October 28th, 1935

Dear Dr Guha,

I have not fully read your paper, but was interested to see how you had approached the subject. The great difficulty about the coefficient of racial likeness, in my view, is that it has been put forward as a panacea, with consequent vagueness as to the exact function it is intended to fulfil. As you know, it was originally a test of significance, though never a very reliable one. It is, perhaps, only due to the name it received that it was ever used for anything else, e.g., as a generalised inverse measure of resemblance. In my view, any such generalised measure, if one is ultimately found to be needed, must be based on a careful study of the racial significance of the particular measurements on which it is based, which are probably of very unequal value for this purpose; though, naturally, all may properly be used as a test of significance.
What we need, I should judge, is to discover what particular component of the multiplicity of measurements in which any two populations differ is indicative of a particular racial element, such as more or less infusion of Mongolian blood. Any such component may mathematically be represented by a linear function, preferably of raw measurements, though conceivably other functions of these measurements might be utilized. At my suggestion Miss Barnard has illustrated this process in relation to the apparent secular change in the measurements of dated series of crania from Egypt. This, of course, is only a beginning and an illustration, and I am sure the method will be much more fruitful when applied to measurements of the living where special components associated with, e.g., social status, altitude, urbanization, etc., no doubt, will be found in addition to those characteristic of the larger racial differences.

You might be interested to see a very elementary critique of the O.R.L. which I have recently written. I hope you will return it after reading.

Yours sincerely,