REVIEWS

'Short step from establishing the failure of radical social movements to questioning whether there were any truly radical social movements at all' (p. 206). Scates's 'more contingent kind of history' successfully rejects these kinds of antitheses—capitalism versus socialism, self-improvement versus radicalism, men's versus women's political interests—that obscure what Robert Gray has called 'the real play of historical possibilities at the time'. Ultimately, Scates's reconstruction of the vibrant radical culture of the 1890s, his attempt to recall, for a 'New Australia', the 'half remembered' dreams of single taxers, socialists and anarchists, reminds us that these 'dreams' are worth our attention.

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Frank Broeze's book, Island Nation: A History of Australians and the Sea, is an account of practically everything connected with the seas and coastline which surround Australia. It is a broad survey of all things oceanic, from early Aboriginal fisheries and colonial overseas trade to today's container cargoes, maritime unions and surfing culture.

It begins with the importance of naval strategy to the British Empire and Australia's place in that strategy. Australian historians reading Island Nation may be surprised (and perhaps relieved) to find that the 'Foundation debate' has been concluded. Broeze assumes that the debate about why Botany Bay was founded, which dragged on through the 1970s and '80s in Australian history circles, is finally over. Broeze declares Geoffrey Blainey and Alan Frost (among others) the victors. Like them, Broeze argues the British claimed New South Wales not simply to 'dump' convicts, but rather to pre-empt the French and provide an alternative route for the China tea trade in times of war. Broeze admits, however, that this sea-inspired founding of Sydney was somewhat contradicted by the initial prohibition put on boat-building to keep its convict labour force from escaping. The prohibition did not last long as 'within a generation Sydney would become a vibrant regional entrepot' (p. 31).

This inter-regional trade declined towards the end of the nineteenth century as Australia retreated from its Asian and Pacific neighbours. Broeze traces 'White Australia's' pursuit of British immigrants and erection of tariff walls to protect itself against cheap coloured labour. Australia's loyalty to Britain in commerce was paralleled in defence. The Royal Australian Navy was founded, according to Broeze, to fight Britain's wars in faraway seas. These conflicts soon came close to Australia's shores, however, as an expansionist Japan captured all German colonies north of the equator during World War One and most of Southeast Asia and the Pacific during World War Two. Britain's declining maritime power at this time is perhaps best seen in Broeze's description of the gigantic bluff of the
REVIEWS

'Singapore Strategy'. Britain's hope that one naval force could cover two hemispheres shows how its resources were thinly stretched over an empire too big to defend.

While Broeze's description of the geopolitics surrounding the fall of Singapore is much more even-handed than, say, Paul Keating's, his description of the British domination of the Australian shipping industry is necessarily partisan. P & O in particular emerges from the book no longer as a benign cruise company but as an octopus controlling practically every shipping concern in the western world. Its take-over of BISN, the New Zealand Shipping Company, the Federal Steam Navigation Company, the Union Steam Ship Company, the Canadian-Australasian Line during World War One and, more recently, the New Zealand Shipping Corporation, and its twenty-five percent interest in Australian Stevedoring have given this British-based company too much power over the transport of Australia's exports and imports. Various shipping lines were started up by federal and state governments to provide an Australian alternative, but they folded as innovations in modern shipping such as the introduction of containers and mechanised wharfs made huge amounts of capital necessary. All that remains of these doomed attempts to regain some control over our shipping are the small fleets owned by BHP and the government-run Australian National Line (which will probably be sold off under John Howard, according to Broeze).

Broeze devotes a timely chapter to Maritime unions. This chapter, of course, has added relevance because of the battle between Patrick's Stevedoring Company and the Maritime Union of Australia. The author wrote this book long before the battle flared but this chapter provides important background to the current dispute. The harsh working and living conditions of the wharfies, their sense of community as they crowded around the docks, all led to strong unionism on the wharfs. One maritime union's origins in a nineteenth-century battle to ban Chinese from working in Australian steamships shows that they were, like the rest of the Union movement, implicated in the White Australia Policy. It also incidentally shows the poor footnoting which undermines this book (there is no way of knowing where one can read further on the Chinese ban, nor are many of the quotations throughout the book footnoted). The importance of the maritime unions in the establishment of the Australian Labor Party and the rise and fall of various Australian Prime Ministers, such as Billy Hughes and Stanley Bruce, are described by Broeze in what might have been excessive detail if it had not been for the resurgence of industrial disputes on the docks. This reviewer wishes Broeze had been able to include a commentary on the current dispute in his book. As it is, he is prescient in his remarks that there will always be trouble on the docks. But while Broeze's account of the development of maritime unions in Australia provides background to the current dispute, it is perhaps too detailed for those not interested in union history.

Indeed, throughout the book, it is difficult to discern who the intended reader is. The lack of adequate footnotes and generalisations about 'Australians enjoying the beach', seem to preclude an academic audience, and yet the use of technical terms like shipping 'conferences' (undefined but I think it describes a shipping cartel) and 'moles' (some sort of wharf I think) seem to preclude the general public as well. And yet at times Broeze seems to be trying to cater to all
tastes. This is especially evident in his final chapter which does little more than list and briefly describe every Australian novel, painting or other works of art which have been inspired by the sea or beach. While the book is descriptive and not conceptual, it should nevertheless be enjoyed by all those who love the sea as much as its author evidently does.

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In *The Cartographic Eye*, Simon Ryan undertakes a revisionary analysis of many of the iconic ‘exploration journals’ of nineteenth-century Australia. Ryan seeks to deconstruct the writings of Sturt, Mitchell, Oxley and Leichhardt and others, to expose the Eurocentric set of assumptions upon which they depend, and to examine the role of such writings in creating British understandings of land and ownership. In particular, his stated intention is to focus ‘on the colonial moment when there is widespread appropriation of land’ (p. 3), and to ‘scrutinise and undermine the methodology of exploration, and to show that knowledge production is invariably an exercise of power’ (p. 20).

Ryan’s book joins an ever increasing collection of works dealing with spatial history, colonial discourse theory and the gaze of empire, but it is a worthy addition. He draws on the insights of recent theoretical works in this area to advance a lucid and largely convincing argument about the significance of both the genre of exploration writing and the conventions of cartography to the British construction of Australia as an empty land. It is an analysis of textual representations of the visual which emphasises vision as a possessive force and ‘seeing’ as a mode of appropriation.

Ryan does this in a number of ways. He begins by looking at the exploration journal as a genre which constructed the explorer as much as the terrain they were exploring, in a very gendered and classed, as well as raced way. He moves on to look at how these writings represented the landscape, as perceived by the gaze of the explorer, within a specifically European notion of the picturesque, a notion that itself operated as an ideological tool. In the following chapter he examines the ‘cultural constructedness’ of maps, arguing that the conventions of map making which left a ‘blank’ for that which was uncharted territory contributed to the understanding of Australia as a *tabula rasa* ‘on which European fantasies may be projected’ (p. 117). The focus in the final part of the book is on explorers’ representations of the Aboriginal population of Australia. Here, Ryan unravels some of the discursive tactics employed to deal with the unavoidable recognition that the ‘new land’ these writers were ‘discovering’ was already inhabited. The means by which the writers attempted