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Recent Dissertations

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Another of Fison's significant contributions to the preservation of knowledge about old Fiji was his encouragement of island converts to write their autobiographies. Some of these he translated. Joel Bulu (1871), a straight translation, and Old Sefanaia (ca. 1895), assembled from vernacular material, are Fison's work under the pseudonym "A Friend of His."

After Fison had received his M.A. from the University of Rochester (New York) for work on the Australian aborigines, he gave up writing under pseudonyms. The pseudonym period lasted for a quarter-century (1857-1883) and covers material of prime value for any ethnohistorical reconstruction in the anthropology of Fiji.

Recent Dissertations

Since dissertations are not always easily accessible, we will in the future, as space permits, include brief summaries when these are provided by the authors.

Banks, Judith Judd (M.A., anthropology, University of British Columbia, 1970) "Comparative Biographies of Two British Columbia Anthropologists: Charles Hill-Tout and James A. Teit."

Bynum, William F., M.D. (Ph.D., history of science, Cambridge University, 1974) "Time's Noblest Offspring: The Problem of Man in the British Natural Historical Sciences, 1800-1863." The dissertation treats the work of William Lawrence, J. C. Prichard, George Combe, Robert Chambers, Richard Owen, Robert Knox, Thomas Huxley and Charles Lyell, with specific reference to two related sets of queries: 1) What is the significance of the anatomical similarities between man and the anthropoid apes? Do animals possess minds? Is the difference between men and other animals qualitative or quantitative? What are the implications of classifying man as a member of the animal kingdom? 2) Why are some men white and some black? Are all men descended from a single pair, or are racial characteristics aboriginal? Are the different races members of the same species? If so, how have the striking racial variations occurred? Despite good theological, scientific and humanistic reasons for considering man a single species, there was little direct historical evidence on the formation of human varieties, and the major racial types existed at the time of the earliest written and pictorial records. Therefore, anthropologists commonly appealed to the "analogy of nature," pointing out that domestic animals also exhibited marked variation, and since man was also a domestic animal, it could be proved analogically that human varieties were "accidental," not aboriginal. Medical anatomy and physiology also depended on this analogy, since many
data were derived from animal dissection. Physicians assumed that relations between anatomical structure and physiological function obtained in both men and animals, but the issue was complicated theologically and philosophically when this seemingly innocuous method was applied to the comparative anatomy of the brain. Darwinism intensified these tensions without materially changing them.

Erickson, Paul A. (Ph.D., anthropology, University of Connecticut, 1974) "The Origins of Physical Anthropology" (cf. HAN I:2).

Reingold, Judith C. M. (Ph.D., anthropology, University of California, Berkeley, 1973) "German Nationalism and the Inquiry into German Origins during the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries."

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