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Changing Patterns in the Social Organization of the  
Coffee Export Sector in San Paulo, 1889-1930

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CHANGING PATTERNS IN THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE  
COFFEE EXPORT SECTOR IN SAO PAULO, 1889-1930

by

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Originally prepared for presentation at the seminar "Society and Politics in Export Economies" held at the Centro Brasileiro de Análise e Planejamento (CEBRAP), March 11-13, 1982. This is a preliminary report based on a broader study of the patterns of collective action enacted by Paulista coffee planters in the decade of the 1920's. Field work was done in São Paulo in 1979 and 1980 with the support of the Social Science Research Council. The author welcomes comments and suggestions.

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Dorme nenê  
Que a cuca vem pegar  
Papai está na roça  
Mamãe no cafezal.

(Paulista lullaby)

At the turn of the decade of the 1920's, the coffee planters of São Paulo--the world's largest coffee export sector--engaged in a surprising flurry of contentious behavior and conflict. In less than two years of ferment two major associations were formed and an equal number of major coffee congresses held, while an organizational drive on the part of the most vociferous new association resulted in more than 85 new local chapters in the interior of the state by 1923. Prompted by a sharp fall in the price of coffee in 1920-21, the articulated grievances and claims covered a wider range of issues--particularly lack of manpower, credit, planter organization and governmental responsiveness to the plight of planters. Feelings ran so high that on the congress of March of 1921 an outright threat of political revolution was made. Playing upon the predominant mood of the assembly, keynote speaker Alfredo Pujol declared that unless the government addressed planters' demands they would resort to "the red flag of revolution, supreme refuge of the oppressed."

This is anomalous. The scene clashes with the usual portrayal of Paulista planters as being among the most economically secure, organized and politically incorporated export elite

in Latin American history. How then could they feel so oppressed as to threaten revolution? What are we to make of the self-declared economic difficulties, lack of organization, and decay in political influence? How shall we explain this unexpected display of insecurity?

At a general level, answers to these and related questions can help clarify the conditions under which economic elites and power holders mobilize to defend their interests. They are particularly relevant in elucidating the political behavior of export elites and emergent bourgeoisies in dependent societies--and, from there, of the conditions under which they can exert dominance over the political process and over the development of a national society. In terms of the continuity of the larger process of capitalist development--of which export sector growth is the first major phase--this ability is especially pivotal when, as was the case in Brazil starting in the 1920's, the growth of the export economy begins to stabilize and established export elites face the challenge of new social groups advocating new forms of development, particularly industrialization.

In this context of large-scale transition, most accounts of the political behavior of export elites have predicated an otherwise unproblematic hegemony on their part, only jolted into demise by factors outside the organization of the export sector proper. Many accounts of the revolutionary episodes of the 1930's in Latin America and of the attendant ebbing in planter "oligarchical" control, for example, advanced explanations in terms of factors such as the saturation of world markets or the

global crisis of 1929-30. Others concentrated on possible discontinuities between the export economy and the process of industrialization: the demise of the planter and the dependent economy coming about when an industrial class and process of economic development were able to overthrow them.

While defining the proper framework for an inquiry, it is clear that alterations in the external dimensions of dependence and broad patterns of potential conflict related to the issue of industrialization can hardly by themselves explain the socio-political organization of planters and their allies. This study attempts an alternative approach in terms of the internal social organization of the export sector. It assesses cleavages and tensions related to the processes of differentiation generated by the very development of the export sector in an effort to determine the degree of cohesion among planters and cognate groups, including politicians. The limelight is on processes of differentiation and cleavage linked to the interplay between competing modes of production organization--what Hirschman(1977) has called "micro modes of production." For São Paulo, the analysis focuses on the interplay between the large fazenda and the emergence of a small holding system.

The large coffee planters of São Paulo have been traditionally credited with bringing about modern capitalist relations in Brazil. They are accorded the most decisive structural role in the transition to modern Brazilian society--starting with the processes leading to the abolition of slavery in 1888 and the overthrow of the Empire in 1889. The federal

republican system ensuing thereafter is said to have been so dominated by coffee elites that it has been dubbed "the Republic of Coffee." Coffee was indeed king in its importance for Brazilian society, often accounting for over 70% of exports and constituting the locus of accumulation for a great many of the Brazilian fortunes of this century.

The term "hegemony" has been used in the literature to characterize the hold of Paulista planters over Brazilian society throughout this period(e.g., Fausto 1977). Politically, planter organization and domination is said to have been institutionalized in the form of the land-based coffee-producing local political chief known as coronel. Through a pyramid of clientelistic relations in which higher level coronéis aggregated the demands and claims of their clientele in the lower levels, the planter-coronel was said to have reigned supreme over state and national political structures until the very eve of the Revolution of 1930. The roots of planter hegemony have been predicated on the economic predominance grounded on the strength of the micro mode of production over which he presided, the fazenda Paulista. Unlike the plantation system based on slavery which emerged in prior waves of coffee expansion in Brazil and other parts of São Paulo, that of the so-called Santos zone(see Map, Appendix) came to rely almost wholly on free labor--immigrant European labor--even before Abolition was declared in 1888. Free labor, provided in the form of the colonato, was the key element making it a modern capitalist institution in the eyes of some observers. Together with a third element of planter predominance, the large-

scale commercial intermediary known as comissario, the planter is said to have exercised a secure hold over the coffee export sector and the overall economy unfolding around it until the very crisis of 1929-30.

How to reconcile this view with that expressed by planters themselves in the mobilization campaigns of the early 1920's?

A closer look at these demands suggests that planter problems ran much deeper than those provided by the vicissitudes of the external market or direct political pressure from industrialists (See also Font 1982, forthcoming). Sure enough, government intervention in the market to protect the price of coffee was a recurring demand. But side by side with this claim, often even more prominently, were demands denoting serious internal difficulties:

- (1) A larger flow of immigrant colono labor to counter a major labor shortage. Labor shortages were said to have put the planter "at the mercy" of the colono, with wage increases going out of control and threatening São Paulo's competitive position.
- (2) Change in the taxation system developed in São Paulo. The "ad valorem" export tax levied on coffee to fund the state budget, coupled with other indirect taxes and a special surtax levied in 1908 to finance the first valorization scheme, was said to rise production costs beyond acceptable levels. Resentment against the government on this count is summarized in the repeated charges that it was a "partner without capital."
- (3) The creation of a Planters Bank and increased credit to finance coffee stocks.
- (4) A Centro da Lavoura was called for to organize a divided class and restore planters' capacity to influence policy-making.

In summary, if we take planters at face value important aspects of the internal organization of the export sector and its

relation to the government were in major need of overhauling.

Normal verbal jousting or durable claims? The position taken here is that planters should be taken seriously. The principal working hypothesis explored below is whether their cries against chronic undersupply of labor, loss of control of the commercial aspects of the coffee economy and over the policy-making processes reflected a generalized decay in the hegemonic role played by the fazenda in the earlier stages of the development of the Paulista export sector.

To assess the extent to which these demands did indeed reflect durable concerns and the erosion of the predominance of the fazenda requires an in-depth examination of the stability of the labor system, of the commercial networks tying producers to intermediaries and buyers, and of the terms of embedding of the export sector in the enveloping policy structures. The argument to be developed is that, by World War I--and then increasingly throughout the decade of the 1920's--important processes of differentiation were taking place within the coffee economy itself. These were undermining the three pillars on which the predominance of the fazenda rested: to repeat, an abundant and pliable labor system under the colonato, strong commercial and financial intermediation in the person of the comissario, and instrumental control of the policy-making processes under the clientelistic system of interest aggregation known as coronelismo.



### CHANGES IN PRODUCTION: CHALLENGES TO THE FAZENDA

The main arguments about the strength of the fazenda coffee economy have been based on its scale and the growth rhythm it generated. It is difficult not to share this view. In the short fifteen years between 1880 and 1895 the coffee economy grew six-fold and came to claim for the Santos zone--hitherto a largely unexplored or unsettled region--first place in world production. At the end of this boom Santos 10-million bag harvests represented half of the world's production. They typically accounted for close to 40% of Brazilian exports. Besides being the largest coffee export sector ever, it constituted one of the largest export sectors to its time.

While indeed there can be no quibbles about the role of the fazenda in the early phase of expansion, there are sufficient grounds to argue that in subsequent phases pressures on the fazenda led to the emergence of other forms of production, particularly small and medium holders.

The best aggregate evidence pointing to the emergence of alternative forms of production comes from data on the nationality of holders reported in various available censuses and surveys, especially those of 1905, 1920, 1923 and 1932. These data have been recently assessed in a study arguing that the emergence of a small holding system in São Paulo was related to the upward mobility of immigrant colonos (Holloway 1974). The aggregate results from these sources are summarized in Table 1.

These figures show that by 1905 foreigners were significant-

ly represented among landowners in the Santos region with 22% of the total. By 1920 the figure jumps to approximately 40%, while somewhat larger percentages are obtained in the coffee tax survey of 1923(43%) and the agricultural census of 1932(48%).

Holloway's line of analysis crystallizes a debate with authors such as Caio Prado Junior(1933), Hall(1969), Dean(1977) and Souza Martins(1979) who have denied or minimized any significant move from colono to independent farming on the part of the immigrants. Earlier, several Paulista social analysts such as Milliet(1941) and Camargo(1952) had noticed the emergence of small holders in coffee production(although their implicit disagreement with Caio Prado Junior was rather muted). The latest statement expressing the counter position(Souza Martins 1979) argues that planters were able to monopolize control of land, particularly the best ones, and thus inhibit independent small farming by immigrant colonos.

Most of the data adduced to deny significance to the rise of a small holding system from the ranks of the colonos pertains to the period before 1920, centering in particular on the census of 1905. In that census, "only"(e.g. Souza Martins 1977) 8,392 rural properties appeared as belonging to foreigners in the state, of which 6,840 were in the Santos region. Now, if we multiply that figure by 4.6, the average size of colono families, the resulting figure of 40,000 individuals pursuing an independent livelihood in agriculture does not appear as low a figure. In all likelihood, the census figures underestimate the number of small holders. As Dean(1977: 178) himself found, many sitiantes and

Table 1

BRAZILIAN AND FOREIGN FARMS IN SAO PAULO--Summary of  
Six Surveys and Censuses, 1905 to 1934.

National Origin	Santos Zone <sup>(1)</sup>				All of São Paulo <sup>(2)</sup>	
	1905 <sup>(3)</sup>	1920 <sup>(4)</sup>	1923 <sup>(5)</sup>	1932 <sup>(6)</sup>	1932 <sup>(7)</sup>	1934 <sup>(8)</sup>
ALL FARMS						
Braz. .	24,478 (78%)	30,589 (61%)				191,762
Foreign	6,840 (22%)	19,546 (39%)				82,978
Total	31,318 (100%)	50,135 (100%)				274,740
COFFEE FARMS .						
Braz. .			17,112 (57%)	40,693 (52%)	47,013 (54%)	43,040 (52%)
Foreign			12,979 (43%)	38,308 (48%)	39,438 (46%)	39,265 (48%)
Total			30,091 (100%)	79,001 (100%)	86,451 (100%)	82,305 (100%)

(1) Includes only municípios in the western plateau (see regionalization attempts by Camargo, Milliet and Holloway).

(2) Includes municípios in western plateau as well as in other regions.

(3) Source: São Paulo, Secretaria da Agricultura (1904-05).

(4) Source: Brazil (1920).

(5) Source: São Paulo, Secretaria da Agricultura (1924).

(6) Source: São Paulo, Secretaria da Agricultura (1934).

(7) Source: São Paulo, Secretaria da Agricultura (1934).

(8) Source: São Paulo, Secretaria da Agricultura (1936).

The above sources have been used by Camargo and Holloway, among others.

holders of minifundios--as many as twice the number of those who did in Rio Claro, the county he studied--did not register their properties or posses during this period. Apparently, most of

these did not register properties until the 1930's. Dean's estimate of the true number of small holders in Rio Claro increased dramatically when he took this group into account. On the basis of the revised numbers, he concluded that up to 15% of the rural labor force may have owned land(See Dean 1976: 492). If this number is extrapolated to the 300,000 or so workers in the Santos zone at the time(Holloway 1974:249), the resulting figure of 45,000 is impressive. Assuming an average of three workers per family, this yields an estimate of 15,000 units. This is probably a high estimate. Together with the official census figure it provides a range within which the truth is to be found.

The figure from the 1920 census is useful in portraying the relative increase with respect to the official 1905 figures. But it is also likely to be as much of an underestimate as that for 1905. The same can be said about the admittedly partial coffee tax survey of 1923--which, in any case, shows 41% of the coffee farms and 30% of coffee trees to be in the hands of foreigners. It should also be noted that in all censuses and surveys after 1920, second generation immigrants appeared as Brazilian. Since the boom in immigration took place between 1885 and the mid 1890's, children born before 1900 would be adults by 1920 and many could be expected to have become small coffee growers.

Washington Luís's platform address during his campaign for President of the state of São Paulo in 1920 confirms the fact and the importance of the Paulista small holding system. His main theme was that a "silent" transformation was taking place in the

state's land tenure system via the subdivision of the latifundios and the new patterns of settlement in the virgin areas of the west(See "O Estado de São Paulo" 1/26/20: 4).

The nationality of the planters against whom rural workers lodged complaints at the labor relations board known as Patronato Agrícola throughout the 1920's--the period for which comparable data are available--provides yet a separate indication of the degree of participation of foreigners in coffee production after Luís became president. As shown in Table 2, by 1924-25 native Brazilians accounted for less than 50% of the claims. This figure gives an estimate of close to 50% of immigrant and foreign share of coffee production respectively.

TABLE 2

NATIONALITY OF PLANTERS AGAINST WHOM CLAIMS WERE FILED AT THE PATRONATO AGRICOLA, 1922-1930(In percentages).

NATIONALITY	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927	1928	1929	1930
BRAZILIAN	76	55	44	43	51	56	50	52	53
ITALIAN	20	22	18	30	25	19	21	20	24
OTHER	4	23	38	27	24	25	29	28	23
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

SOURCE: São Paulo, Secretaria da Agricultura(1920-1930). Relatório. (Annual reports of the Patronato Agrícola).

That a shift to small holding agriculture was taking place during this decade is also indicated by coffee tax records for the county of Araraquara reconstructed by Edgar Carone and col-

leagues(see Azzoni et. al. 1975). Three graphs, found in the Appendix(Part D), have been derived here from those data and offer a telling picture. The first graph registers a sharp increase in the number of small holders(from 350 in 1920 to over 600 in the late 1920's), while the numbers of other types of producers remain stable. This increase was not brought about by the simple proliferation of ever smaller holdings. The second graph shows a gradual increase in the proportion of coffee trees accounted for by small holders, which is accompanied by a decrease in the proportion of trees in latifundia and large farms. Moreover, as shown in the third graph, there is a sharp decrease in the average size of latifundia, while the size of small holdings undergoes a modest increase from 7,500 trees in 1920 to close to 7,900 trees at the end of the decade.

An incomplete survey of coffee farms done in 1930 by the Coffee Institute of the State of São Paulo shows that 74% of 39,897 farms surveyed had less than 20,000 trees--a size as good as any for an operational definition of small farm. Since the estimated 10% of the groves not surveyed were in the "very new" areas, where small holders concentrated, the figure of 29,429 farms of less than 20,000 trees is almost certain to have an additional bias in favor of a lower estimate(see BICESP April 1931: 1). The coffee survey of 1935-36 by the Secretaria da Agricultura revealed a total of 88,230 coffee farms in the state, of which 73,935--or 84%--were under 20,000 trees(DNC 1938: 240). It seems likely that such an abrupt change was caused in large part by the listing of properties previously unlisted, such as those

discussed by Dean, as much as by the break-up of large estates taking place after the crisis of 1930.

Factors in the rise of small holding coffee farming. The overwhelming majority of the 2.5 million immigrants entering São Paulo between 1884 and 1930 came as colonos for the coffee fazendas. An indication of the level of immigrant preponderance is that native Brazilians were responsible for only 18% of the claims filed with the Patronato Agrícola between 1920 and 1928 (see Font 1982, forthcoming). Based on the high association between immigration and the colonato, Holloway's argument is that colono mobility must have been the main avenue to independent small-scale coffee farming. His argument is supported by diverse kinds of data--ranging from almanacs of localities, testimonials of the period, community case studies, ethnic groups studies--repeating the theme of mobility by immigrant colonos.

As Table 1 indicates, the growth of small holders was indeed a phenomenon decidedly related to the immigrants. Even ignoring the biases produced by unlisted sitiantes and naturalized or second generation owners, foreigners accounted for an impressive 48% of the units. Yet, Holloway's argument is not as open and shut a case as it seems.

An alternative hypothesis compatible with the observed census data is that those immigrants who became land owners and coffee producers did so with savings they brought from home or acquired in other economic activities in São Paulo--particularly in the booming intra-regional commerce.

The first possibility tends to be negated by research on the

wealth of incoming immigrants as indicated by the number of items of luggage they brought. This shows that, averaging about half a bag per person (Holloway 1974: 378-79), the European immigrants who came to São Paulo were rather impecunious as a group. On the other hand, Dean (1971) argues that some of the immigrants were of bourgeois origins. But it is unlikely that these newcomers would have had the agricultural skills to become coffee growers soon after arrival. It should also be kept in mind that, while the immense majority of the immigrants may have been too destitute of capital and skills to become independent coffee farmers, a significant number--as will be discussed below--came as part of colonization schemes designed from the start to set them as independent producers.

The second alternative is even more plausible. There is evidence that urban-based economic activities on the part of immigrants were booming in the towns and cities in the interior of the state prior to 1920. According to a 1910 survey of the taxable value of urban properties reported by Holloway himself, immigrants and other foreigners owned 43,930 buildings with a taxable value of approximately \$102,763,650 (see Table 3). The reported value of urban properties exceeded the value of rural properties declared by immigrants in the 1905 rural census. The value of foreign urban properties is more than twice the declared value of \$44,313,218 for all foreign owned rural properties in all of the state and \$40,525,440 in the Santos zone. That is, foreigners seem to have been doing better in the cities than in the countryside. Cities rather than fazendas appear as more like-



ly places for the accumulation of savings and capital that could have gone into the formation of the immigrant sítios and fazendas. The data from the surveys of 1905 and 1910 are reproduced in Table 3, which also shows the figures for the single most economically important immigrant group, the Italians. Since the comparable figure for Brazilians was not published, the relative weight of immigrants cannot be determined. Holloway(1974: 401,515) estimates, however, that by 1905 immigrants owned up to 48% of the buildings in the city of São Paulo, with Italians alone accounting for 25%.

There is evidence indicating that urban-based commercial capital was seeking application in coffee lands. Dean(1971: 178), for example, found that most of the larger foreign-owned land units in Rio Claro belonged to merchants or other urbanites from the city of Rio Claro or outside the county.

Yet, there is one major a priori difficulty in attributing most immigrant farm ownership and operation to prior urban experiences. This notion contradicts the usual paths observed in patterns of mobility. It is difficult to envisage a large scale move back to the countryside on the part of successfully urbanized immigrants. To set themselves up in independent urban occupations, immigrants who lacked initial savings would have had to accumulate some savings in agriculture, presumably as colonos, and would have had the choice of continuing a career in agriculture or in urban occupations. Once "graduated" to an urban occupation --small merchant or manufacturer, artisan or industrial proletarian, or the like--there probably would have remained very

Table 3

Urban and Rural Properties Owned by Foreigners in  
São Paulo, 1905 and 1910--in U.S. Dollars.

Nationality	Urban, 1910		Rural, 1905	
	Santos Zone	São Paulo	Santos Zone	São Paulo
ALL FOREIGNERS .				
Number of Units	25,572	43,930	6,840	8,484
Value . . . . .	.....	102,763,650	40,525,440	44,313,218
ITALIANS . . . . .				
Number of Units	14,784	23,520	4,494	5,239
Value . . . . .	.....	37,369,200	14,196,800	15,354,560

Derived from Thomas H. Holloway Migration and Mobility: Immigrants as Laborers and Landowners. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1974, pp. 392-394 and 401-402. The data used by Holloway are from the tax on urban buildings (imposto predial) paid in 111 of São Paulo's 175 municípios in 1910. The counties included fall in the coffee zone. The data appeared in "Proprietà urbane appartenenti a stranieri nello Stato de S. Paolo," Italia e Brasile, Vol. 3, No.2 (Nov.-Dec. 1910: between 192 and 193).

little propensity for him to return to direct agriculture. A similar argument can be made about those who came with savings or who achieved savings from commercial or industrial activities. What is more likely is that, when the property purchased was large enough, resident administrators or operators would have been hired or contracted; and, when it was a small sítio or minifundio, sharecroppers or renters would have been responsible for production. Again, Dean found 5% of the rural

labor force of Rio Claro to hold such arrangements with urbanites.

Even if it were to be established that urbanized immigrants accounted directly or indirectly for most of the small and medium holdings, this would not necessarily contradict the hypothesis of colono mobility. On the contrary, to the extent that urbanized immigrants could be presumed to have come mainly from the fazendas, successful urban experiences could be construed as a separate channel of upward mobility and an indirect path from the colonato to independent farming.

The colonato and independent farming: context. Whatever may have been the precise path connecting the colonato, the emergence of an urban economy and independent farming, it is clear that they were all part of the same movement of the Paulista coffee-centered economy.

Perhaps even before 1920, when census data shows São Paulo to have taken the lead in industrial production, the state may have been becoming more urbanized than the rest of Brazil. A regional market economy had arisen, drawing various subregional hinterlands into an increasingly structured network of trade, with nodes in the towns springing up as the railroad lines penetrated the interior.

Since the large fazenda tended to self-sufficiency (Dean 1971), it was the small holder, and the colono rising beyond the subsistence level, who must have provided a great deal of the initial impetus in demand and supply which primed and sustained the process. In this context, there are sound reasons to posit

colono mobility as a primary starting point of the processes leading to the formation of a small holding system in São Paulo.

Admittedly, it was the goal of independent farming what brought most immigrants to São Paulo (Hall 1969). The term "colono" itself suggested an individual who came to colonize or settle the kind of open region much of São Paulo was at the time. The ambiguity of the term was no doubt used by Paulista elites to encourage this perception--and, with it, immigration. The structural properties of the role, as will be seen below, encouraged among colonos the illusion that they were or could be on the road to becoming independent producers (Souza Martins 1979: 92-93).

Coffee work conditions in the fazenda--particularly up to the first decade of the twentieth century--were harsh and not conducive to massive upward mobility. Planters considered colonos mere substitutes for the slave; their initial treatment was not unlike that accorded the latter. In general, planters kept wages at low levels. Yet, while the goal of independent farming became a will-o-the-wisp for most immigrants, with at the very most 7-8% of potential landowners among first generation immigrants able to become independent producers (Holloway 1974: 434), the fact remains that a substantial number did so. The figure was sufficiently large to serve as visible example for others to emulate. Those colonos whom in Dean's study became small holders worked in the fazendas for about 12 years to raise the necessary savings. For the Japanese, the last major immigrant group in the period studied here, Tsukamoto (1973) reports 10 years as the time taken to the majority of those who made it, and 6 years for the

very successful families. These differences probably reflect the fact that Rio Claro at the time was a mature area of settlement, whereas the frontier to which the Japanese were attracted had cheaper fertile lands. These numbers pertain to those who made it. Most immigrants probably tried in vain many years, only to eventually join the growing ranks of the landless proletariat. Be that as it may, by 1934 up to one fourth of all foreign-born potential landowners may have in fact come to own rural property (Holloway 1974: 435). At that time, a higher proportion of immigrants than comparable Brazilian natives owned land in São Paulo (Holloway 1974: 436).

Since--from what is known--most of those who tried did not make it, the critical factor in any process of mobility was unlikely to be motivation, but should be sought in the opportunity structure unfolding with the changes in the colonato resulting from the development of the Paulista economy.

The evolution of the colonato: from subsistence agriculture to commodity production. To assess the collective capacity for colono upward mobility requires an analysis of the evolution of the colonato--and thus of the fazenda.

Developed in the context of the transition from slave to free labor, the colonato was likewise intended to generate a stable resident labor force. While a free laborer, the colono was not a full proletarian. The standard colono contract provided for a package of wage and other incentives. Three major forms of remuneration were specified--money wages for the care (trato) of coffee groves, for the harvesting of the

beans(colheita), and for unspecified daily work(diaria). In addition, it provided free housing as well as usufruct of land for subsistence crops. All wages were on a per unit basis--a fixed amount of money per thousand trees cared, per unit of volume of coffee picked, or per day worked. In the usual contract(e.g., see Bassanezi: Appendix), all services performed were remunerated, except for a few days per year(up to six in the fazenda Santa Gertrudes studied by Bassanezi and Dean) for maintenance or repair of the road connecting the fazenda to the nearest loading facility(usually a railroad service station). Also specified were a variety of fines the administration could levy on colonos who violated work rules and procedures.

Several authors have recently noted the peculiar combination of capitalist and non-capitalist relations of production in the colonato through which planters derived income in the form of surplus-value as well as a form of land tribute. Jose de Souza Martins(1977) identified this situation. Later, Sallum (1979) demonstrated that this arrangement entailed what can be seen as the payment of non-capitalist rent to the planter. Relying on an exegesis of Marx's analysis of rent(Capital,III) he argued that the difference between what the colono received and the value of his labor was rent paid. Colonos and planters were thus related in a capitalist(wage) and precapitalist(rent) relationship. Planters were, both and at the same time, capitalist producers and landlords. Colonos in turn were wage earners and subsistence tenants. For planters, rent income was what he would have had to pay in additional real wages to main-

tain his labor force. That is, rent "income" can be seen as market wage for all labor performed less money wage paid.

The hypothesis is advanced here that this arrangement made it possible for some of the colonos to become independent commodity producers, thus providing a base for a potential shift to coffee production.

The main logic of the system was to put in the own hands of the colono the responsibility to provide for his own subsistence, i.e. for the reproduction of the work force. Economic pressures on planters were thus thereby minimized, particularly when coffee price slumps reduced their revenues. Then, the standard reaction, constrained by the availability of land, was to increase land use privileges while reducing wages--that is, to increase the "rent" component of his "income."

As a result, usufruct rights were becoming more central to the colono than any other item. Besides providing for his subsistence, the colono also produced food surpluses which, in the expanding Paulista economy, were additional sources of cash income.

Perhaps more important than price slumps in the extension of planting rights to colonos was the competition for labor among planters. Rather than increasing the wage bill, the preferred strategy of planters was, again, to attract colonos by offering increased land privileges. Competition for immigrant labor became a major source of friction among planters. The immense majority of claims filed by planters against other planters at the Patronato Agrícola during the 1920's were for "wooing" of

colonos or aliciamento(55%) and for failure to pay old debts of the colonos they hired(42%)(see Appendix). Bassanezi(1973: 110-111) reports planters in Rio Claro to have been at a veritable cold war(guerra fria) over this question.

Incidentally, it is no doubt in part due to the role of land in attracting labor that the Paulista coffee economy expanded so fast. The success of the fazenda in drawing sufficient manpower was directly dependent on making land available for colono use as well as for coffee groves. The expanding frontier to the west had plenty of land for both uses. A concomitant outcome from this was the tendency for coffee production to expand incessantly. This was also particularly the case because the conditions permitting planters to offer the best contracts to colonos were those to "form" new groves (contrato de formação). In the 4-6 years it took a coffee seedling to become a producing tree, the 12 feet or so separating the rows planted with coffee could be used to plant corn or beans--together with rice, the three main staples in the colono's diet. This pressure was so significant that the coffee economy--instead of stimulating technological innovation to intensify production--continued to grow extensively into the frontier even in the years of depressed coffee prices between 1897 and 1910.

What is important for present purposes is that colonos could become significant land operators on their own --gaining skills as farmers of subtropical crops and even coffee. At least some of them --but particularly formadores, who had control of land and coffee harvests for 4-7 years--can be said to have been ap-



proximating generalized petty commodity production(see also Fausto 1977: 199). They worked in semi-autonomous fashion, purchasing basic means of production, such as hoes, peneiras, and all household items. The family, and not the colono by himself, was the central unit of production. Family resources were pooled in pursuit of economic objectives and a division of labor instituted which exploited the labor power of all family members 10 years or older. Rather than staying in the house, the wife usually spent a great deal of her time working in the cafezal or caring for the family plantings in their roça. Family composition may have been one of the single most important factors in elevating a minority of colono families beyond common proletarianization. It seems that unless the family unit could count on several able hands(they were called "braços") to care for a large roça and a higher number of coffee trees, proletarianization was unavoidable.

If the subsistence economy inherent in the colonato(Oliveira 1977 :397-398) had the potential of becoming a generalized form of petty commodity production, that potential hinged ultimately on the structural variables affecting the scale of production and the demand for the surpluses of beans, rice and corn produced in the family roça--that is, on the "use value" of the land for which "rent" was paid to the landowner-planter. As will be argued below, these were to make a big difference. In an immediate sense, expansion of petty commodity production depended on continuing and expanded access to land. This, in turn, depended on a variety of factors affecting the labor market.

Land availability, labor market conditions and the expansion of petty commodity production. The use of land as a short-run safety valve in the fazenda may have become its main problem in the long run. Planters with unused good land, like those in the frontier regions, were at a considerable advantage in attracting colonos from established regions and fazendas. Abundant young groves there permitted more of the kind of interrow cropping highly sought by the colono. With the same amount of work, he could weed and care for the coffee trees under him as well as his own plantings of beans, corn and even rice. Bad treatment, exhausted or unavailable land contributed additional "push" effects from older areas. Added to the high attrition rates generated by urban migration, repatriation, and a shift to small holding agriculture, these push and pull effects came to be responsible for the high turnover rate, "nomadism" and labor market conditions recognized as basic to colono upward mobility. In one of the best studies on the subject, Bassanezi(1975) found that half of the colonos and other workers in the same fazenda Santa Gertrudes of Rio Claro studied by Dean stayed less than 4.1 years working there during the period 1895-1930.

This geographic mobility prevented the full institutionalization of relations of dependence, contributed further to making the labor market a dynamic one, and put the colono in direct contact with the full range of opportunities available. Generally, colono nomadism and search for El Dorado to the West may have favored a secular improvement in the overall terms of the contracts(see also Ramos 1923: 195-226).

What is important is that, instead of tending to equilibrium by the reproduction of a pliant and stable labor force, fazendas were unable to retain and confirm incoming cohorts of immigrants as permanent resident colonos. In fazenda Santa Gertrudes, 35 out of the required 135 colono families had to be replaced each year due to departures. If we take these figures as representative, one fourth of the fazenda permanent labor force in the state had to be replaced every year.

While a substantial number of colonos undertook the road of geographic mobility in the search for a better life, very few remained committed to the colonato as a way of life. Even then they continued to harbor illusions of the colonato as a transitory station en route to either independent farming or an urban occupation.

On a typical year the fazendas lost dozens of thousands of colonos to these two alternatives and to a third option activated when disillusionment was unavoidable, repatriation to the home country. Of the two and a half million immigrants entering São Paulo between 1887 and 1930, perhaps as many as 70% seem to have returned to Europe (Cano 1977: 48,62).

This way, the colono system which came to prevail in the interior of São Paulo should be seen as a revolving-door labor system based on continuous international migration. Several thousand new immigrant families were needed each year to replenish the fazendas for those lost to cities, independent agriculture and repatriation.

With the high attrition rates and the tendency or expansion,

the coffee economy put unremitting pressures on the state's immigration program. At first the government readily complied. Holloway has estimated that immigration exceeded the overall demands of the coffee economy up to the first part of the twentieth century. He argues that by the 1890's there had entered many more immigrants than needed by the coffee fazendas (1974: 149,252). Had it not been for the concomitant development of industry, he surmises that there would have been massive rural unemployment when the crisis deepened later in the decade (1974: Table 5-21: 256). But, this situation did not last long. Soon the immigration flow and labor pool were to be drastically reduced and a period of chronic shortages to begin.

The institutionalization of the colonato. So long as planters were able to count on yearly inflows of subsidized immigration and were able to exercise control over the lands, they managed to have enough labor, pay relatively low money wages, and make a hefty profit. Again, failure to sustain a sufficiently large flow of fresh colonos had a direct and immediate impact in forcing concession of land in better terms (Dean 1977: 185) and perhaps even higher money wages. Tied to simple commodity production and not mature surplus value extraction, they were not oriented to increase the productivity of labor by increasing the organic composition of capital--and with it the technological component of production.

The colono system encountered a fateful challenge when the coffee price crisis at the turn of the century led to such deterioration in economic conditions that immigrants began to

return home en masse. For several years the negative net flow of immigrants meant the loss of several hundred thousand potential workers (Halloway 1974 ,Cano 1977). Yet, coffee continued its expansion to the west in spite of the general crisis and loss of labor. While they were pressured to lower money wages, planters were more inclined to expand interrow cropping to retain or attract colonos from a dwindling pool(Holloway 1974: 272-274). Expansion continued even when a tax on the planting of new coffee trees was imposed in 1903 to prevent(unsuccesfully) a crisis of overproduction. At this juncture planters realized that they were inexorably tied to a continuous flow of immigration and that, lest immigration flows drop to critical levels, São Paulo had to offer prospective immigrants more than the mere semblance of reasonably good treatment.

Before and during the time that some planters coped with the crisis or simply expanded by making more land available, the general tendency among a great many planters had been to reduce money wages. This affected in particular the colono families which, because of family composition or other related factors, relied more on wage income than on the sales of agricultural surpluses. In response to accounts of deterioration of working conditions in the fazendas, the Italian government passed the Prinetti decree in 1903 prohibiting subsidized migration to Brazil. The Spanish government threatened to follow suit. While many immigrants continued to leave, the inflow was sharply reduced. The main result was that, in the midst of the coffee price crisis lasting until 1910, planters had to face an adverse

labor market, and were thus pressured to take compensatory measures. This explains that Dennis would find labor conditions in 1908 to be favorable to colonos in the Alta Mogiana region. Dean's Rio Claro was no exception to these changes. In Fazenda Santa Gertrudes--owned by Conde Eduardo Prates--colono contracts changed several times between 1904 and 1927, always increasing the "concessions" of land use to colonos(see Bassanezi 1973: 179).

From this point on an abundant labor supply would be a chimera leading planters to make continuous demands for more immigration to the state government. Just before 1920 they were asking for permanent program of subsidized immigration funded with 15% of the state's budget. It was clear at the time that such a program was needed because of the fazenda's failure to retain existing colonos(e.g., Holloway 1974: 218). Incidentally, the government resisted or deflected these pressures, maintaining its own immigration and colonization policies. In 1927 it eliminated altogether the program of subsidized immigration.

Realizing how vulnerable the colonato was and how dependent they were on immigration, in 1909 planters agreed to a series of legal measures designed to protect the colono. The most important was the creation of a labor relations board, the Patronato Agrícola, to mediate colono-planter grievances and to enforce new guidelines in the adoption of contracts-- to be spelled out in legalized documents called cadernetas. In 1906 the new Agencia Official de Colonização e Trabalho(Official Agency of Colonization and Labor)--the precursor of the state's Department of

Labor--further facilitated the formation of a more dynamic market in labor. From that point on, the Hospedaria de Imigrantes operated as a market place as well as a lodging station. Competitive bidding came to allocate incoming workers among alternative potential employers, with the Agencia supplying information on jobs available, wages, other conditions, etc. The main intention of the Paulista coffee elite was to change the perception of fazenda conditions in Europe and thus be able to attract a large quantity of fresh immigration.

Immigration resumed at higher levels, permitting the gradual expansion observed after 1911 under better coffee price conditions. However, World War I interrupted again the process of replenishing the labor pool (see e.g. Bassanezi 1973: 145). The relative imbalance between labor needs and supply continued to accumulate as disruptions in international commerce and transportation led to decreases in immigration larger than the drop in coffee prices and exports--while the rural labor force was further depleted by leakages to new processes of urbanization and industrialization. It was this situation what triggered planters' charges in 1920-21 that 30-35% of the coffee groves were "decolonized."

From the colonato to independent farming: food cropping and the generalization of commodity production. If a drastic imbalance did not take place until World War I, how could colonos have saved enough to have achieved the substantial mobility reported earlier? It is also hypothesized here that the main factor triggering and sustaining colonos' savings and capacity to

become independent holders was precisely the expansion in the demand for the food crops he produced in the "rented" plots--and thus in the value of his "subsistence" production.

Stricto sensu, this process took place outside the realm of coffee production. Stimulated by the increased demand from fast-growing towns and cities and other Brazilian regions, the production of the three basic staples of subsistence agriculture--rice, beans and corn--grew so fast that by World War I São Paulo had become self-sufficient and a net exporter of these three staples.

TABLE 5

AVERAGE YEARLY PRODUCTION OF KEY FOOD CROPS  
IN SAO PAULO( in 1,000 tons).

PERIOD	RICE	BEANS	CORN
1901-1903	28.8	41.6	422.6
1904-1906	60.2	83.1	478.2
1907-1909			
1910-1912	107.1	97.5	619.6
1913-1915	72.3	112.8	595.8
1916-1918	152.1	177.1	733.4
1919-1921	275.0	212.5	1,009.3
1922-1924	173.3	78.9	788.0
1925-1927	267.3	194.7	981.8
1928-1930	345.9	217.7	950.6
1931-1933	537.1	229.8	1,419.2

SOURCE: Adapted from Cano(1977: 62).

The growth was truly formidable, since as late as the 1900's São Paulo imported huge amounts of food staples--accounting in 1901-1905 for 26.4% of Brazilian imports of rice, 9.5% of beans and 9% of corn(Cano 1977:Table 5,p. 59). "Subsistence" producers--colonos and independent small holders to whom the



large fazenda had relegated these tasks--were not only feeding the coffee labor force of more than 200,000 families(at 4.8 individuals per family), and the several million persons in the cities and towns burgeoning in the interior of the fastest growing Brazilian state, but also produced a substantial surplus for export. Compared to the figures for 1901-1906, the five year averages for 1925-1930 shows an increase of 3.31 times in the production of beans, 6.89 in rice and 2.15 in corn(derived from Cano 1977: 64). Meanwhile, the population of the state doubled during this period. By the end of the decade of the 1920's São Paulo occupied first place among Brazilian states in the production and export of all three items--with a production of 1,650,000 tons of corn, 420,413 tons of rice and 196,800 tons of beans(RICESP Sept/Nov 1932: 91)

This was no longer subsistence agriculture. The renter-operator identified by Sallum and Souza Martins--"pre-capitalist" or not in his inception or structural relation to the mode of production represented by the fazenda--was now producing cash crops for a mass market. What had happened was that, just as the planter had relied on rent to keep money payments down, so had the colono come to rely on the roça under his operational control for most of his income(See also Cano 1977: 60-62). Holloway(1974: 101-104) discusses four different analyses of colono budgets at the turn of the decade from which it can be determined that colono income from the sale of products from the roça already accounted then for 22%, 36%, 37%, and 40% of all money income(See Dean 1976: 490 for less optimistic estimates). Since

housing, pasture rights and the subsistence of the colono family itself were not included in these analyses, the real value of land use rights must have been substantially greater, perhaps more than half of the colono's total real income (Holloway 1974: 97).

Demand and prices for food staples were more stable than the price of coffee and made this reliance on the plot a rational strategy on the part of the colono. By the early 1920's the revenues he typically obtained from planting rights were equal to or higher than the income obtained from money wages. This was particularly the case in recently opened regions (Holloway 1974: 285). What had made land operation particularly lucrative was that, due to planter's reliance on land as source of rent, the use value of land rented was increasing faster than the general level of land prices--in response to the rising demand for food from the cities. To repeat, land prices remained relatively low since they were largely determined by a coffee market which had remained more or less depressed from 1897 to 1910 and the land was being used suboptimally by planters.

Through 1929-30, immigration never caught up with the relentless demand for fresh labor for the fazendas. The available evidence from the decade of 1920 shows that, as a result, money wages themselves skyrocketed (see Appendix)--although much, perhaps all, of this increase was actually offset by inflation. While planters continued to cry out for immigration, colonos and ex-colonos faced unusually favorable labor conditions in addition to the rising demand for food. Planters had no choice but to main-

tain or expand land use rights. Those who were ready to take advantage of the situation could aspire to make the move to independent farming. The typical cost of a family sized plot of 15-20 alqueires (40 hectares or so) was 6,000 réis in a developed area such as Rio Claro (Dean 1976: 491) and cheaper at the frontier, and a growing number of colonos were now able to raise this fund in less than the 10-12 years it took earlier in the century.

Land markets, colonization policies and small holding coffee production. Colono savings could not lead to investment in direct coffee production unless the would-be producer had reliable access to suitable land (especially the roxa and massapé soils). As we shall see, that required the effective penetration of the market into the realm of land allocation. Demand by colonos and ex-colonos with enough savings was a powerful pressure. But, for this pressure to become reality, land use control traditionally exercised by the planter-coronel would need to be neutralized.

The land tenure system which had historically evolved in São Paulo was based on de facto occupation, recognized juridically as the principle of posse, rather than on transactions involving clearly validated titles (Sallum, Foweraker 1974). Control or ownership of land had come to be decided locally by the planter. This had inhibited the formation of a state-wide title registry. This was truly the heyday of the land-based coffee coronel. Through his ability to enforce rulings of local registries, and the relevant judicial apparatus he also controlled, the planter-coronel could effectively determine the uses to which land was put in his jurisdiction. So long as the planter could keep the

market at bay in regards to the use of public lands and those claimed through the posse principle, he could brush off any pretension of aspiring colonos and ex-colonos to plant coffee on a significant scale. Any other mechanism of land allocation could only come about by a countervailing force. The penetration of the market into land use was to require a political process.

As late as 1907 more than half of the lands in the state remained unoccupied and unsettled(See Map 1, Appendix). According to the 1905 census, 5,014,000 of the state's 10,216,500 alqueires were claimed as private property. While 50% of the available land was thus claimed, only 3% was cultivated. The areas of the "Old West"--the core of the Central, Mogiana and Paulista regions --accounted for most of the claimed and used land. These were areas developed with the boom of the 1880's and 1890's. Most of the properties there were based on legalized titles derived from subdivisions of the sesmarias or massive land grants given by the Crown prior to 1822. The rest of the state--the "new" West of what later would be called the Araraquarense, Noroeste, Alta Paulista and Alta Sorocabana regions--was largely made up of terras devolutas or public lands, the disposition of which belonged in principle with the state.

Planters had been able to ignore or resist various attempts made by the provincial or federal governments since 1850 to take effective control of the terras devolutas and assert primacy over the use of these lands(Holloway , Sallum). These efforts had taken the form of agronomic and cadastral efforts to survey and "discriminate" public lands. The effective registration and

recognition of posses and other claims were a sine qua non for the development of a market in land sufficiently widespread to benefit small holders. Starting with the Lei da Terra of 1850 the attempts made by the state only succeeded in legitimizing previous de facto occupations (Souza Martins 1977, Sallum 1979, Dean 1976). Land use continued to be subject to the rule of local powerful landlords up to the late 1910's. That these efforts had come to naught in the face of resistance and lack of collaboration on the part of local power holders did not mean that some of the most prominent state politicians were willing to let things be as they were. Representing the rising dominant sentiment within the ruling Partido Republicano Paulista, important figures such as Cincinato Braga (1924: 111) called for a homestead act similar to the American. In this Braga was echoing the policy stand sketched in Washington Luís' 1920 Platform, whose main principle was that the state government would thenceforth promote the subdivision of terras devolutas and latifundia to benefit small holding settlements.

Planter capacity to resist the penetration of the state and the market decreased with the opening of the frontier taking place after 1910. After the gradual rise in prices and production starting in 1910 was interrupted by the war in 1914, the cessation of hostilities and the freeze (geada) of 1918 led to a recuperation in prices, immigration levels and expansion. The coffee valorization programs adopted after 1921 reinforced these trends. Comparing Map 2 and Map 1 (see Appendix), it can be seen how dramatic the geographic expansion of land was in the thirteen

years between 1909 and 1922. The growth starting after 1910 and running through the 1920's represented a boom in the so-called "new" regions--where the fertility of the virgin soil and new forms of land tenure made possible significant reductions in production costs(Simonsen 1940: 73). As more than 60% of the harvest came to be produced in the recently opened areas of the Araraquarense, Noroeste, Alta Mogiana, Alta Sorocabana and what later was to be the Alta Paulista(see Appendix), many fazendas in the older regions faced severe labor shortages and tough competition. In a majority of the counties springing in the new west small holders came to account for more than 30% of the production. In 51 of the 126 municípios in the Santos zone surveyed in 1923, foreigners owned 50% or more of the farms, in 32 counties the figure was 60% and in 11 it was 70%. In four counties--Taquaritinga, Rio das Pedras, Conchas and Barra Bonita--immigrant small holders accounted for more than 80% of the holdings and coffee production(see Holloway 1974: 411,515).

While unable to do so in the established coffee counties, the state bureaucracy--rather than local planters--could exercise considerable control over land use in the expanding frontier where small holders thrived. One way in which the state exercised a beneficial influence was through its ability to directly control the administrative structures in the new counties, and favor emerging interests tied to land development and a more diversified economy. The opening of these lands was taking place when the state bureaucracy was peaking in its institutional development and ability to play a more active role vis-a-vis civil

society( Font 1982, forthcoming).

The second was via the organization, chartering or regulation of the large scale settlement and colonization projects catering to the growing mass of aspiring land holders.

The provincial and state administrations had experimented in direct programs of immigrant colonization and settlement through the colonial nuclei(núcleos colonias) and "nursery"(viveiro) programs. Originally requested by planters themselves to promote settlements near their fazendas, they were disappointed when the small holders in these colonies became so successful in private farming that they ignored job offers in the fazendas, preferring to use the time tending their own plots. Moreover, while meant to concentrate on the production of food crops and animals, "colonos" (note: the same term was used) in the núcleos actually began growing coffee commercially. When the new period of expansion and immigration began after 1909, planters opposed the continuation of these programs. One of the arguments was that these programs were attracting colonos away from the fazendas. The fight was led by Paulo de Moraes Barros when named Secretary of Agriculture in 1913. By the early 1920's the state administration had decided to "emancipate"(give clear titles and withdraw state presence) all of the remaining núcleos and to discontinue the program.

A foremost consideration in this decision by the government may have been that less expensive and politically difficult ways were now available to implement its own colonization objectives. Private entrepreneurial efforts in land "speculation";

with charters or support from the state government, had begun a massive operation of claiming control of huge tracts of land, subdividing them into plots with "cleared" titles and selling them to buyers, notably the mass of aspiring small holders (see e.g. Schurig Vieira 1973 or Santos Abreu 1972). These large-scale development schemes were the key means whereby a market in land developed in the new West.

A prototype of this model of colonization was that of the Companhia Marcondes de Colonização in the comarca of Presidente Prudente occupying the southwest corner of the state (see Santos Abreu 1972). This subregion--bordering on the rivers Peixe at the north, the Paraná at the west, and the Paranapanema at the south was largely an unsettled forest until 1920, when the expansion of the Sorocabana railroad from the town of Assis in the east put it in direct contact with Santos. Then, the Companhia Marcondes moved to consolidate huge tracts of land for subdivision into small plots and hundreds of would-be farmers flocked the area. The territories in question had been appropriated through posse, grilo, or purchase--more than 50,000 alqueires (or 121,000 hectares). The company organized private armies of capangas to enforce the occupation of the land against other claimants and provided basic infrastructural services--administration, title clearing, road and town construction, etc. The companhia had links with the government. Cel. Marcondes himself had active affiliation in the ruling PRP, later becoming mayor of Presidente Prudente, while Custodio Coelho, an ex-President of the Bank of Brasil, was in the board of directors. The scale of operation



was so large that at one point Marcondes himself went to Italy to meet with Mussolini to discuss a large program of immigration and colonization. According to Santos Abreu there were at least ten other large land development corporations operating at the time in the Alta Sorocabana region--companies with such names as Companhia Viação São Paulo-Mato Grosso, Empresa Jose Giorgi, Companhia Brasileira de Viação e Comércio, Colonização Martins, Companhia de Terras Norte do Paraná, and the like.

A market for land was forged in the new west largely through these organized entrepreneurial schemes supported by the state. The land development scheme of the Marcondes company specialized in selling plots of "2,3,5,10...20" alqueires to small holders. Payment could be made in installments. Buyers were mostly colonos and ex-colonos from the older regions to the east who were hoping to "make it big" in coffee. Since coffee took 4-6 years to yield significant crops, the settlers survived and paid the installments with the production and sale of food crops. Many were so successful that the scale of production went beyond the family unity and came to involve sharecroppers and formadores. In 1929, the series O Café (1929: 151) reported 679 tax-paying coffee producers in the município, with only 2 owning more than 100,000 trees and 13 more than 50,000.

As Table 4 shows, within less than ten years of active colonization the area was exporting large quantities of corn, beans and rice--as well as coffee--through the Sorocabana railway.

This type of colonization scheme induced or supported by the

TABLE 4

## MAIN EXPORTS FROM THE MUNICIPIO OF PRESIDENTE PRUDENTE, 1930

PRODUCT	AMOUNTS SHIPPED <sup>(1)</sup> (in bags)	AREA CULTIVATED <sup>(2)</sup> (in alqueires)
BEANS	32,828	6,186
RICE	14,011	1,789
CORN	134,101	7,800
POTATOES	81,681	
Sub-Total	260,621	15,775
COFFEE	73,407	20,451

(1) SOURCE: Santos Abreu(1972: 161). Except for coffee, figures refer to large bags of unspecified capacity.

(2) SOURCE: Santos Abreu(1972: 125). An alqueire equals 2.42 hectares.

state was also used with foreign colonization companies. The British-owned São Paulo Land, Lumber and Colonization Corporation subdivided into small plots at least 50,000 alqueires in the Noroeste(in what later became the município of Birigui). By 1927 the company had sold 48,253 alqueires in the form of 2,300 sítios or small holdings at prices reported to be three or four times those at which the land had been purchased(see Muller Camps 1927)( Actually, the sale gains were considerably lower due to inflation). The Japanese immigration in particular, which began in 1908 and intensified in 1917 and 1922-23, was channeled largely by semi-official colonization companies. The most sophisticated was the Kaigai Kogyo Kabushiki Kaisha or K.K.K.K.(Overseas

Development Company)(Schurig Vieira 1973: 35-47). The K.K.K.K. and other companies which preceded it bought land from the state or chartered developers, settling in it thousands of immigrants as independent or semi-independent operators in clusters of private plots or "colonies."

More generally, the state also benefitted small holding agriculture by adopting transportation policies conducive to the development of the new areas. Because of the funnel-like lay out of the railroad network, strategically located lines such as the Paulista and Mogiana were not only able to account for most of the production but could protect their areas in the transportation system whose ultimate destination was Santos. With the take over of the stagnant Northern railway in 1918, the state opened the rich area that came to be called Araraquarense, modernizing the company and literally forcing the Paulista and the São Paulo railway to transport the coffee and other products from the area. The state obtained a similar result with a comparable take over, modernization and extension of the Sorocabana line in the 1920's--favoring new areas to the west, such as Presidente Prudente. Yet another policy favoring commercial access of the previously farthest areas was the massive program of road construction implemented by the administration of Washington Luís starting in 1920.

As stated earlier, another significant land development scheme leading to the proliferation of "cleared" titles and thus the expansion of a market in land involved the planters themselves. There were several different reasons leading some

planters to "retalhamento"(subdivision). The first was a private effort, parallel to that of the government, to provide for settlements near fazendas which would supply the manpower needed during the harvest season. Planter Carlos Leoncio de Magalhaes, for example, arranged for private núcleos in his Cambuhy estates at the foot of the Araraquarense line. Coupled to the need for labor, planters in regions where the soil was becoming relatively exhausted attempted to promote permanent nearby settlements, thus also making a profit in land of little value to them. This mix of motivations seems to have been present, for example, in the decisions of the Silva Prado clan to sell plots in their immense estates.

But, by and large the avalanche on the land by the new colonization schemes represented a direct challenge to the established local planter chieftains. Their traditional land use prerogatives were now frontally threatened and new patterns of land tenure were emerging.

Land values began to soar under the joint pressure of coffee and general agricultural expansion. Pari passu, the market affirmed itself as the principal mechanism for alienating land.

As a land market began to grow, individual planters and other entrepreneurs also entered the industry of real estate. Prominent among these was the figure of the omnipresent grileiro, an expert in jumping claims by a combination of sheer force provided by capangas and jagunços(private armed agents) and preferential access to the local land title registries and magistrates.

The policies adopted with respect to the important question of land use, immigration and colonization reinforced the development of new areas and the emergence of alternative land tenure systems in the expanding Paulista economy. These were often carried out against the expressed wishes of at least some locally established fazendeiros (see e.g. the reaction of the Goularts of Presidente Prudente to the penetration represented by the Cia. Marcondes). Again, the Japanese immigration is another case in point. Even after many planters complained that the existing program was facilitating Japanese ability to operate land through renting, sharecropping or outright ownership--rather than stimulating him to remain a colono--the government continued to support the type of colonization wanted by the immigrant (Nogueira 1973: 226, Cano 1977: 62).

While proclaiming to be thus meeting the needs of the large fazenda, the state's immigration program came to encompass a broader colonization policy. The challenges to local landlords came to generate a series of confrontations which typically pitted them or their agents against land developers and associated land buyers and political allies.

Let's summarize the results of the analysis up to this point. The discussion has centered on several factors interacting with the colonato and resulting in making it possible for immigrants, who entered the state as substitutes for slaves, to become independent small holders. A fluid labor market and opportunity structure prevented the institutionalization of the colonato as a labor system based on permanent labor, made it pos-

sible for immigrants to search for the best opportunities within or outside the fazenda system, and made planters dependent on continuous flows of fresh immigrant labor. Unwilling or unable to rely on money wages for all or most of his labor costs, the planter came to use land--acquired at little or no cost from the vast reserves of unexploited public lands--in the incentive packages offered to colonos. This way, the latter came to function as producers of food staples as well as proletarians. The intended purpose of land usufruct was to make the colono responsible for his own subsistence and reproduction. However, the dramatic expansion in demand for food crops made it possible for families with sufficient labor power to achieve substantial savings by orienting the usufruct of plots to the production of cash crops. The broader economy born of the coffee export sector developed a dynamic of its own, which underpinned the emergence of alternative land tenure and utilization arrangements, particularly in the context of the expanding frontier. There, smallholders thriving on the production of diverse agricultural products became a preponderant element of social organization. These processes undermined the near monopoly of land and labor traditionally claimed by the fazendeiros. The social differentiation inherent in these processes included the appearance of alternative elites with economic and political interests in land markets and regional development. In fact, without coalitions with these power holders it is doubtful that immigrants could have come to exercise effective ownership of the land, or that the alternative economy would have grown so fast.

### CHANGES IN THE COMMERCIAL SYSTEM

Even as the large established planter was losing ground to new forces in the adjudication of land and labor among alternative uses, he could still feel confident that his control of the commercial channels in the state through the comissario was an insurmountable barrier guaranteeing his hold on coffee production. This commercial advantage was doubly insured by what he perceived as his ability to produce at lower prices given the "industrial" scale of the fazenda. The large fazenda was thought to be superior since it had enough capital to buy expensive coffee processing machinery, making its production of better quality. Besides, large planters exercised a great deal of control over the railroad system, the main transportation network.

He seems to have been wrong on all counts. Side by side the established comissario system there emerged an alternative commercial network linking small holders in the interior to the export houses of Santos. The nodal points in this network were commercial intermediaries operating in the towns of the interior. The typical arrangement was for an operator to set a small plant for the processing(beneficiamento) of coffee whereby he would also offer to buy the coffee from the small holder(see e.g. Dean 1977: 56,156-157). This way, the operator served as buyer and intermediary for an entire subregion. He would buy the unprocessed green coffee, "benefit" and standardize the beans, and sell to higher level merchants connected to Santos operatives. The area of Presidente Prudente provides a representative

example. There the commercial mediation of coffee was done via the "maquinista" or owner-operator of coffee processing machines(maquinas de beneficiamento) and buyers representing firms in the city of São Paulo as well as those of Santos(Santos Abreu 1972: 159-160). All production was sold through these local plant-warehouses linked to general wholesale or retail trade.

The formation of an alternative trading network was aided by the decision of some buyers in Santos to purchase coffee in the interior rather than through Santos-based comissarios. The latter bitterly complained of this change, but were unable to prevent buyers from sending agents to the towns of the interior to buy directly from growers or low level commercial intermediaries.

Comissarios had actually gained the upper hand in their alliance with planters when the latter became indebted to them after the expansive boom starting in the 1880's met a collapse in coffee prices in the late 1890's--and then a full-fledged crisis of overproduction after the turn of the century(eventually responsible for the historic valorization program of 1906). Planters found themselves deeply indebted after having carried out the expansion with loans advanced by the comissario. However, when the crisis intensified at the turn of the century, Santos intermediaries found themselves unable to continue to perform adequately the credit and banking functions they had assumed earlier. It is at this juncture that foreign capital--particularly British--began to penetrate deeply into the commercial system. In 1903 the British established the Companhia de Armazens Gerais(Fausto 1977: 212), followed by the Companhia



Registradora de Santos in 1905 and the Companhia Paulista de Armazens Gerais in 1909 (see also Love 1977 and Holloway 1974: 45). The foreign "exporter" was displacing the comissario from the key financing and warehousing functions in the export sector. Through the armazens gerais, so-called "warrants" were issued upon deposit of coffee which in turn could be "discounted" into more liquid form. Towards 1910 foreign export firms and the armazens gerais displaced most of the comissario houses from the export business per se as well.

National control of the key commercial aspects of the coffee economy was made even more precarious by the foreign penetration in the banking and financial system. Love (1977: 62-63) estimates that by 1920 two thirds of the banking business was in foreign hands. This hold had been actually reinforced when the valorization scheme of 1908 granted foreign financiers direct control over huge stocks of Brazilian coffee, and made them recipients of guaranteed interest income from the loans advanced therein (see Holloway 1975 and 1974: 45, Cano 1977). According to Oliveira (1977) this "financial-commercial intermediation" became so pivotal in the export sector that it became a dominant principle of surplus extraction.

While this external factor was important, the more insidious challenge to the traditional larger planter-comissario alliance came from the alternative commercial channels emerging "internally" as a result of the appearance of a significant small holding system in coffee.

The new network of coffee trading was not built up from

scratch but relied on that which had already sprung for trading on the food staples also produced by small holders and colonos -- corn, beans, rice; and, later, raw cotton. In the first census making an effort to list the number of processing stations in the interior, that of 1920, almost all such establishments which had coffee as first activity also listed processing at least one of the other staples, particularly rice and beans. A focal market place for large scale transactions involving these items had been the commercial networks eventually giving birth to the Bolsa de Mercadorias(1918) and Bolsa de Cereaes(1923) of the city of São Paulo. It was through these commercial networks involving Paulistano merchants that much of the coffee of small holders not bought in the interior was sold to national buyers and exporters. In 1921 city merchants successfully won a quota to ship coffee to Santos. In 1923, when another quota system limiting entries into Santos was being set, the ACS denounced and protested vigorously the fact that more than 400 agents had registered in São Paulo requesting part of the quota. Although this was a very delicate matter at the time, these Paulistano merchants lobbied throughout the decade for the organization of an official Bolsa de Café in the city of São Paulo, parallel to that in Santos.

The "legitimate" coffee merchants, belonging to the Commercial Association of Santos(Associação Comercial de Santos--ACS), resented this development. In the early 1920's the pro-comissario "A Gazeta" and other spokesmen of the traditional planter-comissario alliance blamed the Bolsa de Mercadorias of São Paulo--and the annex Caixa de Liquidação--for "the financial and

economic disequilibrium of the productive classes."

Commercial intermediaries and buyers dealing with small holders were at an advantage over established merchants. Small holders produced at lower costs, ceteris paribus, while had no credit facilities or control of the commercial process; thus, they were compelled to sell at lower prices. In part because of this, prices were driven downward in the interior.

Small growers were able to sell cheaper not only because their lands tended to be located in the "new" areas to the west. They also took better care of trees, perhaps the most crucial factor affecting output outside the quality of land. The most telling evidence in this regard are the conclusions reached in 1924 by a scientific team commissioned to study ways of containing the coffee disease stephanoderes coffeae. One of their most important conclusions was that small holders, even those in the established areas of the old west, were better able than fazendas to combat the disease. Comparing groves in the same regions, those of small holders were found to exhibit a lower incidence of the disease and better rates of recovery. This was attributed to their ability to give the trees the care which fazendas claimed they could not due to high labor costs. This conclusion is also supported by the known differentials in production costs observed for different regions.

The social differentiation represented by small holders was diffuse over the entire texture of the Paulista society. Yet, small holders thrived the most in the dynamic areas of recent colonization(See Appendix, Part II: Tables). As shown in Chart 1,

the social structure in these new areas--in terms of class, urbanization, political organization, and the like--was substantially different and at odds with that of established large fazenda areas.

CHART 1

CONTRASTS IN THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE EMERGING IN SAO PAULO'S COFFEE ZONE BY THE EARLY 1920's.

DIMENSION	OLD WEST	NEW WEST
ORGANIZATION OF PRODUCTION	Large Fazenda and non-coffee <u>sítios</u>	: <u>Sítios</u> and smaller <u>fazendas</u> : Diversified production : including coffee
COFFEE COMMERCE	Comissario or agent	: "Maquinista" (grain : processing operator) : linked to wholesale : and retail
ENTREPOT	Santos	: São Paulo
TOWN-COUNTRY RELATIONS	Complements <u>fazenda</u>	: More independent : Thriving due to : small holder reliance : on town as market place : and center of activities
EXPANSION OF COFFEE ECONOMY	Slow	: Very fast
POLITICS	Fazendeiro rules over city and hinterland	: City dominant
CONTROL	Local	: State political- : administrative control : more decisive
DOMINANT GROUP	Planter clans	: Merchants, politicians, : bureaucrats, small : manufacturer or : industrial producer

CONCLUSION: SEGMENTATION AND CONTROL OF THE EXPORT SECTOR

The main conclusion of this study is that the expansion of the Paulista coffee export sector in the western plateau of the state after the 1880's produced a segmental pattern of social organization which made the very question of control of the sector become problematic and laden with potential conflict. By the early 1920's, an alternative coalition--made up of a growing mass of small and medium holders, land developers, new commercial intermediaries and professional politicians--was successfully challenging the established alliance between large planters and comissarios. The keystone of the new coalition was the group of urban middle and upper classes involved in the trading of agricultural products and coffee(see also Dean 1977: 156,182).

The challenge meant that neither large planters nor comisarios were able to exercise full control over critical resources such as labor and land--or even the process of surplus appropriation. It was precisely the large coffee estate's failure to make the colonato a source of a stable, permanent and cheap(all costs considered) labor force what came to play a central role in the emergence of the small holding system underpinning the pluralization and segmentation of elite interests.

The threat was even more direct: the higher commercial profits made possible by lower small holder selling prices were facilitating a displacement from production to commerce as the predominant locus of surplus extraction. Commercial profit, rather than that derived from production, was fast becoming the major source of elite income and capital accumulation. Yet,

planters and their comissario allies were not able to control the commercial mechanisms of appropriation of surplus; the intermediation between national producer and foreign buyer was being increasingly performed by alternative national and foreign intermediaries and financiers battling for lion shares in the commercial (and financial) arena.

Considering also the high rate of surplus appropriation being realized via the external financing of coffee valorization programs (Oliveira 1977), we can conclude that the large fazenda was becoming tangled in a wider web of dependent relations which undermined its claim to predominance and hegemony. According to Holloway (1974: 266), planters' profits--exclusive of interest payments on borrowed capital--had decreased to 9% as the second and third decades of the century worn on, while interests on loans had risen to 12, 18 and 24%.

As a result of segmentation, all major functional areas within the sector--production, commerce, financing, even transportation--were becoming internally differentiated into competing sub-groups (Font 1982). Consensus of interests within any functional group was hampered; instead, cross-functional economic coalitions emerged as the main actors vying for dominant shares of the export sector.

The conflict between segments took a variety of forms: between or within functional groups and, particularly, as sectoral or regional antagonisms (Simonsen 1940 :76). The areas in the New West were gaining in relative weight over older ones--in terms of coffee as well as food crops and, later, cotton. The displace-

ment of the economic center of gravity in the state generated powerful economic and political tensions between regions.

These antagonisms and processes of differentiation were projected into the political process itself. The main vehicle was the associational ferment noted at the beginning of this essay. In this regard one of the most interesting results of this study is that the state's political apparatus came to emerge as no passive or even neutral bystander. Policies adopted with respect to the important questions of land use and colonization, immigration, transportation and public administration--while often contradictory or unclear--expressed and reinforced the formation of an alternative coffee-based economy side by side with the large fazenda(Font 1982). As argued elsewhere(Font 1982), at the same time the state pursued its own emergent interests in the critical relation between the export economy and international financial markets. No wonder the expressions of planter collective contention.

In the context of pluralization of elite income sources and interests, the state government emerged as the one actor capable of playing the key role in deciding the relative fate of these segments--and thus in shaping the subsequent path of development along which the Paulista society would move. By favoring the development of newer areas where the small holder prevailed, the state appears to have joined new economic groups challenging the predominance and hegemony of the large fazenda. In passing let's note that the involvement of industrial groups(Font 1982) interested in the development of the internal market gave this emer-

gent coalition a broader structural meaning.

This is not to say that the state was becoming "dominant" over civil society, generating by decree its large scale transformation. Far from it. The key dynamics was provided by the segmentation in the social organization of the export sector brought about by its own development--in interaction with processes of incipient industrialization. Rather than to neat integration under a stable fazenda system, this overall pattern of development led to growing tensions between various elements of an increasingly complex Paulista political economy. It does seem the case that the state found itself increasingly able to deal proactively, and not merely reflectively, with respect to the heterogeneous and complex Paulista society. Politics was fast becoming the pivotal arena for the adjudication among competing models of social organization and change.

The large fazenda was far from displaced. On the contrary. As argued elsewhere (Font 1982), the key to understanding the decade of the 1920's in São Paulo is precisely the attempt of traditional export elites to restore their full predominance and hegemony.

At a more general level, these findings lend considerable weight to the idea that expansion of an export sector may generate complex processes of differentiation (of interests, social organization and action) powerful enough to undermine the claims to predominance and hegemony by emergent bourgeoisies. The focus on dynamic processes of social organization and collective action in export sectors thus emerges as a promising new ap-



proach to study the social and political aspects of development in Latin America.

APPENDIX: TABLES, GRAPHS AND MAPS

I. MAPS: THE MARCH OF COFFEE TO THE WEST.

1. Coffee Production

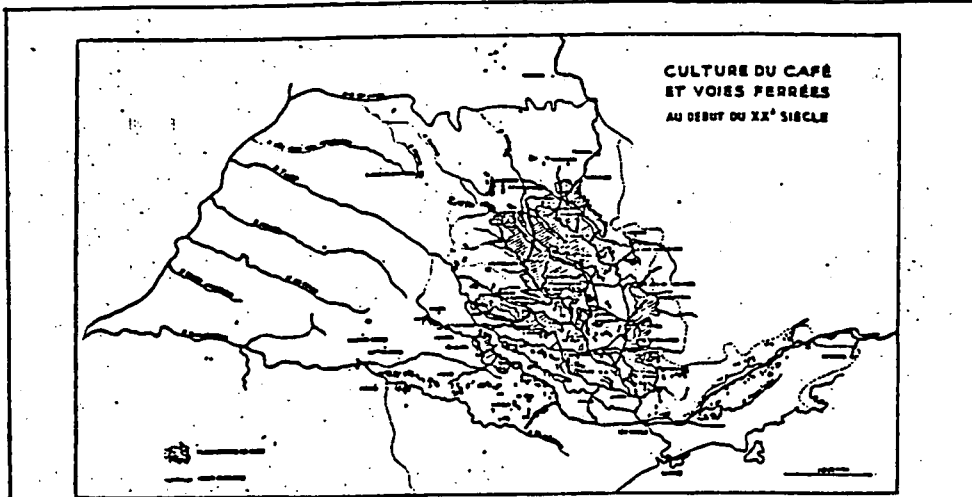


Fig. 14. — Culture du café et voies ferrées au début du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle. (Source: Monnbeig, 1952, p. 100.)

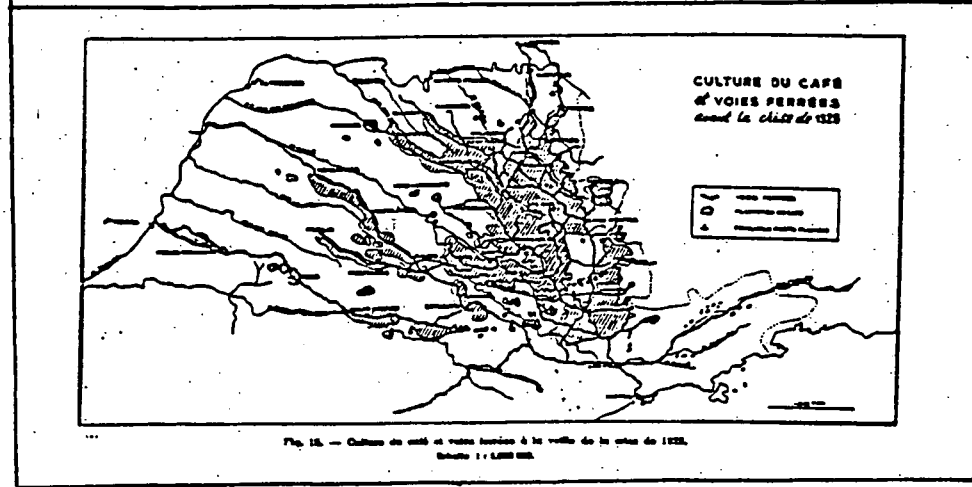


Fig. 15. — Culture du café et voies ferrées à la fin de la 2<sup>e</sup> moitié de 1925. (Source: Monnbeig, 1952, p. 100.)

2. Shift in the Distribution of Immigrants from the Hospedaria

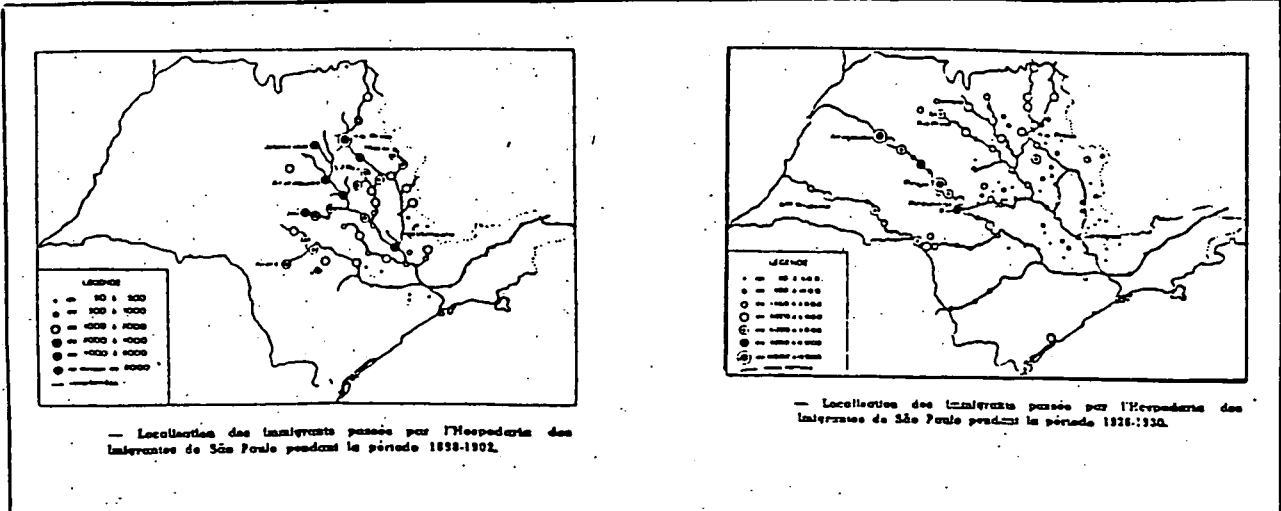


TABLE A  
 POPULATION AND ECONOMIC SHIFTS ACROSS REGIONS IN SAO PAULO'S SANTOS REGION, 1886-1940

SANTOS REGION	PERCENT OF STATE'S POPULATION				PERCENT OF STATE'S COFFEE PRODUCTION		
	1886	1900	1920	1940	1905	1920	1934
OLD WEST:							
CENTRAL	24.3	18.2	16.4	11.8	13	11	7
MOGIANA	14.6	20.4	17.7	11.7	34	44	16
BAIXA PAULISTA	10.9	12.1	11.5	8.1	21	16	11
SUB-TOTAL	49.8	50.8	45.3	31.6	68	71	34
NEW WEST:							
ARARAQUARENSE	2.7	6.5	12.7	13.2	16	15	26
NOROESTE		0.3	3.0	11.9	0	3	24
ALTA SOROCABANA	5.9	5.2	7.4	10.1	11	8	13
SUB-TOTAL	8.6	12	23.1	35.2	27	26	63
SANTOS TOTAL	58.4	62.8	68.4	66.8	95	97	97

SOURCE: CAMARGO(1952), LOVE(1980)

TABLE B

SHIFTS IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF GENERAL AND COFFEE FARMS ACROSS  
REGIONS IN SAO PAULO'S SANTOS ZONE, 1905-1934 (in percentages)

SANTOS REGION	PERCENT OF GENERAL OR COFFEE FARMS			
	1905	1920	1923	1932
OLD WEST:				
CENTRAL	24.5	12.97	17.7	10.21
MOGIANA	25.8	20.2	23	13.7
BAIXA PAULISTA	14.57	15.13	17.47	12.46
SUB-TOTAL	64.9	48.13	58.48	36.4
NEW WEST:				
ARARAQUARENSE	17.9	26.7	25.4	27
NOROESTE	1	6.5	1.8	22
ALTA SOROCABANA	16	18.5	14.4	14.5
SUB-TOTAL	35	51.6	41.5	63.6
TOTAL SANTOS ZONE	100	100	100	100

SOURCE: Holloway(1974)

TABLE C

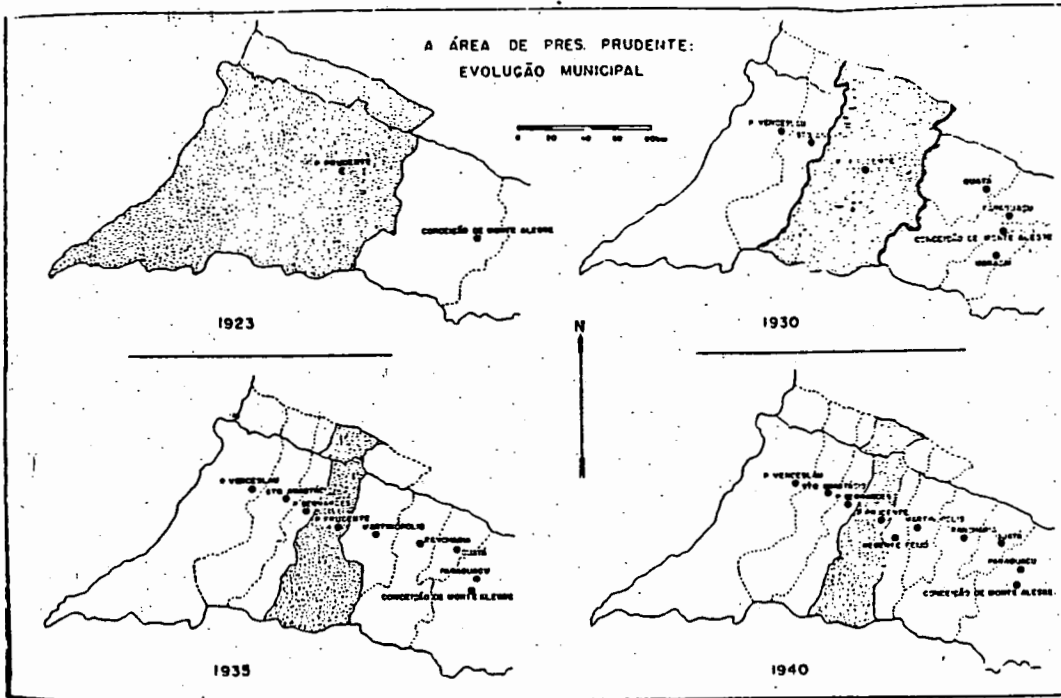
## IMMIGRANT OWNERSHIP ACROSS REGIONS IN SAO PAULO'S SANTOS ZONE, 1805 -1932

SANTOS REGION	PERCENT OF FARMS IN SANTOS ZONE OWNED BY LOCAL FOREIGNERS				PERCENT OF FARMS IN REGION OWNED BY FOREIGNERS				PERCENT OF FOREIGN-OWNED FARMS IN SANTOS ZONE OWNED BY LOCAL FOREIGNERS			
	1905	1920	1923	1932	1905	1920	1923	1932	1905	1920	1923	1932
OLD WEST:												
CENTRAL	4.7	4.9	5.4	3.6	19.3	38	30.5	35.3	21.6	12.5	12.5	7.43
MOGIANA	3.8	5.7	7.7	4.5	14.9	28	33.1	32.5	17.6	14.6	17.8	9.21
BAIXA PAULISTA	4.8	6.7	9.1	6.2	33.3	45	52	49.6	22.2	17.6	21	12.7
SUB-TOTAL	13.4	17.4	22.1	14.2	20.7	36	37.9	39.1	61.5	44.74	51.45	29.4
NEW WEST:												
ARARAQUARENSE	5.3	12.4	14.78	14.1	29.6	47	58.2	52.3	24.2	31.9	34.25	29.1
NOROESTE	.2	4.3	.6	12.4	19.6	66	33.8	56	.9	10.9	1.39	25.5
ALTA SOROCABANA	2.2	4.8	5.7	7.8	18	26	38.7	53.4	13.3	12.4	12.90	16
SUB-TOTAL	8.4	21.5	20.9	34.2	2.4	41.7	49.6	53.8	38.4	55.4	48.54	70
TOTAL	21.8	38.98	43.1	48.2								

SOURCE: Computed and derived from raw data aggregated at regional level by Holloway(1974). Camargo(195 ) remains the basic source on regionalization and primary data.

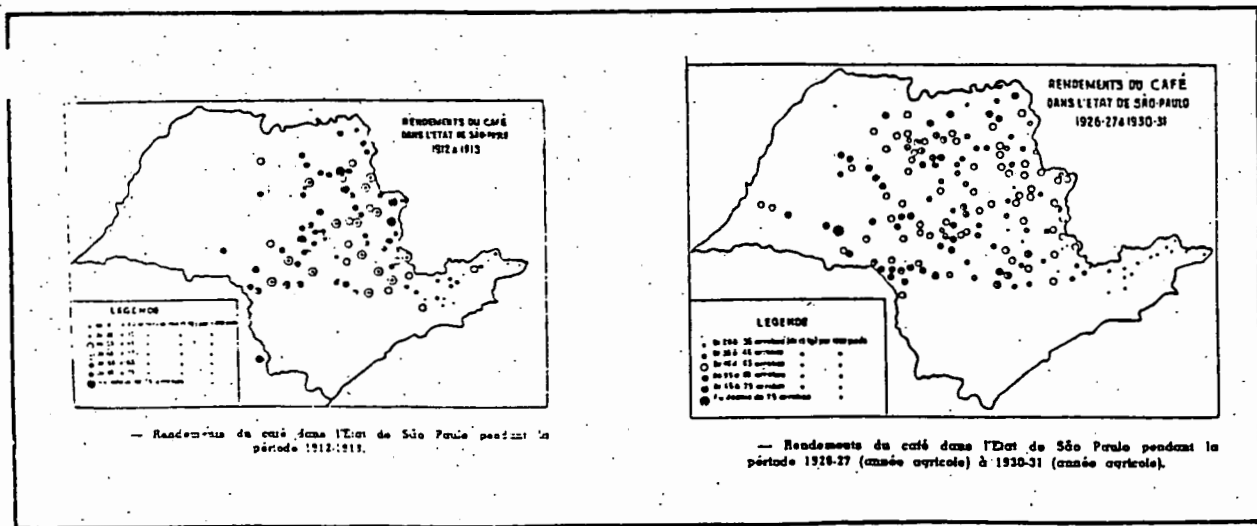
III. MAPS: ASPECTS OF THE SHIFT TO THE WEST.

1. The proliferation of public administration in the West: Presidente Prudente



Source: Santos Abreu (1972)

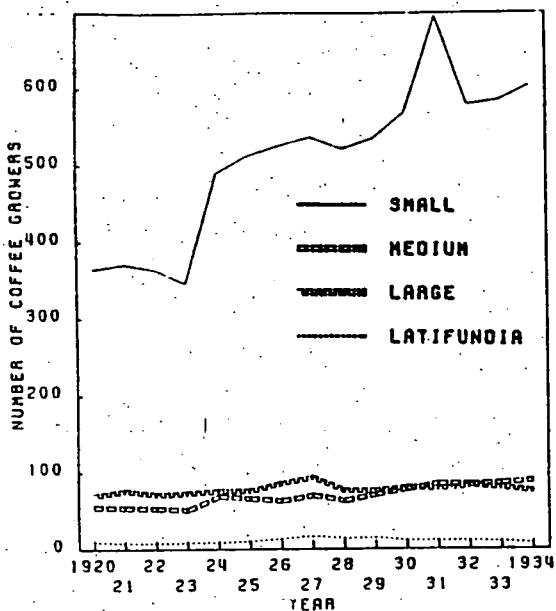
2. Coffee yields



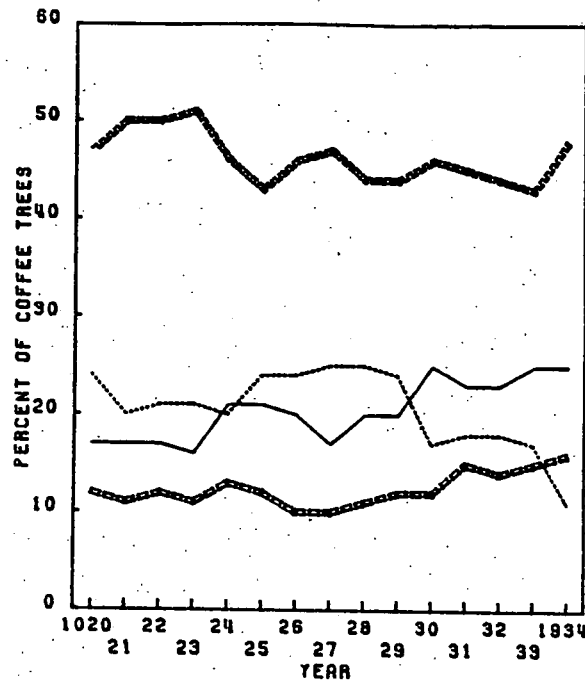
Source: Monnbeig (1952)

IV. GRAPHS: EMERGENCE OF COFFEE SMALL HOLDERS IN THE MUNICIPIO OF ARARAQUARA, 1920-1934.

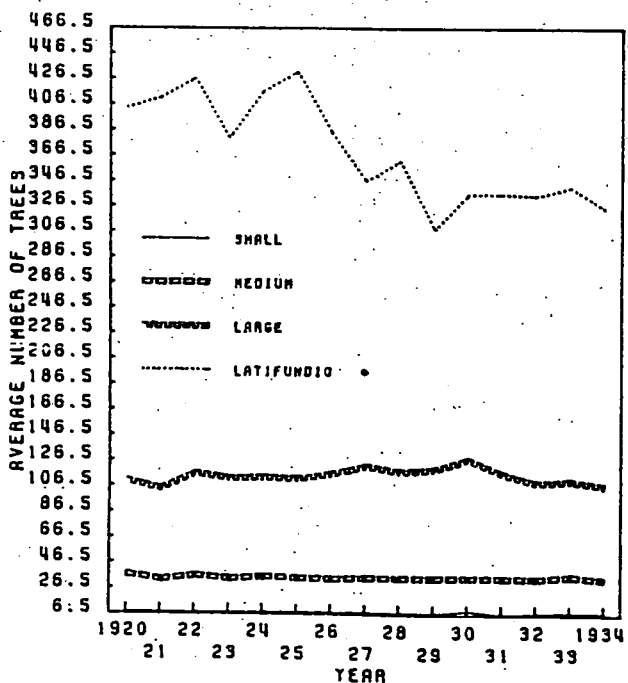
Number of growers by size



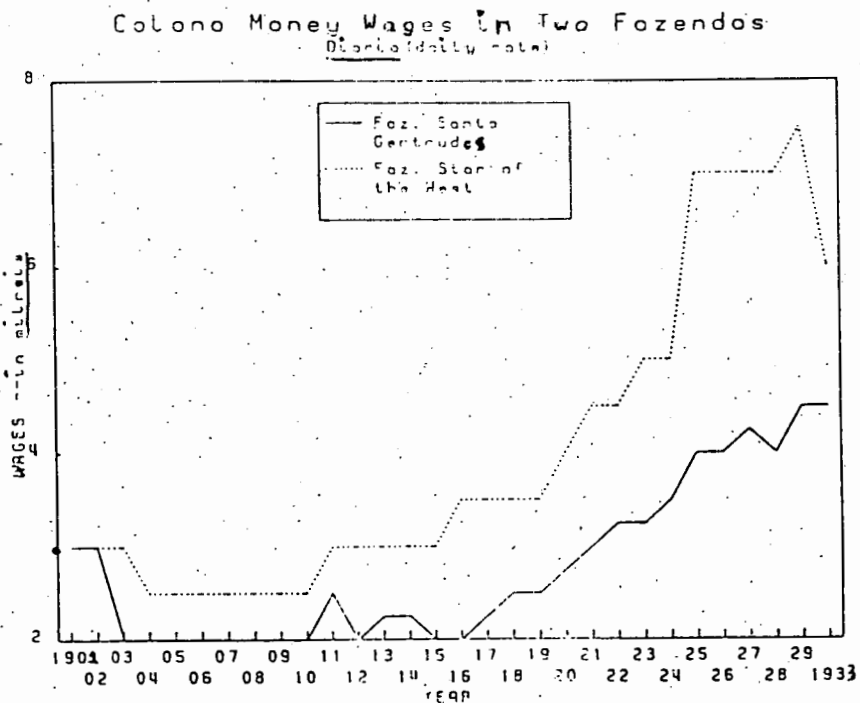
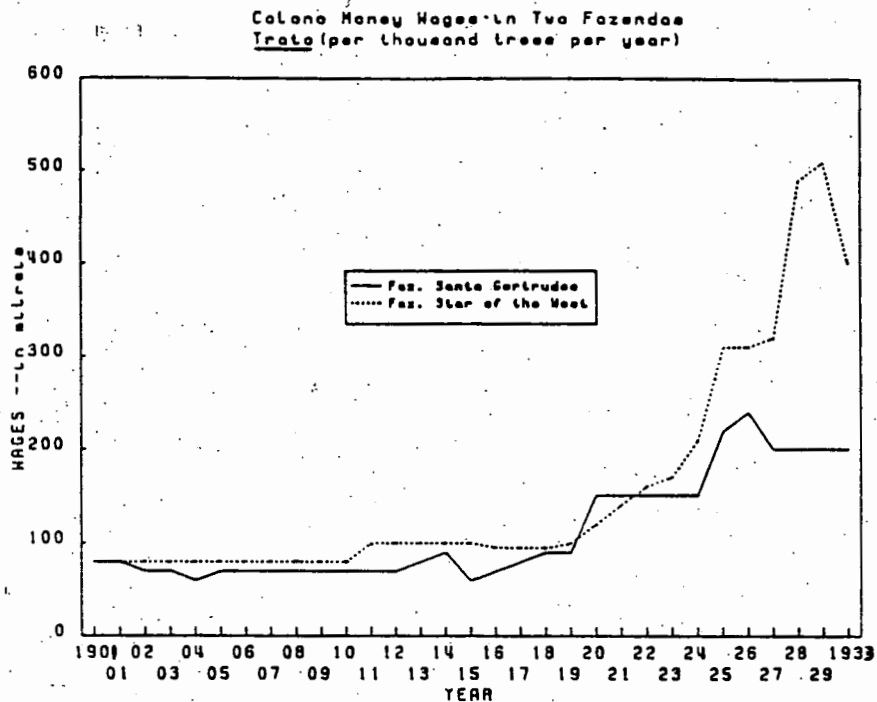
Distribution of coffee trees in percent



Average number of coffee trees per farm



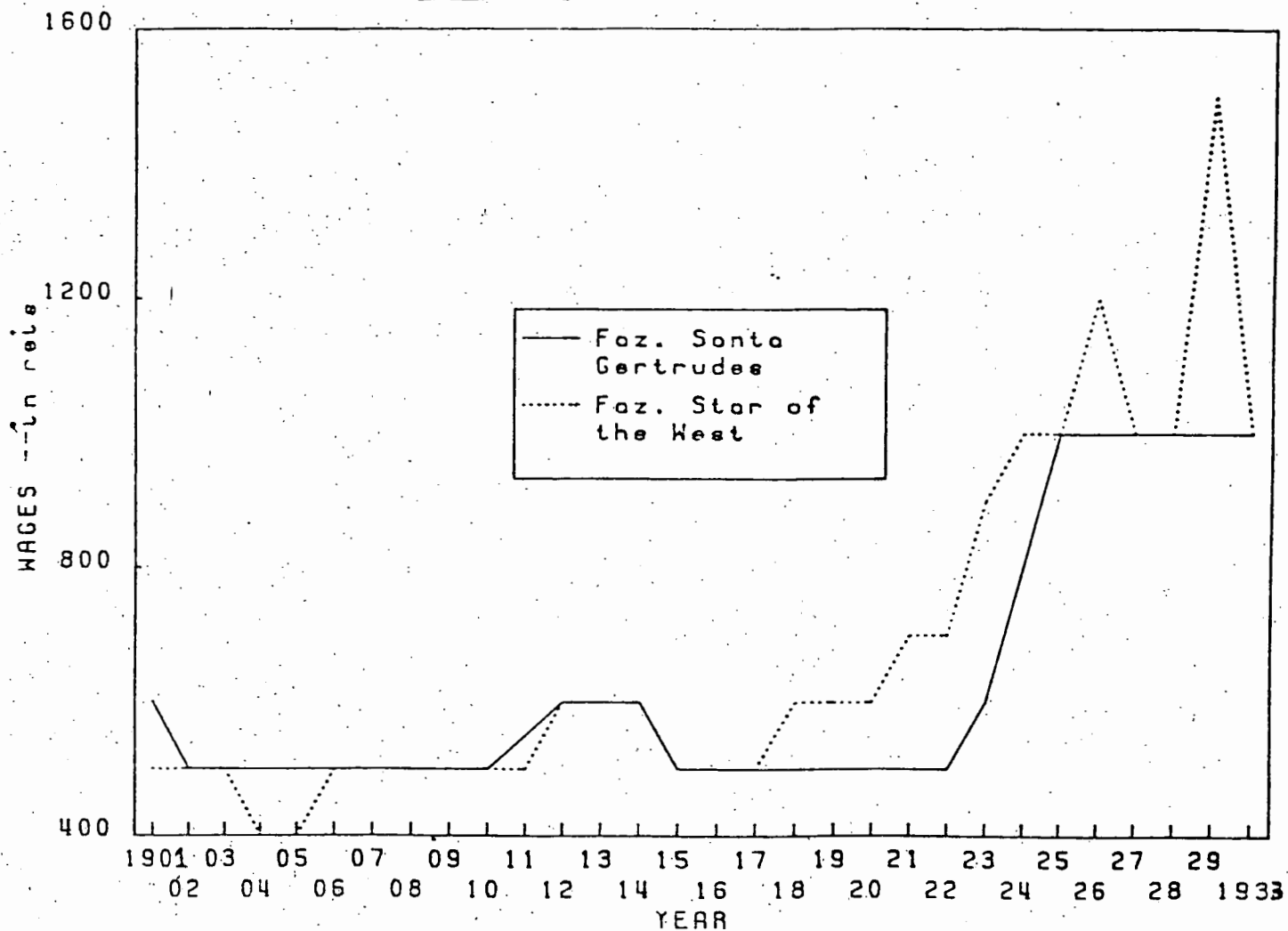
Source: Time series derived from Azzoni et. al. (1975).

V. GRAPHS: COLONO WAGES IN TWO FAZENDAS, 1900-1930.

SOURCES: For Fazenda Santa Gertrudes see Bassanezi(1975).  
 For Fazenda Star of the West see Holloway(1980).  
 (These sources contain the time series from which these plots were derived).



Colono Money Wages in Two Fazendas  
Colheita (per alqueire de café)



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