



The Drama of Fiji: A Contemporary History

John Wesley Coulter

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This history of Fiji focuses on the period of Imperial British control and offers a fascinating glimpse at a unique and volatile situation.

The drama unfolds with a look into the backgrounds of the native Fijians—subsistence farmers most of whom are hardly affected by modern progress. Complications arise with the introduction of the Indian migrants who were recruited to serve periods of indenture on sugar cane plantations. Nearly all of them were Hindus. They yearned for land—the most valuable property in India. The plot further thickens with the "dual government" set-up where a governor, appointed by the Queen, works side by side with the Fijian Administration which has jurisdiction over all Fijians in the Colony.

The Drama of Fiji is based on three periods of fieldwork in those islands at intervals over a period of 23 years, visit to northern India, and relevant literature. The last visit to Fiji, in 1960, was part of a large project in the South Pacific, made possible by a combined grant-in-aid of research, given by the Association of American Geographers and the Graduate School of the University of Cincinnati, the latter of which awarded a subvention to the author for this book.

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