

ANTHROPOLOGY

Theory on Negro Origin

► A NEW THEORY of racial origin is being seized upon to bolster opposition to desegregation and integration in the United States.

The idea that the races of mankind were differentiated and separated from each other at different times before *Homo sapiens* (the modern kind of man) evolved in several varieties, is set forth in a new book published (Oct. 15.) by Dr. Carleton S. Coon, leading physical anthropologist, professor at the University Museum, Philadelphia, and author (*The Origin of Races*-Knopf, \$10).

One of the five subspecies, as anthropologists call races, the Negroes of Africa, began their climb up the evolutionary ladder some 40,000 years ago judging by the fossils of early man unearthed in Africa, Dr. Coon finds.

This contrasts with the white or Caucasoid people who are dated to be from approximately 200,000 years older in their splitting off the common ancestral line, the kind of man who first walked upright, *Homo erectus*.

While Dr. Coon in his new book and his previous one on "The Story of Man" carefully refrains from applying his discoveries to the race question in America, Africa and elsewhere, others are doing so.

That "the Negro race is at least 200,000 years behind the white race on the ladder of evolution" is put forth as an argument for Negro inferiority and as a support to desegregation opposition. This is being widely spread in the South where books and pamphlets by Carleton Putnam of Washington, D. C. are circulated. Distribution was heavy especially in Oxford, Miss., scene of race riots.

This new contention of white superiority is proving embarrassing to attempts to bring peacefully the new African nations into the international community.

Dr. Coon's theory of such differences in racial origin has not been widely accepted. Simultaneously with the appearance of his book, the journal of the American Anthropological Association, American Anthropologist (Oct.) carries an article by Dr. Frederick S. Hulse of the University of Arizona who, in considering "Race as an Evolutionary Episode," finds that the assumption of a total separation of the so-called major racial stocks dating back to Pliocene geological era or earlier is an "extreme opinion" that "has no evidence of any nature to support it."

In Dr. Hulse's judgment "the different sorts of people whom we find in the world today are just not that different."

Dr. Coon states his new book aims to see how far back in prehistoric antiquity human racial types can be traced. He asks whether they all branched off a common stem recently or did their moment of separation lie lower down on the time scale when long-extinct types like the so-called ape-men of Java and China were still alive.

His conclusion is:

"All of the evidence available from comparative ethnology, linguistics, and prehistoric archaeology indicates a long separation of the principal races of man. This is contrary to the current idea that the archaic species of man who had preceded *Homo sapiens* became conveniently extinct.

"Man is little more than a half million years old. Geologically speaking, we were born yesterday. Fossil men now extinct differed from each other in race and were not members of separate species, except in the sense that one species grew out of another."

Dr. Coon is not at all concerned with the impact of his theory on domestic problems, he told SCIENCE SERVICE.

"I have been completely objective," he said. "I have not mentioned American Negroes once in the book."

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ANTHROPOLOGY

Anthropology Fails To Justify Segregation

► A TELEGRAPHIC POLL conducted by SCIENCE SERVICE finds no support for the justification of segregation on anthropological grounds or the Coon Theory.

Responding to the query as to Dr. Coon's correctness of interpretation that the races of mankind differentiated from each other at different times, seven disagreed. Three gave "yes and no" answers and another considered Dr. Coon's theory neither new nor startling.

By the same kind of reasoning as used by Dr. Coon, one anthropologist observed that *Homo sapiens* would be 70,000,000 years behind the prosimians.

On the question of whether the anthropological interpretation justifies segregation, nine out of 12 answering emphatically disagreed with any such conclusion.

With regard to the application of anthropology to the segregation controversy, one answer was "Read the U. S. Constitution." Another suggested the segregation of extreme racists who are unable to get along with the rest of the world. And another stated that it is absurd to claim on any such basis that any race is superior or inferior to another.

One anthropologist replied that events of 200,000 years ago have no relevance to the segregation issue.

Evolution in respect to mental abilities can work so fast that a few hundred years could account for an advantageous change, another anthropologist observed.

Of the 16 leading physical anthropologists and human geneticists queried by telegraph, 12 responded.

A 13th refused to reply on the grounds that "it is highly improper and scientifically ridiculous to conduct an opinion poll on the validity of a scholar's interpretation of evidence."

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ARCHAEOLOGY

Pacific Isle of Tahiti Inhabited Before Christ

► TAHITI and the islands of paradise surrounding it may have had inhabitants 2,000 years ago, new archaeological evidence indicates. An expedition to the Society Islands in the Pacific by Bishop Museum archaeologists from Honolulu has unearthed tools buried with an adult male on the small island of Maupiti which "may be up to 2,000 years old."

The artifacts represent the first discovery of stone implements and ornaments belonging to the earliest days of Tahitian history, Dr. Kenneth P. Emory, Museum archaeologist, stated. He said they differ from forms seen by the first European visitors to Tahiti.

The discovery of the ornaments, stone adzes, and pearlshell fishhooks indicates that Hawaii did not share in this early phase of Tahiti, but a later phase of it, Dr. Emory said. Hawaiian culture would have "multiple origins from central East Polynesia; the first settlers coming from the Marquesas, later settlers coming from Tahiti."

Charcoal obtained by the Hawaii expedition last year on the island of Moorea in the Society chain revealed that it was inhabited by 1020 A.D., earliest radiocarbon date so far obtained from the islands.

However, Dr. Emory feels that diggings on Maupiti will produce an earlier settlement date for Tahiti.

The artifacts, Dr. Emory says, are identical with those found left in ancient burial sites of New Zealand's first settlers more than 1,000 years ago.

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GEOPHYSICS

Four Oceans, Not One, Identified in the Arctic

► ALTHOUGH in the space age the earth seems smaller every day, it may soon have three more oceans under its Arctic belt. A University of Wisconsin, Madison, geologist has announced that the Arctic Ocean is not one, but four separate oceans.

Ned Ostenso, staff member of Wisconsin's geophysical and polar research center, has identified four areas of oceanic crust which constitute "four deeps of truly oceanic character."

Earth scientists distinguish continents from oceans by the type of crust peculiar to each one. There has been some speculation as to whether or not the Arctic Ocean is a water-covered land mass. However, within the Arctic basin which has edges of crust similar to that of the continent, there are four areas of water which cover true oceanic crusts.

Scientists recognize the Arctic as being of primary importance in understanding the earth's magnetic field and climate.

The University of Wisconsin study was supported by the National Science Foundation, the Office of Naval Research and the Arctic Institute of North America.

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