

in the area perhaps most fascinating for students of Pacific history, namely Dillon's perception of and attitude to the Pacific peoples he encountered. Ethnographic detail collected by him relating in particular to the Polynesian outlier, Tikopia, and to Vanikoro and the New Hebrides in the Melanesian group, is valuable source material for anthropologists. Dillon's conception at a deeper level of these societies goes unexplored; a different theoretical approach may have elicited a more meaningful analysis from the material.

But what Professor Davidson, with meticulous care for detail, has painstakingly recovered of Peter Dillon's experiences is impressive indeed. Using a wide variety of sources, he has presented Dillon's story against the varied and complex background of the contemporary Pacific environment, which establishes a thick texture of time, place and environment. It is a work of high quality, and certainly one of the most important works of Pacific scholarship of the decade.

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Red Papers in New Zealand. Ed. David Bedggood. Marxist Publishing Group, Auckland, series one, 1976, n.p.; series two, 1977. 80 pp. N.Z. price: \$1.50.

THE FIRST series of *Red Papers* includes extracts from already published material together with some original contributions. 'The purpose... is to bring together Marxist papers representing the post-war developments in the analysis of New Zealand capitalism.' The approach of the contributors varies considerably from the eclectic radicalism of Pat Hickey's 'Red Fed' memoirs, or Bruce Jesson's republicanism to the consistent Marxism of Willis Airey. Topics range from David Bedggood's introductory analysis, 'State Capitalism in New Zealand', to studies of New Zealand class structure and Wayne Robinson's 'Imperialism and New Zealand's neo-colonial future'.

The second series consists of articles written within the last two years. Beginning with an article by John Macrae, 'The Internationalisation of Capital and New Zealand', it evinces a much stronger theoretical basis. The element of eclectic radicalism persists in Bruce Jesson's 'British Imperialism and the Crown in Early New Zealand' and 'The Family Affair (Part III): The Fletcher Empire'. But otherwise the essays are firmly within the Marxist tradition.

One of the main virtues of the two series is that they provide the initial foundation for an alternative interpretation to the liberal welfarist orthodoxy that has dominated academic writing on New Zealand history. They challenge the view that history is made by great men or that it 'is about life as seen by the legislatures arranged in chronological order.' They emphasize broad structures, class interests and the internal logic of capitalist accumulation rather than personal motives and individual rivalries. Thus Jesson (series two) questions Sinclair's emphasis upon the 'squabbles' between governors and settlers in the early days of the colony, commenting: 'The Governor wasn't in

N.Z. to arbitrate between the settler and the Maori, he was here to govern, to extend the authority of the crown over the whole territory... from the Maori point of view, the Governor-settler division wasn't as important as the underlying unity.' Rob Campbell (series two) argues that the usage of 'class' in the writing of Oliver, Sinclair, Hamer and Olssen is vague and confused. A more rigorous definition is necessary: 'if our main object is the analysis of social change then we need a theory of social change'. He implies that because they decline to confront the problem of 'a theory of social change', the interpretations of 'liberal' historians lack explanatory power. They are no more than commentaries upon a reality which is assumed to be infinitely complex.

The antiquarian and the fullstops and footnotes schools of New Zealand history may be contemptuous of studies which emphasize interpretation rather than information and which have been cheaply produced. However those who are interested in understanding New Zealand should welcome the revival of Marxist critique. Academic historians may also ponder Bedggood's accusation: 'the relative under-development of Marxism in this country is more the result of a sterile university environment than the lack of a strong labour movement'.

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Omai, Pacific Envoy. By E.H. McCormick. Auckland/Oxford University Press, 1977. xviii, 364 pp. N.Z. price: \$21.60.

McCORMICK aimed to put on record all the extant material on Omai, and thought he had succeeded; in a wry postscript he has to add a reference to Herbert Croft's scandal-novel *Love and Madness*, in which Omai intervenes in the notorious triangle of Lord Sandwich, Martha Ray, and the Reverend James Hackman. It seems unlikely, however, that much more will turn up of any substance; the book is certainly, as the blurb claims, comprehensive. It is well-written, well-documented, and beautifully illustrated, including all known likenesses of Omai; the only production flaw is the binding, which on my copy warped as soon as it was taken out of its packing. But the book is a pleasure to read, and far superior to T.B. Clark's splendidly printed but intolerably flashy and careless *Omai: First Polynesian Ambassador*. I have not seen Michael Alexander's recent *Omai: 'Noble Savage'*, which seems to have much the same scope as this book; but I have no doubt that McCormick's work would stand up well in any comparison.

My only serious criticism is that in a praiseworthy desire to give the full background to Omai's career, McCormick rather overdoes the detail on voyages and their preparation. Omai does not appear at all for long stretches, in others he bobs in here and there; in Chapter 4, for instance, Lord Monboddo's passion for men with tails, and the Eskimos' visit in 1772-73, may be defensible as setting for the 'Noble Savage', but Banks's travels in