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995, p. 65).

THE DIMENSIONALITY OF PREJUDICE: DISTINCT DIMENSIONS?

Exploratory Analyses

To test Pettigrew and Meertens' claim, we first performed a principal component analysis with a varimax rotation, just as Pettigrew and Meertens did, but now on all 20 items jointly, as well as a

³Meertens and Pettigrew (1997, pp. 58–59) found that the blatant item pool comprises two distinguishable factors and the subtle item pool comprises three. However, we noticed some disturbing inconsistencies between the results reported in Pettigrew and Meertens (1995) and Meertens and Pettigrew (1997). For instance, in the 1997 article, Meertens and Pettigrew described that they found three factors related to subtle prejudice, by means of exploratory factor analysis in all seven samples. In the 1995 article, they reported different sets of factors: in five samples they found three factors whereas in the other two samples they only found two factors.

⁴First, a principal component analysis, as used by Pettigrew and Meertens, ignores the distinction between common and unique variance contained in the items, as against a principal factor analysis. The latter analysis does distinguish between common and unique variance and hence provides opportunities to consider measurement errors which are not yet known but of course present (Kim & Mueller, 1986). Since for a number of items no prior knowledge is available on measurement errors, it would have been wiser to perform principal factor analysis. Second, to perform a varimax rotation, as Pettigrew and Meertens did, implies that one expects non-correlated factors, but Pettigrew and Meertens expected—and indeed observed—the dimensions of prejudice to be highly correlated. Therefore, applying an oblique rotation would correspond stronger to the expectation that different forms of prejudice are interrelated. Recently, Pedersen and Walker (1997) followed the same procedure we would prefer. Third, Pettigrew and Meertens did not assess the comparative fit of alternative factor models for different samples. Like Pettigrew and Meertens, we removed respondents belonging to minority groups from our analyses. Missing answers on the items were substituted by respondent's mean scores on the other items answered, just as Pettigrew and Meertens had done.

principal factor analysis using an oblique rotation (see note 4). The analyses, summarised in Table 1(a), uncovered four factors. These analyses, both the component analysis as well as the factor analysis, showed at least one factor that contained *both* items categorised as blatant (referring to threat and rejection) *and* items conceptualised as subtle (referring to traditional values). However, if Pettigrew and Meertens' distinction between blatant and subtle prejudice were valid, these items should load on distinct factors. Given the theoretical argument of Pettigrew and Meertens on the distinction between two forms of prejudice (i.e. traditional versus modern prejudice), and given the modesty of the final

Table 1(a). Exploratory analyses on 20 'blatant' and 'subtle' prejudice items ($N=3806$): results from a principal factor analysis (PF) with oblimin rotation (pattern matrix), and results from a principal component analysis (PC) with varimax rotation (rotated component matrix)

Item	Factor 1		Factor 2		Factor 3		Factor 4		Communality	
	PF	PC	PF	PC	PF	PC	PF	PC	PF	PC
TR 1 (B)	0.38	0.58	0.03	0.37	-0.37	0.09	0.02	0.09	0.44	0.50
TR 2 (B)	0.53	0.48	-0.01	0.51	-0.24	0.04	-0.04	-0.00	0.42	0.49
TR 3 (B)	0.41	0.54	0.12	0.40	-0.31	0.19	-0.05	-0.00	0.42	0.49
TR 4 (B)	0.55	0.44	0.05	0.53	-0.19	0.10	-0.11	-0.10	0.40	0.50
TR 5 (B)	0.35	0.50	-0.04	0.35	-0.28	-0.02	-0.02	-0.06	0.27	0.38
TR 6 (B)	0.23	0.52	0.19	0.22	-0.30	0.27	-0.01	-0.01	0.30	0.39
I 1 (B)	-0.03	0.70	0.00	-0.04	-0.63	0.06	0.08	0.21	0.42	0.55
I 2 (B)	0.09	0.57	0.03	0.14	-0.46	0.09	0.21	0.37	0.40	0.49
I 3 (B)	-0.00	0.76	0.07	0.04	-0.72	0.16	0.08	0.22	0.60	0.66
I 4 (B)	-0.04	0.78	0.04	0.05	-0.81	0.15	0.12	0.28	0.72	0.71
TV 1 (S)	0.46	0.15	0.03	0.57	0.01	0.07	0.20	0.31	0.33	0.45
TV 2 (S)	0.54	0.01	-0.02	0.67	0.12	0.00	0.11	0.18	0.29	0.48
TV 3 (S)	0.55	0.11	-0.02	0.66	0.07	0.01	0.08	0.11	0.30	0.46
TV 4 (S)	0.37	0.13	0.27	0.49	0.03	0.36	0.06	0.09	0.27	0.39
CD 1 (S)	0.07	0.10	0.66	0.17	0.04	0.73	0.05	0.09	0.46	0.58
CD 2 (S)	-0.06	0.03	0.71	0.01	0.07	0.77	-0.01	0.02	0.46	0.60
CD 3 (S)	0.07	0.18	0.49	0.13	-0.06	0.61	0.03	0.08	0.30	0.43
CD 4 (S)	-0.09	0.12	0.54	-0.07	-0.06	0.67	-0.04	-0.02	0.29	0.47
PE 1 (S)	0.10	0.30	-0.01	0.26	-0.15	0.05	0.63	0.70	0.55	0.64
PE 2 (S)	-0.01	0.15	0.03	0.14	-0.09	0.08	0.60	0.80	0.40	0.68
Eigenvalue	5.39	5.95	1.21	1.82	0.86	1.43	0.56	1.12		
% variance	26.9	29.8	6.1	9.1	4.3	7.2	2.8	5.6		

Note: Bold figures indicate values ≥ 0.20 . Presumed 'blatant' and 'subtle' prejudice items are indicated with respectively B and S. Furthermore, each item refers to one of the following types of prejudice (see Figure 1):

- TR Threat and Rejection
- I (anti-) Intimacy
- TV Traditional Values
- CD Cultural Differences
- PE (denial of) Positive Emotions

Table 1(b). Exploratory analysis on 20 'blatant' and 'subtle' prejudice items ($N=3806$): interfactor correlations of a principal factor analysis with oblimin rotation

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Factor 1	-			
Factor 2	0.28	-		
Factor 3	-0.47	-0.34	-	
Factor 4	0.42	0.19	-0.33	-

eigenvalues of the last two factors derived from the principal factor analysis (<1), we decided to explore a bi-factorial solution.

Confirmatory Analyses and Cross-national Robustness

In order to rule out the possibility of different results merely due to different analyses, we again performed two analyses, both extracting two factors on the pool of 20 items jointly: (1) a confirmatory principal component analysis with varimax rotation, and (2) a confirmatory principal factor analysis using oblimin rotation. As Table 2 shows, both analyses clearly and similarly show two distinct factors. The oblique solution of the principal factor analysis shows that the factors are moderately correlated (0.36).

The first is a broad factor, explaining 26.5% in case of factor analysis and 29.8% in case of component analysis. Given the number and variety of items loading on this factor, it seems justified to label this dimension as general prejudice. The second factor, by contrast, is small, explaining only 6.0% of the variance in case of factor analysis and 9.1% in case of component analysis. Since only the cultural differences items strongly load on it, we label it the perception of cultural differences factor.

The results of the confirmatory analysis are at odds with Pettigrew and Meertens' conceptualisation of both blatant and subtle prejudice. As Table 2 shows, two of the three components that they contend

Table 2. Confirmatory analyses on 20 'blatant' and 'subtle' prejudice items with two extracted factors ($N = 3806$): results from a principal factor analysis (PF) with oblimin rotation (pattern matrix), and results from a principal component analysis (PC) with varimax rotation (rotated component matrix)

Item		Factor 1		Factor 2		Communality	
		PF	PC	PF	PC	PF	PC
Threat and Rejection 1	('blatant')	0.65	0.67	0.01	0.15	0.43	0.47
Threat and Rejection 2	('blatant')	0.62	0.64	-0.04	0.08	0.37	0.42
Threat and Rejection 3	('blatant')	0.59	0.62	0.10	0.24	0.40	0.44
Threat and Rejection 4	('blatant')	0.56	0.59	0.02	0.13	0.32	0.37
Threat and Rejection 5	('blatant')	0.52	0.55	-0.06	0.03	0.25	0.31
Threat and Rejection 6	('blatant')	0.45	0.49	0.18	0.32	0.29	0.34
Intimacy 1	('blatant')	0.54	0.56	0.02	0.16	0.30	0.34
Intimacy 2	('blatant')	0.60	0.62	0.02	0.16	0.37	0.41
Intimacy 3	('blatant')	0.64	0.65	0.09	0.26	0.46	0.49
Intimacy 4	('blatant')	0.69	0.69	0.07	0.25	0.51	0.54
Traditional Values 1	('subtle')	0.50	0.55	-0.02	0.05	0.25	0.30
Traditional Values 2	('subtle')	0.41	0.46	-0.07	-0.04	0.16	0.22
Traditional Values 3	('subtle')	0.45	0.50	-0.06	-0.02	0.19	0.25
Traditional Values 4	('subtle')	0.34	0.39	0.22	0.34	0.22	0.26
Cultural Differences 1	('subtle')	0.08	0.16	0.63	0.72	0.44	0.54
Cultural Differences 2	('subtle')	-0.10	-0.01	0.71	0.77	0.46	0.59
Cultural Differences 3	('subtle')	0.15	0.20	0.47	0.62	0.30	0.42
Cultural Differences 4	('subtle')	-0.04	0.00	0.55	0.69	0.29	0.47
Positive Emotions 1	('subtle')	0.58	0.61	-0.04	0.06	0.32	0.38
Positive Emotions 2	('subtle')	0.42	0.46	-0.00	0.07	0.17	0.21
Eigenvalue		5.30	5.95	1.19	1.82		
% variance		26.5	29.8	6.0	9.1		
Inter-factor correlation in PF		0.36					

Note: Bold figures indicate values ≥ 0.20 .

Table 3. Goodness of fit indices for three LISREL models (multi-sample analyses)

Model	Chi-sq.	df	Chi-sq./df	RMR	st. RMR	GFI	PGFI	CFI
(1) Two-factor model of Pettigrew and Meertens: Blatant and Subtle Prejudice	5928.25	1183	5.01	0.13	0.071	0.83	4.70	0.78
(2) Two-factor model: General Prejudice and Cultural Differences	5120.14	1183	4.33	0.12	0.066	0.85	4.79	0.82
(3) One-factor model	6400.59	1190	5.38	0.13	0.072	0.82	4.67	0.76

define subtle prejudice—the defence of traditional values and the denial of positive emotions—load on exactly the same factor as both of the aspects—opposition to intimate contact with the outgroup and perceived threat from and rejection of the outgroup—that they contend define blatant prejudice. Given this evidence, it seems rather difficult to maintain that this pool of items taps two different kinds of prejudice if the items supposedly tapping different types of prejudice load on exactly the same factor.

Given the possibility of cross-national variation, we have tested rigorously the robustness of this structure using the multi-sample option in LISREL8 (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993), a procedure that has the advantage of providing overall fit statistics whereas Pettigrew and Meertens merely provide fit statistics per sample. This procedure enables us to compare explicitly three alternative factor models: the two-factor model suggested, preferred and elaborated upon by Pettigrew and Meertens, also used in subsequent studies of other researchers; the two-factor model we have derived; and a one-factor model tested by Pettigrew and Meertens but also proposed by Sniderman and Tetlock (1986), who argued that it may be possible to capture only a broad factor tapping a general susceptibility to prejudice.⁵ We accordingly specified the same principal factor analysis with: (1) two correlated factors each containing 10 items; (2) two correlated factors, the first containing 16 items and the second 4; and (3) a single factor, with 20 items loading on it.

The results, summarised in Table 3, show that model 2 exhibits the best fit in terms of all fit indices. The model proposed by Pettigrew and Meertens has the second-best fit, but as a comparison of the fit indices makes plain, its fit is worse than model 2. The model representing all the items in a single factor has the worst fit.

Conclusions on the Dimensionality of Prejudice

These results lead us to conclude that it is not possible to accept Pettigrew and Meertens' claim to have distinguished empirically two distinct forms of prejudice, one blatant and the other subtle, on three grounds. First, Pettigrew and Meertens have not actually tested this claim empirically as they merely performed analyses on the separate sets of items; one set they consider to measure blatant prejudice, the other set they consider to measure subtle prejudice. Second, the actual tests on all items jointly rather than separately, shows a factor solution substantially different from and in fact at odds with the one that they have proposed. We ruled out the possibility that this conclusion is due to different methodological tools because both exploratory as well as confirmatory factor analyses in different variants showed substantially the same results. Third, in the actual test on the cross-national robustness

⁵At this point we did not follow Pettigrew and Meertens who also specified a hierarchical model in which two first-order latent factors are considered to load equally on a second-order latent factor. This model in effect proposes that both blatant and subtle prejudice are equally valid measurements of a more general latent prejudicial attitude. If these measurements are considered to be equally valid, then the question becomes what the merit would be of such a distinction. Moreover, in none of the studies following Pettigrew and Meertens has this hierarchical model ever been used, as far as we know.

of different factorial models, their model shows an inferior fit to the model that we have empirically derived from the data. These tests leads us to prefer a model which posits one factor labelled as *general prejudice* (assessed by 16 items) and another factor labelled as the *perception of cultural differences* (assessed by 4 items) as the best-fitting model.

GENERAL PREJUDICE AND PERCEPTION OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCES: DIFFERENT DETERMINANTS?

As did Pettigrew and Meertens, we will now set out to evaluate the empirical value of the measurements we derived by considering both their determinants and consequences. More specifically, we will test to what extent these measurements can specify relationships with independent and with consequential variables.

Comments on the Measurements

The perception of cultural differences measure consists of four questions asking to what extent minority groups—the particular group varies from sample to sample—are considered to be different in religious beliefs, the language they speak, the values they teach to their children, and their sexual practices. Pettigrew and Meertens (1995, pp. 59–61) contend that exaggerating group differences in one or more of these respects is an expression of subtle prejudice. But if one examines the actual content of the questions (Figure 1), it is evident that many of the groups do differ in many of these respects. Perceiving cultural differences may be a *conditio sine qua non* for forms of prejudice, but are perceptions of cultural differences *per se* an expression of (subtle) prejudice? A theoretically oriented answer to this question requires some definition of prejudice. In recent overviews of definitions on prejudice (Brown, 1995; Jones, 1997), it is quite strongly suggested that it is not just the perception of differences but rather the evaluation of perceived differences that is one of the crucial aspects of prejudice. As it is exactly this explicit evaluation that is absent in this measurement, the empirical answer to the question whether the perception of cultural differences can serve as a measure of prejudice is the more pressing. Moreover, how can one tell that a respondent exaggerates cultural differences? Consider a Dutch respondent who is asked to what extent Turks differ in their religious beliefs or a British respondent who is asked to what extent Asians differ in their language. In saying ‘very different’, the respondent is acknowledging a social reality, not necessarily expressing a subtle prejudice. As distinct from the items in the general prejudice factor, which are frankly evaluative in character, the items on cultural differences register predominantly perceptions but not necessarily exaggerations nor evaluations.

Just so far as the items on cultural differences tend to measure predominantly perceptions of social reality, we expect rather consensual answers. And indeed: never less than 71% of respondents, and in some cases up to 90% of them, acknowledge differences between the majority and the minorities. These considerations lead us to expect that there may be only minor differences between different categories of people on the perception of cultural differences measure.

Different Social Determinants: Results from Multiple Regression Analysis

To test this assertion we have to consider the determinants of perceptions of cultural differences. If this measure has some of the same determinants as the measure of general prejudice, then it may be reasonable to consider it also to be a measure of prejudice. That is, different forms of prejudice cannot

have entirely different determinants. They nonetheless must, if they are to be genuinely different, have at least partly different sources. We summed the quasi-Likert scores of the constituting variables of both dimensions separately to arrive at the dependent variables for the regression analysis. We have accordingly replicated and expanded Pettigrew and Meertens' analysis of the social determinants of the two factors, though our analytical procedure differs slightly from theirs, including as many similar predictors as they did for reasons of comparability.⁶ We used multiple regression analysis with dummy variables for all non-metric variables in the equation, because it has the potential of sharpening interpretations: the resulting unstandardised regression coefficients (*b*'s) show differences between the social category at hand and the reference category (Hardy, 1993). In case of (quasi-) metric independent variables, we report the standardised regression coefficients (beta's).

Table 4. Multiple regression analyses on general prejudice and cultural differences (*n* = 2302)

	General prejudice			Cultural differences		
	<i>b</i>	beta	<i>p</i> -value	<i>b</i>	beta	<i>p</i> -value
Education (finished at age)						
≤14	0.266		0.000	0.096		0.154
15	0.220		0.000	-0.014		0.835
16	0.152		0.002	0.036		0.565
17	0.138		0.007	0.055		0.400
18	0.076		0.138	0.067		0.309
19	0.034		0.606	-0.127		0.132
20	0.144		0.038	0.021		0.810
21	-0.086		0.238	0.060		0.519
≥22 (ref. category)	-		-	-		-
Social Position						
Higher management, professionals (ref. category)	-		-	-		-
Middle management	-0.018		0.760	0.131		0.083
Routine white collar	0.100		0.082	0.087		0.237
Shopkeepers, craftsmen, proprietors, farmers, fishermen	0.213		0.002	0.092		0.295
Supervisor	-0.061		0.601	0.176		0.240
Skilled manual worker	0.238		0.000	0.309		0.000
Other manual worker	0.167		0.029	0.076		0.438
Retired	0.153		0.016	0.237		0.004
Working in household	0.145		0.015	0.115		0.130
Student	0.069		0.465	0.000		0.999
Temporarily not working; unemployed	0.169		0.023	0.211		0.027
Church Attendance						
Once a week or more (ref. category)	-		-	-		-
Few times a year	0.083		0.033	0.159		0.001
Never	0.013		0.799	0.065		0.305
No Christian denomination	-0.094		0.048	0.011		0.852
Religiosity						
Religious person (ref. category)	-		-	-		-
Non-religious person	0.029		0.362	-0.023		0.574
Confirmed atheist	0.028		0.632	0.027		0.716
Don't know	0.066		0.257	0.009		0.900

⁶For reasons of comparability with Pettigrew and Meertens (1995, p. 67), we included some predictors (ethnocentrism, racist movement approval and national pride) that may be considered to be consequential variables rather than predictor variables of prejudice. The ethnocentrism index consists of three items, each yielding a favourability rating from 0 to 100 for three groups—southern Europeans, black Africans, and Jews (alpha = 0.78). The approval of racist movement consists of two items—approval of racist movements and disapproval of anti-racist movements (alpha = 0.56).

Table 4. Continued

Income					
Lowest quartile	-0.017	0.701	0.017		0.757
Second quartile	0.025	0.525	0.023		0.655
Third quartile	0.060	0.122	0.054		0.278
Highest quartile (ref. category)	-	-	-		-
No answer, don't know	0.023	0.629	0.062		0.310
Subjective Social Class					
Working class	-0.049	0.350	-0.204		0.002
Lower middle class	-0.023	0.670	-0.091		0.191
Middle class	0.005	0.911	-0.043		0.455
Upper middle or upper class (ref. cat.)	-	-	-		-
Other, refusal, don't know	-0.018	0.812	-0.142		0.137
Individual deprivation		0.003	0.842	0.024	0.305
Expectation personal situation next year		0.014	0.388	-0.007	0.747
Change in economic situation country		0.000	0.997	-0.011	0.608
Change in financial situation household		-0.008	0.642	0.010	0.660
Group relative deprivation		0.102	0.000	0.000	0.987
Size of community		0.024	0.129	0.018	0.407
Friends among minority groups		-0.164	0.000	-0.099	0.000
Minority groups living in neighborhood		0.013	0.443	0.006	0.774
Sex (women)	-0.048	0.119	0.039		0.331
Age		0.075	0.001	-0.026	0.408
Political interest		-0.125	0.000	-0.005	0.825
Political conservatism		0.121	0.000	-0.007	0.764
Ethnocentrism		0.300	0.000	0.161	0.000
Racist movement approval		0.192	0.000	0.034	0.129
National pride		0.092	0.000	-0.007	0.742
Explained variance (R^2)			0.505		0.088

The first factor, which we have suggested captures general prejudice, presents a pattern that fits seamlessly with this interpretation. Table 4 shows that, consistent with previous studies of prejudice, people with lower levels of education prove markedly more susceptible to prejudice than those with higher levels of education (for an extensive recent overview see Vogt, 1997). Similarly, people performing manual labour are more susceptible than higher managers, as are shopkeepers, the unemployed, retirees or people working in the household at home (Schäfer & Six, 1978; Scheepers, Felling, & Peters, 1990; Scheepers, Schmeets, & Felling, 1997). Moreover, those who attend church only a few times a year are more susceptible than those who attend frequently (Coenders & Scheepers, 1998; Eisinga, Felling, & Peters, 1990a,b). Furthermore, older persons tend to score higher than younger; those who see their group as being worse off than minorities score higher than those who do not (i.e. group deprivation). And we find that the more conservative, the more ethnocentric, the more one approves racist movements, the stronger one's feeling of national pride, the stronger one's general prejudice. Finally, the less interested people are in politics, and the less ethnic friends that they have, the higher their scores on the first factor.

By contrast, there are far fewer points of differentiation for scores on the measure of the perception of cultural differences. Perceiving cultural differences appears to be prevalent only among: skilled manual workers, retired persons, and the unemployed as compared to higher managers; those attending church merely a few times a year as compared to frequent church visitors. And it turns out that the less ethnic friends one has, or the more ethnocentric one is, the more cultural differences one perceives. These findings are, of course, worth acknowledging, but they do not add novelties: actually, there is no social category discovered to perceive cultural differences that had not already been discovered

as being generally prejudiced.⁷ In fact, the direct effects of education and age, that Pettigrew and Meertens (1995, p. 68) considered to be rather important, have disappeared. Moreover, those differences that show up on the perception of cultural differences measure are far shallower than differences on the general prejudice measure. This shows up dramatically in contrasting *R*-squares of the two factors. The adjusted amount of explained variance of general prejudice is many times higher (0.505) than of perceived cultural differences, which is almost negligible (0.088). Responses to the perception of cultural differences items are thus socially consensual, as we expected, in a way that responses to the general prejudice factor are not. As such, the perception of cultural differences measure does not specify our insights into the relationships with independent variables. More specific: the discriminatory power of the perception of cultural differences is poor in the sense that it does not bring out social categories to be prejudiced in some other way than the general prejudice measure does.

GENERAL PREJUDICE AND PERCEPTION OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCES: DIFFERENT CONSEQUENCES?

Pettigrew and Meertens also claim that the distinction between subtle and blatant prejudice is useful since both forms have different consequences. Following this rationale, we explore the possibility that the measures we derived from the data—general prejudice and the perception of cultural differences—have differential effects and hence add insights into public consequences of contemporary prejudicial attitudes (cf. Davis, 1985).

Different Consequences: Results from Multiple Regression Analysis

Following Pettigrew and Meertens, we built a scale measuring ‘opposition to immigration’ (Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.77$) and a scale measuring ‘preferred remedies’ (Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.70$), their label, a scale assessing support for policies to promote better relations between the majority group and minority groups. In addition, to increase the opportunity to observe diverse effects, we constructed two additional dependent variables. One measures the extent to which respondents feel that there are too many people of different nationalities, races, religions, and cultures in the country (Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.85$). The second measure assesses the extent to which respondents feel disturbed by the presence of people belonging to other nationalities, races, religions, and cultures (Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.86$). Paralleling their analysis, these four scales are successively regressed against the measures of the two factors derived from our factor analysis. To replicate their procedure more exactly (as in Meertens & Pettigrew, 1997, p. 62), a third independent variable, political conservatism, was also included.

The first factor is manifestly a measure of prejudice. If the second factor also is a measure of prejudice, albeit of a different type, then it too should, at least bivariate, be related to opposition to immigration and public policies to assist minorities, which it is. Moreover, to make the distinction between the two factors useful, inclusion of the second factor in a multivariate analysis should add to the explanation of the consequential variables. Table 5 shows that the impact of the general prejudice measure on the two measures analysed by Pettigrew and Meertens, the opposition to immigration index

⁷There is one minor exception to this rule: the people who consider themselves to belong to the working class perceive *fewer* cultural differences than those who belong to the upper middle or upper class. This finding is rather odd and difficult to interpret unless one assumes that this category is more likely to live close to ethnic minorities and consequently may be more likely to perceive similarities rather than differences.

Table 5. Bivariate correlations and multiple regression analyses on attitudes toward immigrants

	Bivariate correlation	Regression results		
		beta	<i>p</i> -value	<i>R</i> ²
Opposition to immigration scale				0.423 (<i>n</i> = 2867)
General prejudice	0.644	0.606	0.000	
Cultural differences	0.249	0.027	0.081	
Political conservatism	0.276	0.097	0.000	
Preferred remedies scale				0.108 (<i>n</i> = 3276)
General prejudice	0.328	0.333	0.000	
Cultural differences	0.120	0.006	0.714	
Political conservatism	0.075	-0.023	0.176	
Number of minorities scale				0.269 (<i>n</i> = 3322)
General prejudice	0.507	0.464	0.000	
Cultural differences	0.202	0.035	0.029	
Political conservatism	0.244	0.109	0.000	
Disturbance by minorities scale				0.156 (<i>n</i> = 3367)
General prejudice	0.394	0.383	0.000	
Cultural differences	0.170	0.035	0.038	
Political conservatism	0.107	-0.004	0.814	

and the preferred remedies index, is large. However, the impact of the second factor in the multivariate analysis does not even meet conventional levels of statistical significance. Similarly, the impact of general prejudice is much stronger than that of perception of differences on the number of minorities index (0.46 versus 0.04) and disturbance by the presence of minorities index (0.38 versus 0.04).

The implication of these findings should be noted. The modesty in absolute as well as comparative terms of the contribution of perception of cultural differences to policy positions further corroborates our position that it does not specify our insights into relationships with dependent variables. Hence, not much of consequence is gained in explaining policy and other orientations toward or against immigrants by introducing this measurement.

DIFFERENT CORRELATES: RESULTS FROM TYPOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

According to Pettigrew and Meertens (1995, p. 73), the distinction between blatant and subtle prejudice is also useful since it adds insights into the effects of prejudice: 'Subtles [people scoring low on blatant prejudice, but high on subtle prejudice] comply with the [anti-blatant] norm, and express their negative intergroup views only in ostensibly non-prejudiced ways'. Pettigrew and Meertens contend that, by simultaneously taking into account scores on both of their prejudice measures, people can be divided into three types: equalitarians, that is, people who are low on both subtle and blatant prejudice; subtles, that is, people who are high on subtle but low on blatant prejudice; and bigots, that is, people who are high on both subtle and blatant prejudice. The intuition underlying their typology seems to us helpful. People who score high on a measure of subtle prejudice can be classified only as subtle racists if but only if they do not also score high on a measure of blatant prejudice. The Meertens-Pettigrew typology is a way of enforcing this distinction, and applying their typology, they claim to show that subtles are distinctively more likely than out-and-out bigots to support punitive policies against immigrants when an ostensibly nonprejudicial basis for doing so is available. They consider this feature of subtle prejudice to be crucial. Let us, therefore, examine their evidence.

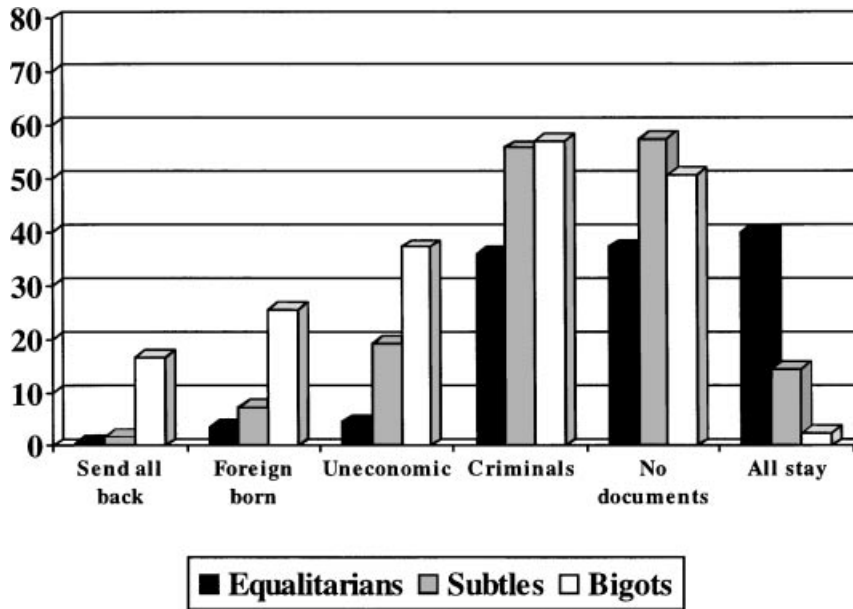


Figure 2(a). Three prejudice types and preferred immigration policies (percentage mentioned; uncontrolled)

To demonstrate the value of their typology, Pettigrew and Meertens focus on responses to a question, which reads as follows: ‘There are a number of policy options concerning the presence of (outgroup) immigrants living here. In your opinion, which is the one policy that the government should adopt in the long run?’ Since some of the policy options were not mutually exclusive, respondents were allowed to opt for more than one policy. Pettigrew and Meertens claim that their results, which we have recalculated on the basis of exactly their typology and have reproduced in Figure 2(a), demonstrate that respondents classified as subtles express their prejudice against immigrants when ‘there is an ostensibly nonprejudicial reason to do so’ (Meertens and Pettigrew, 1997, p. 64; see also Pettigrew and Meertens, 1995, p. 70).

In support of this claim, they refer to the high proportion of subtles who agree with policies that immigrants who are criminals or immigrants who have entered the country illegally should be sent back. But it is not so obvious that respondents who take a rather legalistic point of view and hence agree with these policies, are proven to be prejudiced: notice that even among equalitarians, there is considerable support for these policies.

Making matters worse, the responses to the question as stated above, were improperly analysed. That is, we suspect that Pettigrew and Meertens presupposed that the policy options are independent, which they are not, as we will argue. We found a number of respondents (5.6%) who only opted for the policy of sending back all immigrants. Most probably, these respondents would not oppose other, i.e. less harsh, policy options like sending back immigrants not born in the country, not contributing to the economic livelihood of the country, having committed criminal offences and sending back those not having legal documents. This implies that the responses are not mutually independent. Therefore, we took this item-interdependency into account by recoding the responses such that respondents who only mentioned the policy option of sending back all immigrants would also not oppose the less harsh policies. Therefore, we have recalculated the relation between Pettigrew and Meertens’ typology, constructed exactly as they did, and policy preferences toward sending immigrants back.

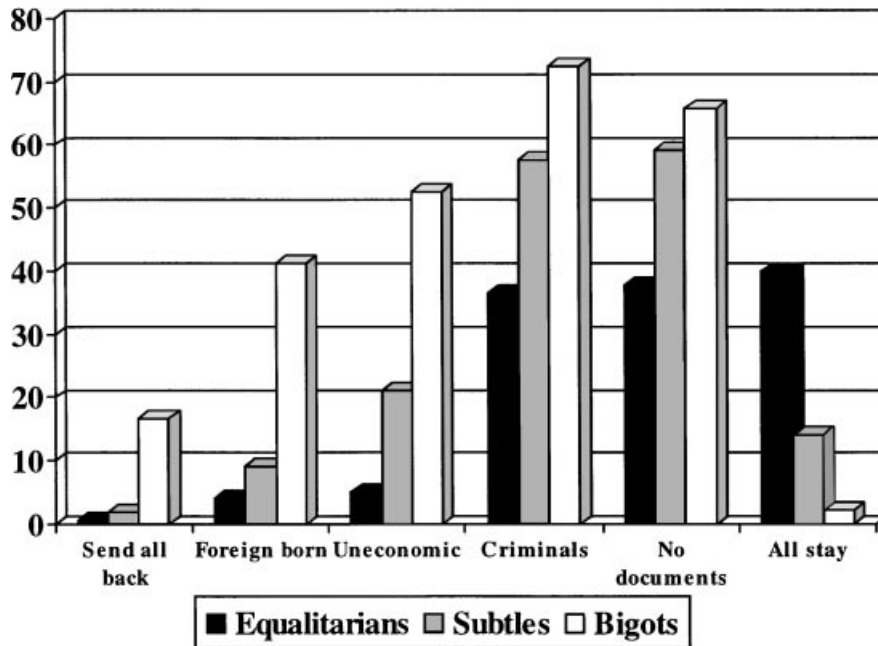


Figure 2(b). Three prejudice types and preferred immigration policies (percentage mentioned; controlled for response on 'send all back')

As Figure 2(b) shows, once this methodological correction is made, Pettigrew and Meertens' finding turns out to be artificial. Rather than subtles being more likely than out-and-out bigots to favour sending back immigrants who are criminals or who have no legal documents, it is just the other way around: 72.3% of the bigots wish to send home criminal immigrants as opposed to 57.6% of the subtles and 36.5% of the equalitarians; and 65.9% of the bigots wish to send home immigrants without legal documents as opposed to 59.3% of the subtles and 37.8% of the equalitarians. Our re-analysis shows that the subtles just take an intermediate position in between the bigots and the equalitarians. The relatively high support for sending home criminal and illegal immigrants, compared to sending home other types of immigrants, is not something typical of subtles. Equalitarians also show markedly higher support for sending home criminal and illegal immigrants. In short, these findings refute Pettigrew and Meertens' claim that subtles show their real harsh stances, just as harsh or even harsher than the bigots, when there are ostensibly nonprejudicial reasons to do so. Pettigrew and Meertens' claim that their typological analysis shows that subtle and blatant prejudice have different consequences thus does not stand up to scrutiny.

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

Pettigrew and Meertens claim to have devised reliable and valid measures of subtle, as distinct from blatant, prejudice. This claim, if well-founded, would represent a major breakthrough. But replication of their study shows that it cannot be sustained. Specifically:

- (1) Their factor analysis on examination has some limitations, the most important of which is that the distinction between items measuring subtle prejudice and those measuring blatant prejudice was imposed as a matter of definition, not actually tested empirically.
- (2) After replicating Pettigrew and Meertens' analysis, with their own procedures as well as with more appropriate factor-analytical procedures, we found that the specific conceptual distinction that they propose between subtle and blatant prejudice collapses. Two of the three components of 'subtle' prejudice load on exactly the same broad factor as the components of 'blatant' prejudice. Consequently, we labelled this broad factor as general prejudice. The small second factor contained merely items referring to the perception of cultural differences. The bi-factorial solution we propose was tested against the solution by Pettigrew and Meertens and another previously proposed one-factorial solution: our solution turned out to be superior in terms of all fit indices.
- (3) Consistent with previous research, we found many social categories distinctively susceptible to general prejudice. However, we found no comparable pattern for the perception of cultural differences. The perception of cultural difference items, on examination, reflect not so much evaluative prejudices but rather cognitive perceptions. These items showed a poor discriminatory power and brought no additional insights regarding social categories that could be shown to be prejudiced, next to the social categories that had already been discovered to subscribe to general prejudice.
- (4) Then, too, we found that general prejudice had large effects on opposition to public policies to assist immigrants. However, we found hardly any significant effects of the perception of cultural differences on these policy views.
- (5) Finally, replicating the typological analysis of Pettigrew and Meertens, their claim that different 'types' of prejudice have distinctive policy consequences fails when corrections are made for item-interdependency.

It does not follow that because Pettigrew and Meertens' specific operationalisation of the distinction between blatant and subtle prejudice is not adequate, the distinction itself is not valid. The distinction between blatant and subtle prejudice, or more generally between traditional and contemporary prejudice—if it can be successfully operationalised—may be of substantial importance in exposing the contemporary sources and dynamics of different forms of prejudice. It is the more important, therefore, to specify what needs to be shown in order to show that a new form of prejudice, more subtle than the old but just as pernicious, has indeed materialised.

Part of the benefit of examining the Pettigrew and Meertens' study is clarification of the logic of the distinction between blatant and subtle prejudice; a distinction that we consider, both for theoretical and empirical reasons, potentially important. In particular, it is possible to specify what is required conceptually and operationally if the two forms of prejudice are to be distinguished empirically. We will specify six conditions related to the conceptualisation and the measurements as such (1 and 2), but also related to the differential determinants (3 and 4) and differential consequences (5 and 6).

- (1) Following previous research in this research tradition leads us to propose that both blatant and subtle prejudice reflect some antipathy toward ethnic minorities. Then, it follows that a measure of subtle prejudice, to be a valid measure of prejudice, must be at least moderately correlated with a valid measure of blatant prejudice.
- (2) However, if measures of the two forms of prejudice are highly interrelated, distinguishing between them is unlikely to be instructive unless they can be shown to be factorially distinguishable.
- (3) For the distinction between blatant and subtle prejudice to be productive, it is necessary to show that there are social categories that are 'false positives'—that is, people who appear to be racially

tolerant judged by a measure of blatant prejudice, but who in fact are prejudiced judged by a measure of subtle prejudice.

- (4) If the previous conditions are fulfilled, then one should provide testable theoretical propositions as to why these social categories of false positives are either able or motivated to obscure their prejudices. Of course, one should also provide testable propositions as to why some social categories are more likely to be blatantly prejudiced, but in this respect one can evidently build on previous research.
- (5) Different forms of prejudice are likely to have different consequences, or, at least, have different effects on the same consequential variables. Moreover, the differences with respect to their consequences are likely to hinge on the social context. Subtle racists, so far as they are motivated to conceal their prejudice, should be distinctively inclined to express it, as Pettigrew and Meertens suggest, when the situation is ambiguous and they have at hand an ostensibly non-racial justification of their response.
- (6) Different forms of prejudice, however, may have equivalent consequences and yet be genuinely different. This condition, though it may appear more relaxed than the fifth, actually is more demanding. It amounts to a claim that people who disguise their prejudice out of a concern for social norms will, given the opportunity, be as likely to respond negatively to minorities as blatant racists.

These conditions together imply that one should provide an extensive theoretical framework that includes both testable theoretical propositions on the nature and measurements of (forms of) prejudice, on the (previously ascertained and theoretically interesting) determinants of prejudice as well as on the consequences of prejudice. In effect, this requires a contemporary synthesis of theoretical and empirical contributions from different disciplines of the kind that LeVine and Campbell (1972) and Schäfer and Six (1978) once provided.

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