

NEW EVIDENCE IN REGARD TO THE INSTABILITY OF  
HUMAN TYPES

By Franz Boas

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

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A number of years ago I carried on, under the auspices of the United States Immigration Commission, an investigation on the physical types of immigrants and of their descendants. One of the results of this inquiry was the establishment of the fact that there is a difference in appearance between the immigrants and their descendants. So far as the bulk of the body is concerned, this information was not new. Analogous phenomena had been observed in 1877 by H. P. Bowditch in Boston, and by Peckham in Milwaukee. It was new, however, that there is also a change in such features as the cephalic index and the width of the face. It was found that on the average the heads of descendants of immigrants of East European types are more elongated, and those of the descendants of South Europeans more rounded, than those of their parents. The data were obtained partly by a generalizing method, partly by a comparison between parents and children.

The results of this inquiry have been attacked by many writers, on the basis that they decline to believe that such changes can occur. I have not found any actual criticism of my method and of the results, except by Corrado Gini, who doubts the inferences drawn in regard to the populations of Italian cities which also show a modification of the cephalic index.

I think the hesitation of many authors to accept the results is due largely to a misinterpretation of their significance. I may be allowed to state concisely here what I think has been proved, and what inferences seem justifiable.

The investigation has a direct bearing upon the question of the classification of human local types, more particularly of European types. Many attempts have been made to give a satisfactory classification of the divergent types that occur in Europe. Pigmentation, stature, form of the head, and form of the face, show material differences in various parts of Europe, notwithstanding the fundamental sameness of the whole race. Authors like Deniker, and many others, have carried out on this basis an elaborate classification of European types in a number of 'races' and 'sub-races.'

In this classification the assumption is made that each race that we find at the present time in its particular environment is an hereditary

type different from the others. In order to express this assumption, I should like to use the term that these races and sub-races represent, 'genetic' types—genetic in the sense that their characteristics are determined by heredity alone. The question, however, has not been answered, whether these types are really genetic types, or whether they are what I might call 'ecotypes,' in so far as their appearance is determined by environmental or ecological conditions. If we include in this term not only environmental conditions in a geographical and social sense, but also conditions that are determined by the organism itself, we might, perhaps, still better call them physiological types, in the same sense in which the biologist speaks of physiological races. My investigation then was directed to the question in how far a certain type of man may be considered a genetic type, in how far a physiological type. If there is any kind of environmental influence, it is obvious that we can never speak of a genetic type *per se*, but that every genetic type appears under certain environmental or physiological conditions, and that in this sense we are always dealing with the physiological form of a certain genetic type. The question, then, that demands an answer, is, in how far genetic types may be influenced by physiological changes.

I believe, that, on the basis of the material that I collected, we must maintain that the same genetic type may occur in various physiologically conditioned forms, and that so far as stature, head-form, and width of face are concerned, the differences between the physiological forms of the same genetic type are of the same order as the differences between the races and sub-races which have been distinguished in Europe. I must add, however, that these remarks do not refer to pigmentation, for, contrary to a widespread belief, we have no proof of environmental influences upon pigmentation. For this reason the classification of European races cannot be considered as proving genetic differentiation.

The whole investigation which I carried on, and certain comparable observations obtained from older literature, do not indicate in any way to what physiological conditions the observed changes may be due. The only physiological causes in regard to which evidence is available relate to the bulk of the body, and to a certain extent to the proportions of the limbs. The size of the body depends upon the conditions under which growth takes place. Growth depends upon nutrition, upon pathological conditions during childhood, and upon many other causes, all of which have an effect upon the bulk of the body of the adult. When these conditions are favorable, the physiological form of a certain genetic type will be large. If there is much retardation during early life, the physiological form of the same genetic type will be small. Retarda-

tion and acceleration of growth may also account for varying proportions of the limbs. On the other hand, we have no information whatever that would allow us to determine the cause of the physiological diminution in the size of the face that has been observed in America, nor for the change in the head-index that occurs among the descendants of immigrants.

Furthermore, there is nothing to indicate that these changes are in any sense genetic changes; that is to say, that they influence the hereditary constitution of the germ. It may very well be that the same people, if carried back to their old environment, would revert to their former physiological types.

In fact, it can be shown that certain features are strictly hereditary, and that, although the physiological form of a genetic type may vary, nevertheless the genetic type as such will exert its influence. Professor von Luschan has repeatedly called attention to this fact as revealed in the modern populations of Asia Minor, where, notwithstanding the mixture which has continued for at least four thousand years, the characteristic Armenian, Northwest European, and Mediterranean types survive in the mixed population. Similar examples may be observed in Italy. I have calculated the variability of the head-form that is found in different parts of Italy, based on the data collected by Ridolfo Livi. The head-form of the North Italians is excessively short. The head-form of the South Italians is decidedly elongated. In between we find intermediate forms. In the Apennines, we have, in addition to the mixture of these two Italian forms, a marked immigration from the Balkan Peninsula, which introduced another short-headed type. As a result of these long-continued mixtures, we observe low degrees of variability in northern and southern Italy, high degrees of variability in the central regions, particularly in the Abruzzi. These indicate permanence of the component types of the mixed population.

During the last few years some new data have been collected that confirm my previous observations. I have pointed out several times that changes of types have been observed in Europe wherever a careful comparison between city population and country population has been made. Generally the changes that occur there have been ascribed to selective influences; but the intensity of selection would have to be so great, that it does not seem plausible that they can be explained by this cause.

In conjunction with Miss Helene M. Boas, I have made a comparison between the head-forms of the city populations of Italy and of the rural population in the areas surrounding the cities, and compared

these data with the information given in the Italian census in regard to the immigration into cities. I found throughout that the variability of head-form in each city is smaller than would be found in a population in which all the constituent genetic types were present without physiological modification. This result has been criticised by Corrado Gini, on the basis that in former times migration was less than what it is now. I grant this point; but nevertheless it is quite obvious, that, although no exact data are available, the mixture of population in a city like Rome or like Florence must be very great, since the political conditions for the conflux of Italians, and even of individuals from outside of Italy, have been favorable for a very long period. If this is true, we should expect a very high degree of variability in Rome, which, however, is not found.

Turning to new data, I wish to mention the observation made by Dr. Hrdlička, who, in a paper read before the Pan-American Scientific Congress, has stated that he found the width of face of Americans of the fourth generation—that is to say, of descendants of Europeans who had no foreign-born ancestor after the fourth generation back—was materially decreased as compared to the width of face found among European types. This conforms strictly with what I found among the descendants of immigrants of all nationalities.

A year ago I had the opportunity to make an anthropometric investigation of a considerable number of natives of Porto Rico. This work was carried on in connection with the Natural History Survey of Porto Rico organized by the New York Academy of Sciences. The population of Porto Rico is derived from three distinct sources—from people belonging to the Mediterranean type of Europe, from West Indian aborigines, and from Negroes. The Mediterranean ancestry of the Porto Ricans leads back to all parts of Spain; but among the more recent immigrants, Catalans, people from the Balear Islands and from the Canary Islands prevail. There are also a fair number of Corsicans. The Spanish immigration has been quite strong even up to the present time. Among the individuals whom I measured, 14% had Spanish-born fathers, some even Spanish-born mothers. From all we know about the history of the people of Porto Rico, we must consider them essentially as descendants of male immigrants who intermarried with native women. It is evident that in early times this must have led to the development of a Mestizo population, in which, however, the amount of Indian blood must have decreased very rapidly owing to the continued influx of Spanish blood, and the elimination from the reproductive series of the male Mestizo element. The Negro population is settled

particularly on the outer coast of the island; while the amount of Negro blood in the interior is apparently not very great, except near the principal routes of travel.

According to European observations, the Spanish ancestors of this population, while living in Spain, are long-headed. The Negro element is of mixed provenience, from many different parts of Africa, but, on the whole, the Negro in Africa is also long-headed. The West Indian element, judging from the few prehistoric crania that have been recovered, represents a very short-headed type. The modern Porto Rican is short-headed to such a degree that even a heavy admixture of Indian blood could not account for the degree of short-headedness. If we apply the results of known instances of intermixture to our particular case, and assume stability of type, we find that, even if the population were one-half Indian and one-half Spanish and Negro, the head-index would be considerably lower than what we actually observe. There is therefore no source that would account for the present head-form as a genetic type; and we are compelled to assume that the form which we observe is due to a physiological modification that has occurred under the new environment. The head-form of those individuals whose fathers were born in Spain is noticeably more elongated than that of the individuals whose parents are both Porto Ricans. The head-index of the Mulatto population is intermediate between the index of the native Porto Ricans and that of those whose one parent is Spanish. The average index of the Porto Rican is 82.5. The average index of the Spaniard in Spain is less than 77. We find, therefore, an increase of five units here, which can in no way be accounted for by genetic considerations.

I may mention in this connection that the average stature of the Porto Ricans is apparently almost the same as that of the Sicilians in New York, and that throughout the period of growth the stature follows about the same curve as that represented by Sicilian children living in America. If anything, the stature is a little lower, and there is no indication of that acceleration of development which is so often claimed to be characteristic of a tropical environment. Undoubtedly poor nutrition, and probably also pathological causes, have a retarding influence here, which might easily be overcome by better hygienic conditions.

It is unfortunate that we have no accurate statistics of Porto Rican immigration and emigration, which would enable us to state with much greater definiteness what genetic type should be expected here. There is a popular belief in Porto Rico that in certain parts of the island, in

the so-called 'Indiera,' Indian types have persisted to a greater extent than elsewhere. I have not been able to find any definite indication of a difference in type; but I have measured only a few individuals from these districts. The material that I have been able to study comes from all parts of the island, but principally from the western-central part. The phenomena here described occur with equal intensity in all parts of the island.

The question of the degree of instability of human types seems to my mind an exceedingly important one for a clear understanding of the problems of physical anthropology. It would be particularly desirable to study the problem among immigrants living in different rural communities of the United States, and it would be even more desirable to have information in regard to the types that develop among the East Europeans and South Europeans who return to Europe and settle in their old geographical environment.

## A REVISION OF THE ATOMIC WEIGHT OF TIN

By Gregory Paul Baxter and Howard Warner Starkweather

COOLIDGE MEMORIAL LABORATORY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY

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A recent investigation upon the atomic weight of tin by Briscoe,<sup>1</sup> in which stannic chloride was compared with pure silver, yielded a very concordant series of results, with an average value 118.698 ( $Cl = 35.457$ ). This value has been adopted by the International Committee on Atomic Weights in preference to that found by Bongartz and Classen,<sup>2</sup> 119.0, which has been in general use for some time. Since the electro-deposition of cadmium and zinc in a weighed mercury cathode has been found to be a process capable of great accuracy,<sup>3</sup> and since tin amalgam promised to be unusually well adapted for quantitative handling, this electrolytic method has been applied to the analysis of stannic chloride also.

In brief the method of operation was as follows: Pure tin was converted to tetrachloride by treatment with pure chlorine, and the tetrachloride was purified by fractional distillation. After weighed portions of the chloride had been dissolved in dilute hydrochloric acid, the metal was deposited electrolytically in a mercury cathode contained in a weighed glass cell similar to that previously described.<sup>4</sup>

Before converting the tin to tetrachloride it was freed as far as possible from acid-forming elements by twice transporting the metal electrolytically through an acid solution of stannous chloride, the anode