

"RACIAL" STATISTICS IN HAWAII

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"He hath overthrown the chief of the Nubians; the Negro is helpless in his grasp. He hath united the boundaries of his two sides, there is not a remnant among the Curly-Haired." Thus does an ancient Egyptian inscription celebrate the victory about 3500 years ago of Pharaoh Thutmose I over his enemies.¹ It is one of the earliest known records of a people classifying men "racially."

At the present time the U. S. Census Bureau and the Territorial Bureau of Health Statistics use a nine-fold classification by "race" when publishing statistical information about the people of Hawaii. The following groups are listed: Hawaiian, Part Hawaiian, Puerto Rican, Caucasian, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Filipino, and All Others.

These two agencies are in agreement about the categories to be used in the racial classification. The Census Bureau is usually the pace-setter when a change in classification is to be made, but in 1900 their attempt to introduce Mainland racial categories proved so confusing that it did not gain any local acceptance in the Territory. Since then the Census Bureau has followed closely the consensus of suggestions coming from various sources in Hawaii. The Census Bureau operates on the principle that the best classification is one which, while if possible maintaining continuity with previous censuses, is recognized and used by the people of a community. For instance, in 1930 its instructions to enumerators on the Mainland for classifying a person as Indian were "to return as Indians, not only those of full Indian blood, but also those of mixed white and Indian blood, 'except where the percentage of Indian blood is very small,' or where the individual was 'regarded as a white person in the community where he lives.'"²

¹James Henry Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1906), Vol II, p. 71.

²The Census practice of counting all persons of no matter how small a proportion of Negro blood as Negroes of course accords with the general practice in all Mainland communities of classifying such persons as Negroes. The only exception is when a person "passes," as white. Such a person, no longer having enough Negro blood to be "visible," goes to a community where his ancestry is unknown, and where he will naturally be classified by his "visibly" white ancestry. He does not even have to change his name, as does the Jew who wishes to pass as a gentile. Regarding a person of mixed Indian and Negro blood, the Census Bureau states he "should be returned as a Negro unless the Indian blood predominates and the status as an Indian is generally accepted in the community."

At the present time, the Honolulu Chamber of Commerce has set up a committee for the purpose of making general recommendations in regard to the 1950 census. One of the sub-committees of this committee is dealing specifically with the question of what population breakdowns, including racial breakdowns, to recommend. It is called the sub-committee on population characteristics and occupation.

When the discussion at the first meeting of this sub-committee was somewhat misleadingly reported in the press, there was aroused an immediate and vital interest in the matter of racial classification, as evidenced by at least one editorial, and a number of letters to the editor. The editorial asked, "Why should an American census of population discriminate between one racial ancestry and another?", and several letters were in the same vein. One criticized "the inclusion in the various registration forms of our University of Hawaii of a question regarding the racial extraction of the applicant. Some mainland universities . . . have struck this question from their registration forms. Why has not the University of Hawaii, an institution which purports to be a leader in the field of inter-racial understanding, done as much?"

A clarification of the matter of racial classification in Hawaii thus is highly desirable. In view of the fact that sociologists are known to be interested in the study of "race relations," the impression is easily gained that they are perpetuating invidious distinctions. This journal, the only sociological publication in Hawaii, seems an appropriate place to attempt such a clarification.

The first fact of importance is that no classification has been permanent, and there is no reason to believe that the present classification is permanent. Actually, it is not even in universal use among governmental agencies in Hawaii.

It is not necessary here to go into the statistical practice under the Monarchy and Republic of Hawaii, and the abortive attempt to introduce mainland practice in the 1900 census has been mentioned. The censuses of 1910, 1920, and 1930 used a somewhat more detailed classification than the one now in use. Part Hawaiians were divided into Caucasian and Asiatic-Hawaiians. The Caucasians were separated into Spanish, Portuguese, Puerto Ricans, and "Other Caucasians."

The Department of Public Instruction has been using a form which lists the following races: Hawaiian, Part Hawaiian, Puerto Rican, Spanish, Other Caucasian, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Filipino, and All Others. The Police Department of the City and

County of Honolulu also uses this more detailed classification. The various institutions reporting to the Territorial Department of Institutions follow a variety of classifications. Thus, Oahu Prison follows an elaborate classification which lists, among others, Caucasians, Germans, and Portuguese, as well as Negroes. The Board of Paroles and Pardons, on the other hand, uses the nine-fold classification of the 1940 census, as does the Territorial Hospital for the Mentally Ill. The Waialeale Training School for Boys specifies several mixtures, including Hawaiian-Eskimo, Chinese-Italian, and Puerto Rican-Spanish, and has altogether sixteen categories for 116 wards. On the other hand, the Kawailoa Training School for Girls uses the shorter nine-fold classification. The annual report of the Department of Public Welfare uses no racial breakdown. There are no statistical summaries about divorces available in any published governmental reports.

Everyone who has any knowledge of the local situation may look at the present nine-fold division and wonder where the several mixtures he is acquainted with are classified. Certain arbitrary rules have been followed in assigning such people to a category, and these rules are based on several somewhat contradictory principles. First, only one kind of mixture is given a classification, the Part Hawaiian. All persons who have no matter how little Hawaiian blood are classified as Part Hawaiian, unless they be pure Hawaiian. This means that in Hawaii, a person of some Negro blood, if he also has Hawaiian blood, will be classified as Part Hawaiian.

Second, the Caucasian and Hawaiian groups are the only ones where the criterion of admission is supposed purity of ancestry. All persons listed as Hawaiians are supposed to be pure Hawaiians, and the same applies to all Caucasians, although the latter may of course be compounded of various European mixtures, such as Portuguese, Russian, English, German.

This leaves, in the third place, the persons of mixed blood who have no Hawaiian in them. These are not, as might be supposed, assigned to the All Others category. They are rather classified according to two principles. If the mixture is Caucasian with one of the other recognized groups: Puerto Rican, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Filipino, the person is assigned to these groups. Thus a Caucasian-Puerto Rican or Caucasian-Filipino is classified as Puerto Rican or Filipino. If the mixture is between these other recognized groups, and involves neither Caucasian nor Hawaiian blood, the ancestry of the father takes precedence. Thus a person

whose father is Japanese and whose mother is Korean would be classified as Japanese. An exception would be the child of a Puerto Rican father and an Oriental (Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Korean) mother. In this case the Asiatic group has precedence and the child is assigned to it.

The All Others category is reserved for several smaller groups and some of the mixed bloods involving these groups. The most important of these smaller groups are Negroes and Samoans. A person of Puerto Rican-Negro ancestry would be put into the All Others group. The Census has occasionally given the totals for these smaller groups, but it has not given any further information about them. The number of Negroes found by the 1940 Census was 255.

The Portuguese group is the largest formerly recognized group which is now no longer given separate status by the Census Bureau and the Bureau of Health Statistics. Many persons of Portuguese ancestry had resented being distinguished from "Other Caucasians," and their sensitivity, as well as the large amount of mixing between the Portuguese and the "Other Caucasians," led to the dropping of this category in the 1940 Census. This now makes it impossible to derive various indices of infant mortality, of educational progress, etc., for this group.

That the Portuguese are no longer statistically identified does not mean that they have achieved complete loss of identity in popular usage.³ There are other distinctions which are, at least to some extent, popularly recognized, but not statistically noted. One of these, for instance, is the Japanese distinction between the Okinawans and the rest of the Japanese, designated Naichi or "Inside" or "Homeland" Japanese by them. From pre-war Japanese consular records we know that the Okinawans form about fifteen per cent of the total population of Japanese origin in Hawaii (almost 25,000 persons), but the U. S. Census has, of course, not been interested in this distinction. If the Okinawan Islands are by the final peace treaty with Japan separated from that country, and if the United States obtains them as a trust territory, it may yet prove desirable to differentiate between the two groups of Japanese in future censuses.

³One occasionally comes across rather startling illustrations of the fact that local people of non-Caucasian ancestry do not always accord Portuguese the same status as that accorded the other Caucasians, called Haoles. Thus a Mainland woman was filling out a form for a local girl. Her directions said that Portuguese were to be classified as Caucasians. To her the term Caucasian was unclear, but if a Portuguese was Caucasian, she felt that a "Haole" could not be, and so she classified her as All Others!

At the present time there is one growing group, which is destined increasingly to be given public recognition, the group of Caucasian-Oriental mixtures. Because of the classification system described above, these people are now all placed into a pure Oriental category. They were counted in the 1942 civilian enumeration, at that time coming to a total of 4,147 in the Territory. In four subsequent fiscal years, the Bureau of Health Statistics has reported the births of an additional 2,135 persons of Caucasian-Oriental ancestry. How many have died or left the Islands we have no way of knowing, but judging from the trends in intermarriage, it is possible to predict that this will be an increasingly important and large group. The Census authorities might well consider whether this is a group that ought to be given statistical recognition. Similarly, the number of persons whose ancestry is mixed Asiatic, having neither Hawaiian nor Caucasian components, is growing steadily. It may also be that the Negro group has grown sufficiently to be listed separately.

The above sketch of the trends in racial classification clearly points out that while, on the one hand, some groups tend to merge, others tend to emerge.

The Census Bureau cannot allow itself to be swayed by every passing whim. The categories it uses must have some stability through the years, lest their value as a record of the changes in a community be lost. In setting up census tracts in a city, the requirement is that the tracts be maintained permanently as outlined. It is thus pertinent to ask what are the principles by which a racial classification, in the first place, and, in the second place, a change in the racial classification, are justified.

Part of the criticism of any racial classification mentioned above stems from a gross misunderstanding. People confuse citizenship with race.

The editorial cited above, while speaking of the pride which the peoples of Hawaii had for their countries of origin, stressed the fact that the important fact is that they are Americans. Apparently many persons forget that race or ancestry does not refer to citizenship. The census of course gets data about citizenship as well as race, and it is when these are related to the racial statistics that we learn of the progress towards American citizenship which even those groups are making, who, like the Japanese, are ineligible for naturalization and can acquire citizenship only by birth or service in the armed forces. In 1940 76.5% of the Japa-

nese population were American citizens, as against 65.3% in 1930.

While it is thus clear that no American's citizenship is being questioned when in Hawaii he is asked to state his race, the query about race nevertheless arouses resentment in some people here. Resentment comes mainly from members of groups who are dissatisfied with their group's social status in Hawaii or who, as in the case of the Japanese during the war, feel an intensification of prejudice by others against their group. To the extent that all non-Haole groups feel some prejudice directed against them from time to time, there can be found some opposition to the racial designations in all groups. These sensitivities are deep-seated and must, even though they be based on misunderstandings, be taken into account in any realistic approach to the matter of racial classification.

Among Haoles, what opposition exists comes mainly from persons who claim that the designations are a deterrent to rapid assimilation.

It is of course true that the application of racial designations to individuals can lead both to needless discrimination and to an accentuation of the distinctions involved. Actually this sort of abuse, although it exists, is not as grave as might be supposed. Honolulu newspapers have for a long time refrained from giving racial designations when reporting on the personalities in the local news. Certain Haole organizations do discriminate against persons of non-Haole ancestry either by seldom or never admitting one to membership, or by assigning, as in the case of one school, a quota to Orientals. Obviously, the public schools and the University of Hawaii, while they ask registrants to state their race, under no circumstances use race as a criterion for admission.

Such discriminations as do exist are probably a much greater force in prolonging local group differences than the statistical use of the designations.¹ At any rate, it is but a matter of time when the cultural differences among local groups will disappear.

The sociologist has pointed out that the building of a common society out of population elements coming from diverse cultural backgrounds is almost inevitably accompanied by social disorganization, but that this disorganization can be reduced if the process of assimilation can be spread out over several generations rather

¹On the Mainland Jews are given no separate statistical recognition, but they are discriminated against by clubs and schools.

than concentrated over one or two. From this point of view Old World institutions, such as the language school and the foreign-language press, being inevitably temporary institutions, are aids rather than hindrances in the orderly progress towards effective assimilation. On the other hand, it has been a common historical experience that when a nation has attempted to force the assimilative process in some minority group, this policy has boomeranged, and such a minority group has persisted in maintaining its separate cultural identity. In Hawaii many of the racial organizations, such as the Emergency Service Committee among the Japanese during the war and the Puerto Rican Civic Association, have as their avowed aim to help the members of their group participate on a respected and equal basis as Americans in the affairs of the wider community.

One important use of statistics is to measure the progress towards assimilation. If statistics are kept of the recognized "racial" groups, it is possible to relate any racial statistics of disorganization, such as crime or divorce or mental illness, to the total population, and thus obtain rates which will give an indication of how serious the problems of adjustment are proving to each group. The responsible leadership of each group has found such statistics of inestimable value for showing them where their people needed guidance and help. Thus, just before the war, former Delegate Victor S. Houston was using the available statistics to show that in 1939 the Hawaiians had more than five times as high a rate of illegitimate births per thousand births than the Caucasian and Japanese groups, and then he outlined constructive proposals for meeting this problem.

Public Health authorities use such statistics to discover in what direction ameliorative efforts will prove most effective. Hawaii's tuberculosis death rate is still above that of the nation as a whole. By getting the rates for the local racial groups it immediately becomes apparent that the incidence of tuberculosis is higher, and the problem therefore more acute, among Filipinos and Hawaiians than among Caucasians and Part Hawaiians.

Only when such statistics are kept can certain questions which are of importance in the determination of trends in the Territory be answered. For instance a perennial question in all statehood hearings has been about the existence of bloc voting, but because of the fact that for ten years the statistics of registered and voting citizens has not been kept by race, it is impossible to make certain statistical analyses by which the question could be fairly easily

answered. It is thus more difficult to defend people who are probably no more guilty of the charges made than the people making the accusations.

There can be no doubt about the value of these racial statistics in promoting the cause of assimilation and this practical value far outweighs the possible negative uses to which such statistics can obviously be put by irresponsible or ignorant persons. Actually the lack of detailed and accurate information about the groups in Hawaii would make each group far more vulnerable to irresponsible charges than does the possession of these data.¹

The census takes statistics about males and females and about age-groups, e.g., the five-to-ten-year-olds as against the ten-to-fifteen-year-olds. Such data have the same practical value. We note, because we have the data, that males have higher crime rates than females, as do people from ten to thirty as compared with older people, and this helps the responsible authorities to deal with the problems of crime in a community.

The main difference between racial statistics and sex and age statistics is that race is not a permanent and clearly definable entity. What is called race in Hawaii may be referred to on the Mainland as race, nationality, minority group, ethnic group, cultural group, and ancestral group. Such terms in Hawaii and on the Mainland, refer to recognized group differences, both cultural and biological. The cultural differences refer to language, religion, nationality, diet, costume, festivals, family customs, family names, and group loyalties. Such differences, like the biological differences, are passed on, in one case socially, in the other biologically, from generation to generation. But the cultural differences are gradually disappearing through education and life in Hawaii, while the biological differences are being mixed through intermarriage, so that members of one family are no longer of the same biological type. Perhaps the term ancestry or ancestral group most clearly expresses the subtleties and it probably does not arouse as much resentment as the term race.

A group of students in a seminar on race relations recently attempted a definition of race which would be satisfactory in the

¹A safeguard against irresponsible use might be, as Dr. Andrew W. Lind has suggested, not to publish racial statistics about crime, mental illness, etc. in any public reports, but to keep such statistics in a sort of "confidential statistical exchange," for the use of qualified professional persons. This would make possible both the practical application of these statistics in the manner discussed and their application to a scientific understanding of problems of race and race relations on a more general level.

study of race relations. It became clear that no purely biological definition would do. In the first place, physical anthropologists are not in complete agreement. In the second place, groups identified by the physical anthropologists, such as the Alpine, may have no problems of race relations with another group, such as the Mediterranean.

In the practical affairs of men race seems rather to be any ancestral group with recognizable differentiating traits, which may be biological or socio-cultural or both, provided the mutual behavior of this group and other ancestral groups is conditioned by these differences.

Some such definition as this should be in the background when deciding whether a group in Hawaii should be eliminated from or added to the existing classification. It has become impossible to differentiate the Asiatic Hawaiians from the Caucasian Hawaiians and thus it is quite natural to classify them together as Part Hawaiians. On the other hand, the Caucasian-Orientals are differentiated from the Orientals with whom they are now classified and as a result differential behavior patterns are developing. It would seem desirable to give them separate status.¹

It has been estimated that in another fifty years at least fifty per cent of the local population will be of mixed blood. At that time the Old World cultural traits will also be all but eliminated. Thus the day will come when Hawaii's experience will corroborate the statement in Acts, "And he made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the Earth." (17:26) Then the racial or ancestral classification in the census will be out-dated.

¹An indication of their separate status is the fact that they are classified as "Cosmopolitan" for the annual "racial" beauty contest at the University.