SPECIAL COMMUNICATIONS

ARTIFICIAL DEFORMATIONS IN HAWAII

JOHN G. STOKES

Curator of Ethnology, Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum, Honolulu

Dr. Hrdlička.—In regard to your enquiry concerning physical deformations of Hawaiians by artificial means—I include below the partial information I have gathered so far.

Head Moulding.—My attention was first called to the subject by Professor J. Macmillan Brown, who referred to the term “opa” in Andrews’ Hawaiian Dictionary as indicating “to press; squeeze, as the head of a child.” Dr. Brown obtained some information from a long-time white resident here, which showed that head-moulding was probably a Hawaiian custom, and asked me to make further enquiries.

Many Hawaiians have since been questioned with respect to the term and custom, but the enquiries have by no means been concluded. The following notes may therefore be subjected to a later revision.

Term Used.—I could not learn what term, if any, was used for the process. *Opa* indicates the manipulative pressure between palm and fingers in massage, and is sometimes used in place of *lomilomi* (massage). It has no particular application to head-moulding. One Hawaiian woman suggested that the term sought was *opaha* (to be bent in, as the roof of a grass house partly fallen in—Andrews). Later information, however, was to the effect that *opaha* was applied in the description of a child’s head when lop-sided as a result of the mother’s holding it, during nursing, too continuously on one side. It is possible that there was no special term for the process, and the general term *hooponopono* (to make correct) served the purpose. *Poo pakiikii* (broad head) described a head when suitably flattened at the back and rounded, and indicated proper parental care. *Poo puu* (lumpy head) was a head with a posterior projection—evidence of neglect during infancy. A high forehead was considered ugly.

Andrews referred to “Anatomia” (Mission Press, Oahu, 1838) as authority for the term *opa*. This little book, without designated author, was “written in Hawaiian for the instruction of the pupils of Lahaina-

luna School in anatomy" as the Hawaiian title page intimates. As may be assumed by the wording of the text, it was prepared by the missionary teachers and not by Hawaiians. I translate, as literally as possible, the passage in this work relating to head-moulding:

In unenlightened countries the people regarded as a matter of importance the changing of the natural form of their children's heads into new shapes. Some pressed (*opa*) on the sides of the head to flatten them. Other people manipulated the forehead. The people of Hawaii regarded as the ideal head one which was flattened on the forehead and behind. In enlightened countries the people allowed the heads of their children to remain in the beautiful form in which God made them.

Process Followed.—Enquiries resulted in ascertaining that knowledge of the custom had not been lost, although few Hawaiians were acquainted with the methods. Accounts furnished last year by three women in Kona, island of Hawaii, differ in detail. Those of the first two were not repeated by other Hawaiians, but I believe are to be trusted. The third account was most frequently met with and has since been generally confirmed on Oahu. With all three, operations were said to have begun as soon as the baby was born.

The first woman, sixty-five years old, said that the infant was placed on its back with the head resting on a portion of coconut husk lined with pulu (the soft silky fiber of the tree-fern). In this position the forehead was frequently pressed downward with the palm of the hand. It was stated that the treatment continued for a week or two until the bones hardened.

The second woman, about forty-five years old, described a binding process. Two portions of the hard shell of the coconut were lined with pulu and bound over the baby's head—one at the forehead and the other at the back. They were removed whenever the child was bathed (once or twice a day), and the head carefully massaged to keep up the circulation. The time required was as in the preceding account.

The third, a grandmother over sixty years of age, stated that the baby was carefully laid with the back of the head resting on a piece of gourd lined with soft tapa, and kept in that position. The forehead was not touched, nor any shaping at all done by the hands. The treatment continued for a week. This woman pointed out a middle-aged man (with decidedly negroid hair) as one whose head had been re-shaped by this means. The man's forehead was high and gave no indication of having been moulded artificially, but the back of his head was almost flat in a vertical line. His head seemed rounded and higher than those of his Hawaiian neighbors.

The three women referred to were the only persons encountered who appeared to be well acquainted with the process. Other accounts from men and women varied the time required from a week to three months, and, in general, these informants described the same treatment mentioned by the third woman. The moulded head was said to have been the form admired by the chiefs.

The custom fell into disuse some years ago, its initial breaking down being probably due to missionary teaching. (See above.) Its final abandonment, however, was hastened and without doubt accomplished by the resentment of the growing youth who found difficulty in wearing the imported hats. The latter explanation was furnished by one of my elderly informants. It is not improbable that manipulation ceased under missionary instruction or injunction and with it the moulding of the forehead. However the mothers, generally conservative, were able to keep up the practice in a certain degree by keeping the infant lying on its back, and thus attained their object without apparent conflict with the ideas of their new spiritual advisers.

These remarks, of course, cannot be considered conclusive at the present stage of investigation.

Finger and Body Moulding.—In addition to head-moulding, the bodies of female infants had to undergo further modification in order to make them grow up beautiful in Hawaiian eyes. While the head was being re-shaped, the fingers were tapered by squeezing and rolling. The process was called *omilo* (to roll or twist), a general term. The arms and legs were massaged in order to enlarge certain portions and diminish others, as a fat limb with appropriate dimples was a thing of beauty. The trunk was also massaged. It is difficult to-day to ascertain how long these manipulations continued, and to what extent they were carried out,—finger-moulding alone excepted.

RACE MIXTURE IN HAWAII¹

The Hawaiian Islands are remarkable for the diversity of races represented and for the varied conjugal race-mingling which has taken place in this tiny island world during the past hundred and fifty years.

In 1918, the population of Hawaii in round numbers was as follows:

Asiatics	153,500
Japanese	105,000
Chinese	23,000
Koreans	5,000
Filipinos	20,000
Polynesians	40,000
Hawaiians	23,000
Caucasian-Hawaiians	11,000
Chinese-Hawaiians	6,000
Latins	31,000
Portuguese	23,000
Spanish	2,000
Porto Ricans	6,000
Americans, Scotch, British, Germans, Russians, etc.	22,000

The Chinese began to come to Hawaii in 1870. At present over half the Chinese men marry Chinese women, while most Chinese women marry Chinese men. A large percentage of the Chinese men marry Hawaiian or part-Hawaiian women. Very few Chinese women marry Hawaiian or part-Hawaiian men. Only one Chinese man has married an American woman; a few Chinese women have been married by American men. An appreciable amount of mingling has taken place between the Chinese and the Portuguese; Chinese and Chinese-Hawaiian men marry Portuguese, Spanish, Hawaiian, Caucasian-Hawaiian, etc. The most significant feature is the large number of mixed marriages, in which the Chinese, Hawaiian, and Caucasian-strains intermingle.

Japanese immigration began in 1886, that of Koreans about 1900. In general, Japanese marry only Japanese; they show remarkable racial aloofness, more so, as a race, than any other in Hawaii. A few Japanese men have married Hawaiian, part-Hawaiian, and Portuguese women; only one has married an American woman. There are surprising few marriages between the Japanese and the other Asiatic

¹ MacCaughey (V.)—*J. Hered.*, 1919, X, 41-47.

peoples in Hawaii; a few Japanese women have been married by Chinese and Koreans.

All the Korean women have married only Koreans. The Korean men have married not only Koreans but also women of Hawaiian and part-Hawaiian blood.

The Japanese and Koreans contrast strongly with the Chinese in race mixtures, the former groups evincing strong clannishness in marital selections; the latter groups freely breeding "out." In general, Asiatics in Hawaii breed more freely with Caucasian stock than they do among themselves.

The majority of Portuguese men marry Portuguese. Their national preferences, outside their own group, in quantitative sequence are: Hawaiian, Caucasian-Hawaiian, Spanish, Chinese-Hawaiian.

Most Spanish men married Spanish women. Spanish women marry freely outside their nationality. A small amount of intermarrying takes place between Spanish and Portuguese. A notable number of Spanish women are married by Porto Ricans and Filipinos. The intermarrying between Spanish and Hawaiian and part-Hawaiians is very slight, especially when contrasted with the Portuguese in this regard.

Most Hawaiian men marry Hawaiians. Hawaiian women marry freely outside their own race. Notable among the racial preferences of Hawaiian men are their marriages with Caucasian-Hawaiians, Chinese-Hawaiians, and Portuguese.

Only one half of the American men married Americans; most of the American women married Americans. In numerical order, American men married Americans, Portuguese, Caucasian-Hawaiians, Hawaiians, British, German, Chinese-Hawaiians, and Porto Ricans. Only 13 American men and 3 American women married Asiatics; 15 American men married Chinese-Hawaiians; 223 married women of Hawaiian or part-Hawaiian blood. The 116 American women who did not marry American men married, in order: British, Caucasian-Hawaiians, Germans, Hawaiians, Portuguese.