

The book constitutes an intricate collage of pictures of Australian life and society. Through these vignettes the people themselves — convicts, emigrants and their successors — are described. There is an account of their public occasions: religious, civic, sporting or intended to dignify the worth of labour. The book treats the moments of social disorder in Australia's history, from the celebrated conflict between the miners and colonial authority at the Eureka Stockade to less well-known disturbances involving the Irish, the Chinese and the succession of colourful bushrangers. There is a discussion of how nineteenth-century Australians glorified a range of individuals running from governors, explorers and politicians to the bushranger, "the wild colonial boy". The pictures provided in the written text are supplemented by extensive contemporary illustrations which make more vivid the events and personages described. This is a handsome book, suitable for laying on the coffee table if that position had not become vulnerable to the onslaughts of academic critics.

How well has Inglis succeeded in carrying out his diagnosis of the Australian character? In the first place it is difficult to judge the whole project when only the first of four volumes has been written. The thrust of the enterprise is clear enough but much will depend on the material and interpretation provided as the work proceeds. In this respect the evidence of the first volume is promising. Inglis writes vividly; he is clearly in command of a vast range of qualitative data; his scrutiny is intelligent and often imaginative. His researches are thoroughly documented in endnotes and there is a valuable general bibliography. This is a book from which Australian social historians (who have not been a numerous group) can draw encouragement and Melbourne University Press, the publishers, can acknowledge with pride. As for the author, he is presumably too occupied with the continuation of his mammoth task to stop to receive the approbation which he has so fully earned with this first instalment of his "exploration of social history".

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WARREN DEAN. — *Rio Claro: A Brazilian Plantation System, 1820-1920*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976.

This book by Warren Dean joins a growing body of works on nineteenth and early twentieth century Latin-American rural society. Long considered as falling within the fields of geographers and sociologists (such as McBride and Whetten), the subject has increasingly drawn the interest of historians. This late-blooming concern has been largely produced by the relevance of the latifundia to the issues of race relations, economic development, and "aristocratic" domination of politics. Understandably, given this motivation, there has been a tendency to overtly use these studies as vehicles for commentary on present day problems. Such is the case with Dean's work.

In general, two difficulties could arise from this procedure. Firstly, the prescriptive content might override and warp the analytical. Secondly, the description might be incomplete, touching only on those aspects which obviously further the author's argument. Despite such potential problems, however, Dean manages to provide a taut and compelling account of a Brazilian plantation system.

The county of Rio Claro, in the state of Sao Paulo, is particularly interesting for its role as the leading edge of the late nineteenth century coffee frontier.

As Dean reconstructs their socio-economic history, Rio Claro's great estates properly began with the granting of huge *sesmarias* to a few favoured individuals, a policy which was itself the fruit of bureaucratic disbelief in the productive potential of small-holders. The grantees and their successors proceeded to expropriate the existing swidden farmers, but could not reduce them to wage labour due to the attraction of vacant lands further into the interior. Under the circumstances slavery was necessary to the development of sugar cultivation. With the enforcement of the prohibition of the African slave trade in 1850, a development nearly contemporaneous with the shift to coffee production, the labour system was thrown into disarray. This led to a government sponsored experiment with free labour by which the European immigrant was to ultimately pay for the creation of a new plantation work force. Yet, although the new comers were more efficient than slaves, the owners, Dean tells us, used to the exploitative standards of slavery, refused to share the benefits of higher productivity, causing the immigrants to reject the venture and bringing it to an end. The problem, therefore, was temporarily solved by importing slaves from increasingly distant regions of Brazil.

Despite this temporary reinforcement of slavery the institution was doomed. One of the consequences of the end of the trans-Atlantic trade was that the slave population became increasingly Brazilian, and therefore progressively more difficult to control. Dean believes that, in time, the degree of repression needed to maintain the system increased to a level unacceptable to the imperial government, leading to eventual emancipation. In these critical years of growing resistance the planters tried at first to prolong slavery a few years longer, only to parade belatedly as abolitionists on the eve of its extinction. As the author sees it, however, the end of bondage merely released latent racism. In succeeding years planters replaced the blacks and mixed bloods with new European immigrants, the cost of whose passage was borne by the Brazilian public at large. Yet, immigrants were no more productive than the native population they displaced.

Dean's central concern is the evolution of Rio Claro's labour system, and this unifying thread provides his work with much of its compelling impact. There is here, however, not so much as a pretense of moral objectivity. Thus in discussing the terms of emancipation Dean notes that had it "followed the course of equity and reason, the ex-slaves would have been awarded the land they had toiled on all their lives." Even if one shares his ethical views on this point it is obvious that another position, based on the principle of the sanctity of private property, would lead to quite a different perspective. Further, it is equally clear that the values on which his judgement is based were not formed by his historical research, for Dean never embraces a systematic philosophy of history. On the contrary *Rio Claro* is presented as a calculated, pragmatic political act.

In his preface he points out that although the study of plantation labour has egalitarian implications "the effort, it must be protested in advance, is to restore perspectives distorted through special pleading..." the enemy is the historiographical tradition which has obscured the selfishness of the planter élite by magnifying their "heroic" concessions to the lower orders, and which has hidden the racism of Luso-Brazilian society by propagating the myth of racial democracy. Nor is his interest purely academic for Dean insists that the élite's "historiography is not only self-serving; it also suggests that current decisions might best be left to them. To see things another way is not only to see them more clearly, therefore, but also to restore self-respect and the desire for self-actuation to those in need." Truth for the author, justice for his subjects' heirs!

Warren Dean's explanations are and were meant to be the antithesis of those of the apologists of planterdom. This suggests that it may be possible to go beyond

his account and construct a yet more satisfying synthesis. Indeed, however convincing Dean may be, one cannot help but suspect that in imparting the "message" some violence has been done to the analysis. What is to be made, for instance, of the assertion that the planters gave up their experiments with immigrant labour in the 1850s "because they could not deal on a purely contractual basis with a real proletariat." Dean deals with the problem by stating that this behaviour was paradoxical for in their other affairs the landowners were altogether capitalistic. Which leads him to suggest that they feared the destruction of their society to such a degree that they behaved irrationally. But did nineteenth century capitalists welcome joint action by their workers? Individual and collective bargaining are not mere variants of the same thing. If they were, workers who wished to improve their lot would have less need of labour unions. The tendency, even in the heartland of capitalism, was for employers to attempt to impose contractual terms, often with the aid of legislation similar to that Brazilian Employment Law of 1837 which Dean finds so unprogressive. Since the imperial government refused to use enough violence to repress the disorders, the planters reverted to slavery, which was violence in another form. How did Brazilian planters differ from European capitalists? Was it not in having chattel slavery as an alternative?

The fundamental problem with Dean's work lies in his view of the élite. They are presented as self-thwarting because their racism and retarded social ideas produced economic inefficiency. But their aim was clearly to prolong, and preserve a social system which they found most convenient. The measure of their success is to be found in Dean's denunciation of the myths their successors perpetuate. Finally, one has the impression that the real sin of Rio Claro was in not becoming another Iowa or Saskatchewan. At such a level, however, criticism become puerile. More balance would have existed if Dean had cast his net further. Were the bureaucrats wrong to believe that the swidden farmers were incapable of commercial agriculture? Were the abolitionists such a passive element in the extinction of slavery? The great estates of Rio Claro, produced by the planners of one Atlantic economy, and successively transformed by the masters of another, are here made to bear witness as to the character of Brazilian society to a degree that is far beyond their capacity.

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Peter H. AMANN. — *Revolution and Mass Democracy: The Paris Club Movement in 1848*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975.

As Professor Amann reminds us in the introduction to his monograph, most histories of the French revolutionary year of 1848 tend to stress the failures and achievements of the Provisional Government and Executive Commission as administrative bodies during the first months of the nascent Second French Republic. Only recently have several historians made major contributions to the social history of France in 1848, establishing what Amann refers to as "a history from below movement" in the historiography of the Second Republic. Amann's analysis of the Paris club movement is a welcome addition to the list of outstanding social interpretations of the French Revolution of 1848 which have appeared within the last twenty years. His book will join the ranks of works, such as those by Adeline Daumard, André-Jean Tudesq, Rémi Gossez, and Roger Price, which have opened up new perspectives on this important period in modern French history. Like those