

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

B.A and B.SC SEMESTER IV PAPER- 7

TOPIC-WORLD'S MAJOR RACES

RACES

Human geographical variability is manifest on a continental basis with usual division of our species into races or ethnic groups. For instance, we rely on the simple visual appraisal to determine the distinctions between various groups; especially differences existing in the colour of the skin. People range in pigmentation from a very pale colour as in the North Europe to extremely dark brown as in the African Congo or New Guinea. Human stature also ranges widely from the four-and-a-half foot Pygmies in West Central Africa and Oceania, to the six-and-a-half-foot Nilotic peoples of East Africa. Hair form, another trait that attracts a great deal of attention, varies from straight and long as in the Japanese to short and spiral shaped as in the Africans. Further, the size and form of the human face differs considerably throughout the world, and the proportions of the lower limbs and the trunk vary over a broad range. Many more subtle differences between human populations, such as those in the frequencies of different blood groups, types of blood enzyme and protein polymorphisms and DNA markers also exist, although they require special techniques to be determined.

Hooton (1926) defined race as a great division of mankind, the members of which, though individually varying, are characterised as a group with a certain combination of morphological and metrical features, primarily non-adaptive, which have been derived from their common descent. Montagu (1942) defined race or an ethnic group as representing number of populations under species *Homo sapiens*, which individually maintain their differences, physical and cultural, by means of isolating mechanisms such as geographic and social barriers.

Boyd (1950) defined human race as a population which differs significantly from other human populations with regard to the frequency of one or more genes it possesses. According to Garn (1960) "Race is a breeding population, partially isolated reproductively from other breeding populations, arising commonly but not exclusively from geographic isolation." Hulse (1963) stated "Races are populations which can be readily distinguished from one another on genetic grounds alone".

In his famous book *Origins of Man*, Buettner-Janusch (1969) defined race as “Mendelian population separated from another by major geographical barriers; breeding isolate; a population distinguished from another by demonstration of differences in allele frequencies.” According to Mayr (1969) race is “An aggregate of phenotypically similar populations of a species, inhabiting a geographic subdivision and differing taxonomically from other populations.” Templeton (1998) stated “A subspecies (race) is a distinct evolutionary lineage within a species that genetically differentiated due to barriers from genetic exchange that have persisted for long periods i.e. the subspecies must have historical continuity in addition to current genetic differentiation.”

DISTRIBUTION AND CHARACTERISTICS

Race, a distinctive combination of physical traits is due to inheritance. E.A.Hooton, an American anthropologist (1931) recognised three primary races- Caucasoid, Negroid and Mongoloid along with several sub races which he further modified in 1947, based on the relative commonness of physical characteristics. Caucasoid features are chiefly found among the Europeans and their descendants whereas Mongoloid features are found in the people of Asia, Indonesia, Indians of North and South American. Negroid features are restricted among the populations of Melanesia and African descendant Americans. However, Australoid a fourth major racial group is found by anthropologists based on peculiarity in physical characters.

2.3 CAUCASOID

Caucasoid incorporates a number of sub-groups with an array of racial elements and generalised characters among people. Skin colour varies from white to brown and at times dark brown with flat wavy to varied degrees of curliness of hair, lighter but seldom jet black. Hair texture is usually medium to fine while quantity of body and facial hair is generally moderate or abundant. Caucasoids possess dolichocephalic to brachycephalic head, leptorrhine to mesorrhine nose, high nasal bridge, high forehead, thin lips, distinct chin, prominent cheek bones without facial prognathism, lighter shades of eye colour and tall stature. The Caucasoid are further divided into eleven subgroups namely Mediterranean, Indo-Afgan, Nordic, Alpine, East Baltic, Dinaric, Armenoid , Keltic, Lapp, Indo- Dravidian, Polenesian and Ainu.

1. Mediterranean

Mediterranean, the oldest white sub-race is named after their original home – the Mediterranean shore – that migrated later to all directions. They are present in Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, Greece, Turkey, some parts of North Africa, Arabia, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. These people developed Neolithic culture in Europe, North Africa, Near-East, South-East Asia and the region of Upper Nile. They demonstrated domestication of plants and animals, weaving, pottery, erection of monuments, etc., during the Neolithic period. The Mediterranean people exhibit light body build, dark complexion with narrow head form. Further, three distinct sub-types have been distinguished among the Mediterranean sub-group.

Classical Mediterranean (Basic Mediterranean or Ibero-Insular)

These people inhabit in Mediterranean basin and also in Portugal, Spain, France, Germany, Italy, etc. Similar physical features are also found among the Egyptians of North-Africa, the Berbers of Morocco, Arabia and the Jewish population of Palestine. The physical features of Classical Mediterranean are:

- White skin colour,
- black and curly hair
- dolichocephalic to mesocephalic head form with a cephalic index of 73 to 76,
- straight and medium thick leptorrhine nose with
- long oval face,
- pointed chin,
- flat cheekbones,
- slightly high fore head,
- dark eye colour, medium stature with slender and delicate body built.

Atlanto-Mediterranean (or Littoral)

Atlanto-Mediterranean people are distributed in North-Africa, Palestine, Iraq with little representation in the British Isles, Spain and Portugal. The physical features are:

- dark skin and hair colour,
- wavy to curly hair with dolichocephalic to mesocephalic head form,
- deep rooted and straight nose with medium breadth and height,
- long face with deep jaws, prominent cheek bones,
- receding forehead with well developed eye-brow ridges,

- medium brown to dark brown eye colour with tall stature and more robust than the Classic Mediterraneans.

Indo-Afghan (or Irano-Afghan)

These are mostly found in Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Baluchistan, North- West India and Pakistan. The Physical features are:

- Light brown skin colour, wavy and black hair with abundant hair on body and face showing dolichocephalic to mesocephalic head with a cephalic index of 71 to 77,
- leptorrhine nose having straight or convex nasal bridge with pointed tip,
- long and narrow face with dark eyes,
- medium to tall stature with an average height of 167 cm.

2. Nordic

Nordic are said to be originally Aryans, the people of Scandinavia who represent Nordic racial type distributed in Scandinavia, Baltic region, Northern Germany, Northern France, parts of Netherlands, Belgium, British Isles, United States and some of the British colonies and sporadically in parts of Europe. The main physical features are:

- Pinkish or reddish white skin colour possessing slightly wavy with varying shades of head hair either fine or medium and hair on body and face are neither sparse nor medium.
- They possess mesocephalic head with a cephalic index of 76 to 79 consisting of straight,
- prominent and leptorrhine nose with high nasal root and bridge,
- long and narrow face with strong facial bones and flat cheek bones.
- Their forehead is vertical with moderately developed eye-brow ridges showing prominent chin, blue or grey eye colour with very thin lips and tall stature with 172 cm of average height.

3. Alpine

The origin of Alpines traces to Central Asia. Anthropologists tried to correlate this sub-group with Asiatic Mongoloid race. The admixture of Alpines with other racial types Nordic, Mediterranean, etc. is also evidenced. The Alpine population is found mainly in Central and Eastern Europe especially from France to the Urals. They are also found in the Denmark, Balkan, Norway, Northern Italy, and in the

mountains of Asia Minor with sporadic distribution in whole of Europe. The main physical features are:

- Olive or brunette white or bronze skin colour, slightly wavy,
- medium brown to dark brown hair with medium to fine texture and abundant hair on body and face,
- brachycephalic head with a cephalic index of 85,
- straight or slightly curved leptorrhine or mesorrhine nose, with short, thick and fleshy tip and moderately developed high nasal root.
- They are differentiated with round, broad and short face with high forehead and prominent chin.
- Their eyebrow ridges are either moderately or strongly developed with straight,
- dark to medium brown eyes and blue occasionally,
- moderately thick lips,
- medium to short stature with 165 cm of average height and strong body built.

4. East Baltic

The East Baltic group exhibits an admixture of Nordic and the Alpine traits. Certain features suggest an Asiatic Mongoloid influence. They are concentrated in North-Eastern Germany, Baltic States, Poland, Russia, Finland, etc. The main physical characters are:

- Tawny or creamy white skin colour, straight or wavy hair with medium to coarse texture exhibiting ash-brown,
- rarely reddish colour.
- The facial hair is moderate and body hair is scanty.
- Head form is brachycephalic with a flat occiput,
- convex mesorrhine nose with broad nasal wings and snubbed tip,
- medium nasal root with moderately high and broad nasal bridge.
- Face is square with prominent cheeks and high forehead resulting in squared lower jaws and developed chin.
- Their eye-brow ridges are moderate having medium lips,
- light-blue or grey eye colour and medium stature.

5. Dinaric (Adriatic or Illyrian)

This race exhibits both the Nordic, Armenoid Alpine and Atlanto-Mediterranean in Dinaric Alps region, especially the Yugoslavia, Albania, Austrian Tyrol and also in Central Europe. The main physical features are:

- Light burnet to olive shade skin colour,
- straight or wavy or curly hair with medium texture and dark brown colour, abundant body and facial hair with flat occiput,
- brachycephalic head,
- leptorrhine nose with narrow and fleshy tip, high nasal root and bridge,
- long and narrow face with deeper,
- heavier and more projecting chin,
- straight and slopy forehead with brown eyes,
- thick lips and tall stature with an average of 172 cm.

6. Armenoid

They are admixture of classical Mediterranean, Alpine, Nordic and Indo-Afghan racial elements. But recent studies reveal that Armenoid is an admixture between the Mediterranean and the Alpine. Asia Minor is the earliest known area from which the Armenoid race might have been spread southward to Arabia and India. The sculptor of a man discovered from the ruins of Mohenjo-daro shows Armenoid physical features concentrated in Turkey, Syria and Palestine and also amongst people of Iraq, Iran and Balkan Countries. Typical Armenoid representatives are the ancient Hittites. Similar racial elements have also been projected among the Babylonians, Assyrians and Hittites.

The physical features are:

- Tawny white or olive skin colour,
- wavy or curly hair
- with coarse to medium texture and colour varies from dark brown to black,
- abundant body and facial hair with brachycephalic head and vertical occiput,
- very prominent leptorrhine nose with convex profile,
- depressed and fleshy nasaltip and high nasal root.
- Armenoid possess narrow and elongated face with well developed cheek bones, slopy forehead, thick eye-brow ridges especially in males.
- The chin confirms medium prominence that have medium-brown to dark brown eyes,

- thick and medium lips,
- tall stature with an average height of 167 cm.
- The body is well built with a predisposition towards obesity.

7 Keltic

Keltics are found in Ireland, Scotland, Wales and also sporadically distributed in England and in parts of Western Europe. The physical features are:

- Pale white skin colour with wavy or curly rarely straight
- hair usually medium brown to dark brown and rarely black colour,
- mesocephalic
- head and leptorrhine nose with straight or convex profile having long nose with
- narrow and high nasal bridge,
- long and narrow face with compressed cheek bones and deep chin,
- blue or grey eyes and tall stature with 172 cm of average height.

8. Lapp

Lapps are found in Northern Scandinavia, Northern Finland, Sweden, Norway and North Western region of Russia formed with an admixture of Russians, Fins, Swedes, Norwegians, etc. The distinct features identified them as a separate ethnic group. Infact some of the Lapps are found to be classified with the Mongoloids as they bear more similarity with the Caucasoids than the Mongoloids.

The physical features are:

- Greyish yellow tinge skin colour with straight or slightly
- wavy and dark brown or black hair,
- sparse hairs spread on body and face,
- brachycephalic head, mesorrhine nose,
- concave nasal profile with snubbed nasal tip,
- broad and short face with forward projection and prominent cheekbones
- showing little or no prognathism and well developed eyebrow ridges on the narrow forehead. Eye colour is highly variable with occasional epicanthic fold and thick
- lips among Lapp who exhibit medium stature (159 cm).

9 Indo-Dravidian (Dravidian)

Indo-Dravidian people are distributed in South and Central India and mostly Caucasoid. An admixture of Classical Mediterranean and Australoid (Veddid) is found among these people. The physical features are:

- Light to dark brown skin colour and wavy or curly,
- black hair colour with sparse to medium bodily hair,
- dolichocephalic head,
- mesorrhine nose depicting depressed nasal root with high nasal bridge and thick tip,
- narrow and medium face with little prognathism at times with thick lips,
- round forehead,
- moderately developed eyebrow ridges,
- medium to dark brown eyes and medium stature with an average height of 164 cm.

10 Polynesian

The Polynesians, a composite race originated as white people but got mixed with the peoples of early Mediterranean, Asiatic Mongoloid and Oceanic Negro and thus concentrated in Polynesian Islands of the Pacific Ocean namely New Zealand, Friendly Islands Samoa, Marquesas and Hawaii. Their physical characteristics are:

- Light to yellow brown skin colour with wavy
- sometimes straight or curly hair depicting dark brown to black colour,
- sparse body and facial hair,
- predominantly brachycephalic though dolichocephalic and mesocephalic forms of head with flat occiput,
- prominent and mesorrhine nose with straight or convex profile resulting in depressed or high nasal root and bridge,
- thick tip and broad nasal wings.
- Face is long and broad with prominent cheek bones,
- high and narrow forehead with slight slope,
- less developed eyebrow ridges and well developed chin.
- Eye colour is medium to dark brown with a rare epicanthic fold.

- Lips are moderately thick exhibiting tall stature with muscular and well built body.

11 Ainu

Ainus are basically Caucasoid but Mongoloid features are also found and exhibit close resemblance with the Australian aborigines in physical features. They are found in Northern Japan, South Sakhalin and Yezo. The physical features are:

- Light brown to brownish white skin colour,
- wavy hair with dark brown to black colour and spread abundantly on body and face referred as the “Hairy Ainu”.
- Head form is usually mesocephalic and sometimes dolichocephalic,
- short nose with mesorrhine to platyrrhine form having straight to convex profile,
- slightly depressed nasal root,
- moderately high nasal bridge, short and medium face with mesoprosopic and orthognathic form and well developed chin,
- medium to dark brown horizontal eyes and thin lips having medium to short stature with thick body.