Conclusion

The Afterlives of a Nineteenth-Century Paradigm

The legacies of colonization etched themselves along the grain of the twentieth century. Numbers waxed and waned, but colonization preserved its edge as a policy prescription and continued opening new horizons of business opportunity. Novel empresarios and companies followed familiar scripts – tried and true methods of operation – and expectations of reciprocal benefit among companies and government offices continued to structure the pace and content of colonization proposals.

Significantly, these ongoing projects arose as the term itself, "colonization," circled back to peopling paradigms in response to ideas about population growth, territorial occupation, geopolitical pressures, and wealth generation. More than a century after the first company-led colonization projects, business ventures reprised a dynamic and mutually constitutive relationship with regulatory mechanisms. And companies – together with the migrants they sought to transport to new homelands – remained subject to convergent international forces, though always in the mold of previous efforts.

The cast of characters involved in twentieth-century colonization also evinced remarkable continuities with earlier projects. Household monarchists and republicans alike, including Antonio Prado and Rui Barbosa, carried the business of migration into the new century, as did the descendants of the earliest empresarios. The marquês de Abrantes's grandnephew, also named Miguel Calmon, took the helm of the Peopling Service, for instance. Toponymy itself generated an archive of colonization legacies. By the 1940s, colonies aptly christened Quintino Bocaiúva and Marquês de Abrantes emerged near Rio, while Filadelfia became Teófilo Ottoni.

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On the shoulders of political elites, savvy empresarios, and migrants themselves, colonization carried on in the twentieth century as a historical legacy that was very much alive. Throughout Brazil, foreign colonos and first-generation Brazilians of foreign descent made headway into new internal frontiers. Italo-Brazilians and Japanese migrants who settled in São Paulo decades before partook decisively in a northeastern riverine colonization push into Mato Grosso in the 1950s. This process sped up with the construction of interior highways after the 1960s, most notably the BR-163 extending from Rio Grande do Sul to Santarém, in the heart of Pará.[1] Similarly, colonization companies pulled migrant-descended peoples from Rio Grande do Sul into the western regions of Santa Catarina, jumpstarting a process of land occupation, indigenous displacement, and deforestation that enterprises like the Southern Brazil Lumber and Colonization Company exported to Amazonian regions later in the century.[2]

How had colonization etched such an indelible mark on the history of Brazil? It was a legacy of lessons learned, of continuity in goals and efforts even in the face of dynamic domestic and international change, and of remarkable self-study. Already in the 1870s, previous peopling efforts came under the discerning eye of studious gentlemen who attempted to tease out the unwritten rules governing successful colonization. From the encyclopedic work commissioned by the Agriculture minister and published by Augusto de Carvalho in 1876 to the work of a Peopling Service section chief in 1918, colonization congealed into a historical science. As such, it followed closely in the wake of systematic examinations of colonization at a world scale carried out by Leroy-Beaulieu and others.[3]

Foreign observers also contributed to popularizing a Brazilian science of colonization while indirectly buoying attendant business interests.

[1] ANB, Fundação Brasil Central, cx. 20; Ariana Rumstain, *Peões no trecho: Trajetória e estratégias de mobilidade no Mato Grosso* (Rio de Janeiro: E-papers, 2012).

[2] Eunice Nodari, *Etnicidades renegociadas: Práticas socioculturais no Oeste de Santa Catarina* (Florianópolis: EdUFSC, 2009); and "'Mata Branca': O uso do machado, do fogo e da motosserra na alteração da paisagem no Estado de Santa Catarina," in *História ambiental e migrações*, ed. João Klug and Eunice Nodari (São Leopoldo: Oikos, 2012), 35–53; Miguel Mundstock Xavier de Carvalho, "Uma grande empresa em meio à floresta: A história da devastação da floresta com araucária e a Southern Brazil Lumber and Colonization (1870–1970)" (PhD thesis, UFSC, 2012).

[3] Augusto de Carvalho, *O Brazil: Colonisação e emigração. Esboço histórico baseado no estudo dos systemas e vantagens que offerecem os Estados-Unidos* (Porto: Imprensa Portugueza, 1876); Joaquim da Silva Rocha, *História da colonisação do Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Nacional, 1918).

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In the 1890s, an adjunct lecturer at the Università di Genova named Vincenzo Grossi, for example, pivoted from his work on "American ethnology" in the Aleutian islands and "colonial economy" in Eritrea to Italian emigration to Brazil. Decades later, in 1914, Grossi's *Storia della colonizzazione europea al Brasile* offered a systematic survey of migrations to São Paulo, following the money but also the general trend of producing more informative works on the history of Brazilian colonization.[4]

Powered by a newfound scientific legitimacy and a practiced opportunism centered on profits, colonization continued apace into the twentieth century. Surely, scandals and breakdowns kept plaguing these efforts in a striking echo of nineteenth-century precedents. Yet colonization projects built on this potent legacy of capitalist enterprise and government partnership endured, finding an important – and evolving – niche during the era headed by Getúlio Vargas (1930–1945, 1951–1954) and up until the end of the Brazilian dictatorship of 1964–1985.

COLONIZATION IN THE VARGAS ERA AND BEYOND

In 1930, Vargas strolled into power after a victorious coup supported by an array of divergent forces. To topple the political machinery of the first Republic, he relied on a varied coterie of intellectuals reared in the budding criminology and sanitarianism of Raimundo Nina Rodrigues and the organic agrarianism of Alberto Torres, among other currents of thought. These ameliorative and eugenic currents found their course in the restrictive immigration decrees that preceded a new 1934 constitution by two months. While not particularly innovative in terms of ideas, the 1934 decrees epitomized restrictions against presumably undesired classes of people, including illiterate individuals; blind and hard-of-hearing persons; anyone suffering from leprosy, sexually transmitted diseases, or tuberculosis; gypsies or nomads; mental health wards; sexual workers; and minors and elders over 60. Reviving and empowering old tropes, the second decree, which regulated foreign entries, divided immigrants into two broad classes – agricultural workers and non-agricultural workers – and provided particular guidance on *cartas de chamada* (calling letters),

[4] Vincenzo Grossi, *Se e come si potrebbe tentare la colonizzazione dell'Eritrea* (Rome: G. Bertero, 1895); *L'Amazzonia e gli interessi italiani nel nord del Brasile* (Milan: P. B. Bellini, 1897); *Storia della colonizzazione europea al Brasile e della emigrazione italiana nello stato di S. Paulo* (Milano: Albrighi, Segati & C, 1914); *L'economista*, no. 1211 (18 July 1897), 456.

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a device by which the Labor, Industry and Commerce ministry would review proposals from "enterprises or companies" interested in introducing agricultural immigrants to Brazil. And so, while immigration restrictions crested, companies vested in the lucrative trade of directing migrations won an express route for approvals.[5]

The 1934 Constitution formalized Vargas's hold of power, recentralized migration controls, opened the door to "total or selective prohibition according to place of precedence," and distributed the responsibility to "stimulate Eugenic education" (Art. 138.b) among the central, state-level, and municipal governments. Yet only with the rise of the authoritarian Estado Novo (1937–1945) did Vargas and his brethren enshrine racial and ethnic parameters into migration policy, effectuating a transition from the historical science of colonization to a tutelary craft of population and cultural engineering. A nationalization campaign in 1937 mandated the teaching of Brazilian history in schools and Portuguese as the only authorized language of instruction, dealing a blow to local schools in German, Italian, Japanese, Polish, and other migrant-descent communities. Further administrative reorganization accompanied this shift in 1938, with the transformation of the Departamento Nacional do Povoamento (a later version of the Peopling Service) into the new National Department of Immigration and the creation of the Conselho de Imigração e Colonização (Council on Immigration and Colonization, hereafter CIC), which crowned efforts to pool together the myriad agencies and specialists involved in demographic governance.[6]

The *Revista de Imigração e Colonização* published by the CIC from 1940 to 1955 consecrated directed migrations and colonization as essential social engineering tools of Vargas's statecraft. From its first issue, peopling made a daring return to public policy from the moment the CIC president declared that "no question surpasses population in importance."[7] Notably, the *Revista* revived the principle of peopling as a

[5] Dain Borges, "'Puffy, Ugly, Slothful and Inert': Degeneration in Brazilian Social Thought, 1880–1940, *JLAS* 25, no. 2 (1993): 235–256; Juri Bottura, "Shaping the Body of the Nation: 'Organicist Agrarianism' in 1930s Brazil" (PhD diss., Northwestern University, 2019); Decree no. 24258 (16 May 1934), *Diário Oficial da União* (11 June 1934).

[6] Law Decree no. 1023-A (31 Dec. 1938); Decree no. 3691 (6 Feb. 1939), *Diário Oficial da União* (25 Mar., 8 Feb. 1939).

[7] João Carlos Muniz, "Apresentação," and "Primeiro ano de trabalhos do Conselho de Imigração e Colonização," *RIC* 1, no. 1 (Jan. 1940): 3–4, 5–19. The Council began its operations in Sept. 1939. Members included navy captain Attila Monteiro Aché, major Aristoteles de Lima Camara, Artur Hehl Neiva (director general of the civil police in Rio), Dulphe Pinheiro Machado (director of National Department of Immigration), José

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cornerstone of governmental agency and reanimated companies as the ideal vessels of colonization by turning to useful precedents. It republished, for instance, the 95-year-old work by the visconde de Abrantes, *Memória sobre os meios de promover a colonisação*, the first of a series of "historical documents" offered by the journal.[8]

The *Revista* also featured contributors who extolled historical and contemporary companies including the British and Dutch East India Companies, United Fruit, and Ford due to their "enormous financial resources," calling attention to their "extraordinary rights" and their "monopolistic nature as preconditions for their actions." Reference to these models coexisted with the belief that fascist corporations such as the Ente per la Colonizzazione della Libia and the Istituto Nazionale Fascista per la Previdenza were likewise worthy of emulation.[9] Indeed, the fascist bent and explicit anti-Semitism of many early contributors to the *Revista* defined the way this new generation reprised peopling. While another contributor called for "a policy of selection in relation to the human currents headed to our country … by their racial characteristics," scheming bureaucrats like Justice secretary Ernani Reis – dubbed "Brazil's doorman" by historian Fábio Koifman – further mobilized a systematic campaign to bar Jewish refugees from Brazil.[10]

The Vargas regime's enthusiastic embrace of colonization as a pro-active policy peaked in 1943 precisely as immigration policies hardened and gained autonomy from schemes related to territorial occupation. Since the early 1930s, immigration had grown increasingly restrictive, a trend that became clear with the establishment of a nationality quota regime in 1938 limiting foreign entries to no more than 2 percent of the total number of entries for any given nationality from 1884 to 1930,

Oliveira Marques (director of the Land and Colonization Division of the Agriculture ministry), and engineer Luiz Betim Paes Leme.

[8] Visconde de Abrantes, "Memória sobre os meios de promover a colonisação," *RIC* 2, nos. 2–3 (Apr.–July 1941): 832–891.

[9] Lincoln Nodari, "Algumas considerações sobre as colonizações: O caso específico da colonização no Brasil," *RIC* 1, no. 3 (July 1940): 464–472. On the circulation of corporatist, including fascist, models at the time, see Melissa Teixeira, "Making a Brazilian New Deal: Oliveira Vianna and the Transnational Sources of Brazil's Corporatist Experiment," *JLAS* 50, no. 3 (2018): 613–641.

[10] José de Oliveira Marques, "Colonização e povoamento," *RIC* 1, no. 2 (Apr. 1940): 205–209; Fábio Koifman, *Imigrante ideal: O Ministério da Justiça e a entrada de estrangeiros no Brasil (1941–1945)* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2012), 85–130.

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similarly to the US Immigration Act of 1924.[11] Wartime measures more forcefully capped immigration in 1941 by suspending temporary visas to foreigners requiring any kind of pecuniary aid (with the exception of "nationals from American states") and suspending permanent visas to all incomers except Portuguese nationals, foreigners with Brazilian spouses or children, agricultural workers, and experts involved in any "colonization previously approved by the federal government." Then, in 1944, the saga of colonizing the Brazilian interior hit a high pitch with the creation of the Fundação Brasil Central (Central Brazil Foundation, hereafter FBC). The FBC came at the tail end of the March to the West, a series of initiatives seeded by Vargas throughout the 1930s and early '40s to overtake and exploit a region christened as "central Brazil."[12]

Interestingly, the FBC was statutorily defined as a public-private company endowed with immense governance powers over the area and with capacities that exceeded those allowed to other public dependencies. This hybrid corporation enjoyed exemptions and subsidies similar to other government autarchies but, in contrast to them, remained a "juridical person in private law."[13] As such, the FBC was entitled to central-government subventions as much as to any funds it raised from private sources. Moreover, the FBC could direct an undisclosed percentage of its profits to the salaries of administrators and employees, thus putting that old revolving door between public service and personal gain back on a steady spin. One critical journalist alluded to the FBC's continuities with its centennial predecessors when he remarked that "some men under the direction of prestigious figures ... organize themselves in a limited company" to receive "all aid" from government, "collect private donations," and "harvest easy lucre" from "their bureaus by the coast."[14]

After the war, however, things shifted once again. The Brazilian Conference on Immigration and Colonization organized by the CIC in

[11] See David Cook-Martín and David Scott FitzGerald, *Culling the Masses: The Democratic Origins of Racist Immigration Policy in the Americas* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), 284–293.

[12] Decree no. 17274 (30 Nov. 1944), *Diário Oficial da União* (2 Dec. 1944), 20332; João Marcelo Ehlert Maia, *Estado, território e imaginação espacial: O caso da Fundação Brasil Central* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora FGV, 2012), 46–78; Orlando Villas-Bôas and Cláudio Villas-Bôas, *A Marcha para o Oeste: A epopeia da Expedição Roncador-Xingu* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2012).

[13] Decree no. 17274 (30 Nov. 1944), *Diário Oficial da União* (2 Dec. 1944), 20332; Maia, *Estado*, 176–178.

[14] Joel Silveira, "Prefácio," in Carlos Telles, *História secreta da Fundação Brasil Central (retrato de João Alberto e de uma época)* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Chavantes, 1946), ii–iii.

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1949 brought together a multiform intelligentsia from the first republic and the Vargas era united by the common goal of a rationally executed occupation of interior Brazil. From 30 April to 7 May, a developmentalist coterie of agronomists, geographers, politicians, and diplomats gathered in Goiânia, the frontier city created by the first Varguismo, with two objectives: to ponder how to develop the region "on the basis of national and foreign colonization" and to "identify empty spaces propitious for colonization as the starting point for ... economic decentralization" in advance of the relocation of the country's capital to the interior. As a performative staging of expert knowledge, the conference opening at the freshly minted art-déco Goiânia Theater featured ministers, governors, lawmakers, academics, foreign dignitaries from Lebanon, Holland, the United States, Italy and Portugal, and a Catholic nuncio. Several technical commissions hosted up to 160 presentations nearby at the Jockey Club, Paulo Mendes da Rocha's brutalist icon. The conference produced a total of 177 policy recommendations principally on immigration, colonization, and "social economy," as well as geopolitics and the environment.[15]

At the time, the professional journal of Brazilian geographers and the *Revista Geográfica*, one of the publications churned out by the Organization of American States, glowingly celebrated the conference as a catalyst for development initiatives. Whereas some scholars have deemed the conference a "relative failure," the event was significant in its combination of a small set of novel recommendations with a plethora of nineteenth-century precedents. According to observers, the conference defined colonization as a "competence of federal and state governments, *private companies*, or duly authorized international organizations" and identified the Tennessee Valley Authority as a model to follow. It also advocated for rural infants and mothers and promoted a heightened focus on regional development around the São Francisco river basin and the Amazon.[16]

Beyond very modest substantive solutions, the conference's importance lay in its role as a symbolic crossroads of different generations of

[15] *Revista Geográfica* 9–10, nos. 25–30 (1949–1950): 266–268; Speridião Faissol, "Problemas de colonização na Conferência de Goiânia," "I Conferência Brasileira de Colonização e Imigração," *Revista Brasileira de Geografia* (Apr.–June 1949): 274–278, 302–304. On colonization in Goiás in the 1940s and '50s, see Sandro Dutra e Silva, *No Oeste, a terra e o céu: A expansão da fronteira agrícola no Brasil central* (Rio de Janeiro: Mauad Editora, 2017).

[16] Antón Corbacho Quintela and Alexandre Ferreira Costa, "Uma conferência relativamente fracassada: I Conferência Brasileira de Imigração e Colonização," *Memória* 13, no. 10 (2011): 215–225.

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technocratic apparatchiks that crossed over from the first republic to the Vargas era and into the early years of the Brazilian dictatorship (1964–1985). Yet there were other significant shifts in the tenor of conversation as well. Notably, the conference articulated one of the first explicitly race- and color-blind principles in migration policy, calling for a "colonization free of any bias against race, nationality or religion." However, next to these innovative prescriptions, the conference promoted time-worn measures to stimulate colonization: sped-up naturalization, preference for families and agricultural workers among immigrant pools, incentives for large groups of foreigners to migrate accompanied by religious leaders, immigration reception centers, rural credit for smallholders, and technical agricultural education. The conference beckoned spontaneous migrations to the Amazon region to increase population and "improve Brazil's cultural – agricultural and industrial – patterns," a coded description for migrants from industrialized countries that echoed preferences of old. Rather than an utter failure, then, the meeting at Goiânia reproduced long-running tropes in demographic management while submitting them to the new logics of regional planning and social welfare.

The colonizing impetus of the FBC and the Goiânia Congress of 1949 fed into a new military regime that, after 1964, once again hitched colonization to its own vision of Brazil's interior as one of immense national potential waiting to be unleashed. In many ways, the rising military regime not only recycled personnel from the Vargas era but also refashioned commonplaces of colonization parlance. Indeed, the characteristic developmentalism and geopolitical fretting of the dictatorship era (1964–1985) turned colonization to the service of ideas widespread among the official party, ARENA, about connecting "polos prioritários" (priority poles) through an expansive network of roads that exploited ostensibly underused territories and protected Brazil from land-based intrusions from the north and the west.[17] The approval of an Estatuto da Terra, the dictatorship's version of a land reform, sought to "modernize" agriculture by expropriating smallholding and, with the help of regional companies, sending their occupants to new colonization frontiers in Mato Grosso.[18]

By this time, conservative-led efforts to colonize neotropical borderlands had taken place across Latin America. In Mexico, the "March to the

[17] "Lindoso quer mais objetividade nas metas de Médici na Amazônia," *Tribuna da Imprensa*, no. 6023 (13 Feb. 1970).

[18] João Carlos Barrozo, "A colonização em Mato Groso como 'portão de escape' para a crise agrária no Rio Grande do Sul," *Clio* 32, no. 2 (2014): 143–166.

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Tropics" initiated in 1963 with the Programa de Colonización around the Candelaria river brought colonos from Coahuila to the southern frontier with Guatemala, whose own Empresa Nacional de Fomento y Desarrollo del Petén (est. 1959) led a colonization program in those same humid lowlands from 1965. In Bolivia, plans to develop a continental "Highway of the Jungle" in 1963 instigated a "March to the East" that brought in Okinawan colonos from the Ryukyuan Overseas Emigration Corporation, Mennonite communities from northern Mexico, and Andean highlanders to regions close to Santa Cruz.[19] Comparatively, Brazil's colonization surge came later, once the dictatorship entrenched itself. And the mandate to colonize took shape from above as much as from below. Individual figures such as Amazonas state president Arthur Cezar Ferreira Reis played a key role in both turning the sights of leading political classes toward the Amazon and deploying discourses of civilizing the Brazilian interior that still had purchase in the new jingoism and defense priorities of the military brass now in control.[20]

Projects targeting the Amazon coalesced in the Plan for National Integration issued by the Médici administration in 1970, which ushered in a flurry of colonization-related dynamics, some of long-standing precedent. For instance, the government undertook a close collaboration with a foreign company, German automaker Volkswagen, to realize the latter's plan of establishing a model ranch in southeastern Pará.[21] In parallel, a highway-building fever opened the way for lengthy north-south *rodovias* such as the BR-163 and the BR-158, which pulled peasants, many of migrant descent, from states like São Paulo, Paraná and Rio Grande do Sul to the Amazon-basin states of Mato Grosso, Goiás, and Pará. Colonization horizons of old hence fed into the rush to colonize new Amazonian frontiers.

The dictatorship's colonization surge peaked with plans to build the Transamazonian Highway, the Transamazônica, set to traverse the entire

[19] Rosa Torras Conangla, *Colonización y colonialidad en una selva de frontera: La cuenca campechana del río Candelaria (siglos XIX y XX)* (Mérida: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2019); Ben Nobbs-Thiessen, *Landscape of Migration: Mobility and Environmental Change on Bolivia's Tropical Frontier, 1952 to the Present* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2020).

[20] Arthur Cezar Ferreira Reis, *A integração da Amazônia na civilização brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro: Representação do Govêrno do Estado do Amazonas, 1965); *A colonização européia nos trópicos* (Manaus: Governo do Estado do Amazonas, 1966); Vinicius Alves do Amaral, "Vicissitudes de um Heródoto caboclo: Arthur Reis e a ditadura civil-militar em Manaus (1964–1966)," *Temporalidades* 5, no. 3 (2013): 125–146.

[21] Antoine Acker, *Volkswagen in the Amazon: The Tragedy of Global Development in Modern Brazil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 54–65.

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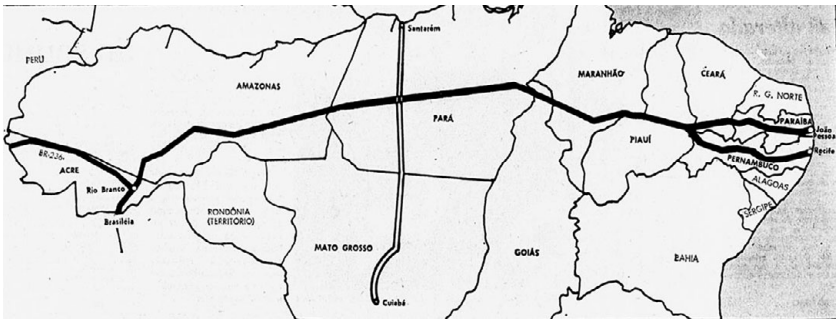


FIGURE 10.1 "Vision of the Future": The Transamazonian Highway
Jornal do Brasil, no. 291 (18 Mar. 1970).

basin from west to east (Figure 10.1). The plan concocted by multiple ministries was to "cut the Tapajós and Xingú valleys through and through with roads, and colonize them until the end of the administration." According to minister Costa Cavalcanti, "a human contingent for occupation" would advance along these roads under a guided colonization process. Among the government officials involved in the project was Agriculture minister Luís Fernando Cirne Lima, erstwhile president of the Rio Grande do Sul Agriculture Federation, which further conferred a strong southern imprint to Amazon colonization. Indeed, old tropes of peopling empty lands of high economic value rang across the mushrooming bureaucracies involved in these plans. As general Médici explained it, "With an area corresponding to around 50% of national territory and occupied only by 3.83% of our population ... the Amazon represents one of the largest demographic vacuums of the world aside from polar regions."[22] These ambitious plans to populate arteries across the Amazon called all hands on deck, incorporating old dvelopment agencies and spawning new ones such as the rural extension agency EMATER-Pará. Yet none surpassed the importance of the Instituto Nacional de Colonização e Reforma Agrária (National Institute for Colonization and Agrarian Reform, INCRA), whose express remit was to watch over colonization processes.

True to pattern, Transamazonian colonization operations did not succeed as planned. After a US$500 million investment in the project, INCRA had only settled 8,000 families by 1981, with an additional 1,600 following on their own, as University of Florida geographer Nigel Smith reported. The slow pace of peopling and unrelenting lobbying from large landholders and corporate interests compelled the military government to

[22] *Jornal do Brasil*, nos. 236, 290, 291 (10 Jan., 17, 18 Mar. 1970).

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change track away from small family plots, offering extensive land allotments to cattle ranchers and private companies instead.[23] A year before the end of the military dictatorship, the Projetos Integrados de Colonização (Integrated Colonization Projects, PICs) that had served as the hallmark of INCRA's operations between 1970 and 1974 were roundly condemned as failures. According to the press in Pará, land distribution to individuals had given way to fraudulent practices of people claiming additional lands through relatives in order to sell them at "exorbitant prices."[24]

The grand ambitions of colonizing the Amazon reached their apogee in an unregulated and highly speculative land market.[25] Not one decade had passed since the enactment of PICs before civil society leaders denounced their disastrous shortcomings. But the notion of failure itself had to be qualified, as profits kept flowing – just not as originally envisioned. Political figures continued to call for the business of colonization to carry on, arguing that only more private investment would allow the plans for peopling the Amazon to come to fruition. Already when the strains of existing programs had become evident, federal deputy for the new conservative-liberal Partido Democrático Social, Ubaldino Meireles, issued a call for the national business class to rescue PICs.[26]

Contrary to Meireles's hopes, however, efforts toward directed migration and settlement did not succeed as intended. Indeed, it is worth remembering that his desperate boosterism came at the tail end of a dictatorship dealing with spiraling inflation and in dire need of capital injections. That alone should serve as a reminder of the weight of context not only in the mobilization of old peopling tropes and dynamics but also in their shaping and reshaping. In fact, after the return to democracy in 1988, Amazon settlement and land distribution targets turned toward sustainable development models. In activated notions of carrying capacity and the limited nature of resources, the discursive field and policies of

[23] Marianne Schmink and Charles H. Wood, "Blaming the Victim: Small Farmer Production in an Amazon Colonization Project," *Studies in Third World Societies* 7 (1979): 77–93; Nigel J. H. Smith, "Colonization Lessons from a Tropical Rainforest," *Science* 214, no. 4522 (Nov. 1981): 755–761; and *Rainforest Corridors: The Transamazon Colonization Scheme* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982); Stephen G. Bunker, "The Cost of Modernity: Inappropriate Bureaucracy, Inequality, and Development Program Failure in the Brazilian Amazon," *The Journal of Developing Areas* 16, no. 4 (July 1982): 573–596.

[24] *Diário do Pará*, no. 546 (13 Aug. 1984).

[25] Jeremy Campbell, *Conjuring Property: Speculation and Environmental Futures in the Brazilian Amazon* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2015).

[26] *Jornal do Comércio* (AM), no. 23163 (16 Aug. 1980).

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sustainable development put a damper on prior ideas of unbridled peopling while repurposing some of the leading frameworks of the same Malthusian thought that had inspired the Luso-Brazilians officials of yester.[27] Vargas's March to the West, moreover, revived in some form in Médici's conceit of traversing the Amazon, which in itself was reincarnated, as it were, in an Amazonian plan that projected extending the BR-163 from its endpoint in Santarém, Pará, all the way to Surinam via a new bridge across the Amazon River, as well as the construction of a new hydroelectric dam in that undeveloped Amazon region.[28]

REMEMBERING MIGRATION

Crises, ambition, and ideas structured colonization as an administrative, political, and intellectual tradition in Brazil – one that refuses to die out. Generation after generation, statesmen, lawmakers, empresarios, adventurers, internal migrants, and foreign colonos have revisited past experiences of managed population movements and territorial occupation. In doing so, they often extracted technical, logistical, and governmental lessons applicable to their own time and to their own interests. In the aggregate, these lessons shaped a learning curve that structured the operations of government agencies and figures as they crafted "management traditions" out of an ample gamut of tutelary and governmental powers in the process of formation.[29]

But the afterlives of a colonization paradigm originally carried to full form in the long nineteenth century would be unthinkable without the company work that undergirded and exponentialized the imperial and later Republican and other regimes' capacities to exert dominion over – and extract profit from – territory and population. This book has shined a light on the previously diffuse, often unexamined role of private interest in colonization processes, with a particular focus on the function played by companies that operated with great liberty, privileges, and power in a society that found in them a vehicle to reproduce its oligarchic political trappings. Neither an individual nor an estate, colonization companies

[27] Carlos Valério Gomes, Jeffrey Hoelle, Marianne Schmink, and Gregory M. Thaler, "From Contested to 'Green' Frontiers in the Amazon? A Long-Term Analysis of São Félix do Xingu, Brazil," *Journal of Peasant Studies* 46, no. 2 (2019): 377–399.

[28] Tatiana Dias, "Movido a paranoia: Documentos e áudios inéditos mostram plano de Bolsonaro para povoar Amazônia contra chineses, ONGs e Igreja Católica," *The Intercept Brasil* (19 Sept. 2019)

[29] Antonio Carlos de Souza Lima, ed., *Tutela: Formação de Estado e tradições de gestão no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: E-papers, 2014).

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benefited both the singular personalities behind them as much as the classes, cabals, or business partnerships to which they belonged. As mutable and adaptable agents of change, colonization companies give future scholars an opening salvo to consider the historical impact of companies as capacious and profoundly problematic collective actors.

Colonization also profoundly impacted Brazil's social history in ways that are only gradually becoming apparent. Scholars have begun to uncover how, at present, positive social markers in states like São Paulo and Rio Grande do Sul may harken back to immigration and the advantages that foreign colonos brought with them, whether in the form of social capital or government concessions. One study matching 52 government colonies founded in Rio Grande do Sul between 1824 and 1918 to present-day jurisdictions concluded that "closeness to an official colony is associated with higher per capita income, less poverty ... better health and education outcomes; and for the areas close to German colonies, also less inequality of income and educational outcomes." In a similar vein, according to economic historian Bruno Witzel de Souza, the relative ease with which German immigrants in São Paulo were able to establish private schools resulted in higher enrollment rates by the early twentieth century and may have "set the path for human capital accumulation in the long run."[30] From the 1850s on, mutual aid societies also privileged migrants with in-group support, even if they also reified internal hierarchies, contributing both to the integration and stratification of migrant communities.

Class and racial divisions both within and among migrant and national groups only deepened in the era of mass migrations, further entrenching socioeconomic differences between foreign and national migrants, as historian Molly Ball has shown. It is important to remember that freedmen and -women and indigenous people did not have access to the subsidies and resources that government officials and empresarios frequently designed for incoming migrants. And often, migrant and migrant-descended laborers went to great lengths to defend these privileges against

[30] Irineu de Carvalho Filho and Leonardo Monasterio, "Immigration and the Origins of Regional Inequality: Government-Sponsored European Migration to Southern Brazil before World War I," *Regional Science and Urban Economics* 42 (2012): 794–807; Joerg Baten, Tarcísio Botelho, and Yvonne Stolz, "Growth Effects of Nineteenth-Century Mass Migrations: 'Fome Zero' for Brazil?," *European Review of Economic History* 17 (2013): 95–121; Bruno Gabriel Witzel de Souza, "Immigration and the Path Dependence of Education: The Case of German-Speakers in São Paulo (1840–1920)," *The Economic History Review* 71, no. 2 (2018): 506–539; Irineu de Carvalho Filho and Renato P. Colistete, "Education Performance: Was It All Determined 100 Years Ago? Evidence From São Paulo, Brazil," Munich Personal RePEc Archive Paper no. 24494 (2010), https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/24494/1/MPRA_paper_24494.pdf.

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what they perceived as usurpation attempts by indigenous peoples such as the Kaingang. Emerging insights such as these command serious reflection on the long-term effects of the colonization processes examined in this book, not least when one considers that many of the municipalities discussed by these scholars overwhelmingly voted for a far-right presidential candidate in 2018 and 2022, supporting political platforms premised on the cancellation of redistributive programs and government initiatives to eliminate extreme poverty.[31]

Despite the glaring historical inequalities and processes that have cemented the symbolism of wealthy provinces like São Paulo, tales of pioneering and industrious migrants persist to the point that any gains among their descendants are celebrated as the product of hard-won merit.[32] This kind of revalorization of migrant descendance emerged with unprecedented force in the postwar period on the shoulders of voluntary associations and as a reaction to the nationalization campaign under Vargas, who, it bears mention, changed track during his last stint in power to accommodate a resurging interest in promoting emigration on the part of the Italian government.[33] What it meant to be German, Japanese, or Italian in Brazil also derived from strategic foreign policy interventions by West Germany, Japan, and other polities bent on strategically exploiting their diasporas during that period.[34] Since then, cultural pride in migrant heritage has found ammunition in historical descriptions of "brava gente" who successfully acculturated and in turn contributed decisively to Brazilian society and identity or in epithets that celebrate erstwhile colonies on the basis of their European likeness – Nova

[31] Soraia Sales Dornelles, "De Coroados a Kaingang: As experiências vividas pelos indígenas no contexto de imigração alemã e italiana no Rio Grande do Sul do século XIX e início do XX" (MA thesis, UFRS, 2011); and "Expansão da fronteira agrícola do centro-sudoeste paulista na segunda metade do século XIX: Presença e atuação indígena em terras almejadas pela apropriação privada, 'um empecilho de dura transposição,'" *História* 39 (2020); Karl Monsma, *A reprodução do racismo: Fazendeiros, negros e imigrantes no oeste paulista, 1880–1914* (São Carlos: EdUFSCar, 2016); Molly C. Ball, *Navigating Life and Work in Old Republic São Paulo* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2020); Benjamin Bryce, *To Belong in Buenos Aires: Germans, Argentines and the Rise of a Pluralist Society* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2018).

[32] On the making of São Paulo's symbolism as a beacon of modernity, see Barbara Weinstein, *The Color of Modernity: São Paulo and the Making of Race and Nation in Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015).

[33] Dario Gaggio, "Pioneers or Mere Labor Force? Post–World War II Italian Rural Migration to Brazil and the Legacies of Colonialism," *Journal of Social History* 54, no. 3 (2021): 920–943.

[34] Glen S. Goodman, "The Enduring Politics of German-Brazilian Ethnicity," *German History* 33, no. 3 (2015): 423–438; Nishida, *Diaspora and Identity*, 18–42, 99–129.

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Friburgo, for instance, is the "Brazilian Switzerland."[35] Germanness in particular found apologists in scholars like Carlos Oberacker, who took pride in underlining "Teutonic" contributions to Brazil's industrial development. These views often gloss over the fact not only that such growth came at the cost of dismal human suffering, as witnessed by the soaring child mortality rates recorded in parish records in São Leopoldo, but also that German-speaking colonos robustly partook in slave-holding, as scholars have more recently examined in great depth.[36]

Brazil has no dearth of ethnic-oriented performances that seek to actualize migrant pasts, trademarking them in regional rituals or traditional festivals advertised benignly as nothing more than local color, especially in southeastern and southern Brazil, where what historian Glen Goodman has called "tourist migrant marketplaces" abound. From the café colonial at Gramado to the yearly Confederado celebrations in Americana to the Museum of the Japanese Migrant to the numerous archives of colono heritage that dot southern Brazilian states and beyond, the temporal lineaments of peopling often remain more securely moored to profit, privilege, and the polemical designations of cultural patrimony than to historical probing.[37]

This book hopes to contribute precisely in the spirit of historical inquiry. In doing so, it joins a chorus of sparse but steady voices at

[35] Emílio Willems, *A aculturação dos alemães no Brasil, estudo antropológico dos imigrantes alemães e seus descendentes no Brasil* (São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1946); Zuleika Alvim, *Brava gente! Os italianos e São Paulo, 1870–1920* (São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1986); Ricardo da Gama Rosa Costa, "Visões do 'Paraíso capitalista': Hegemonia e poder simbólico na Nova Friburgo da República" (MA Thesis, UFF, 1997); João Raimundo do Araújo, "Nova Friburgo: a construção do mito da Suiça brasileira (1910-1960)" (PhD diss., UFF, 2003).

[36] Carlos Oberacker Jr., *A contribuição teutã à formação da nação brasileira*, vol. 2 (Rio de Janeiro: Presença, 1985), 379–385. First published in German in 1955, this work went through three Portuguese editions in 1968, 1978, and 1985. On mortality rates, see João Biehl, Miquéias Mügge and Ana Maria Goldani, "The Books of the Dead Revisited: Mortality and Morbidity in the German Colonies of Southern Brazil, 1850-1880," *História, Ciências, Saúde-Manguinhos* 25, no. 4 (2018): 1197–1217; on colono slaveholding, Paulo Moreira and Miquéias Mügge, *Histórias de escravos e senhores em uma região de imigração europeia* (São Leopoldo: Oikos, 2014); Eugene Cassidy, "The Ambivalence of Slavery, The Certainty of Germanness: Representations of Slave-Holding and Its Impact among German Settlers in Brazil, 1820–1889," *German History* 33, no. 3 (2015): 367–384; Rodrigo Marins Marretto, *A escravidão velada: Senhores e escravos na formação da vila de São João Batista de Nova Friburgo (1820–1850)* (Rio de Janeiro: Revan, 2018).

[37] Jean Comaroff and John L. Comaroff, *Ethnicity, Inc.* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2009); Glen S. Goodman, "Consuming the Café Colonial: German Ethnicity and Tourist Migrant Marketplaces in Southern Brazil," *Global Food History* 4, no. 1 (2018): 40–58.

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different levels of society that have uncompromisingly submitted notions of heritage and historically attendant privileges to critical examination. From Giralda Seyferth's exacting study of the formation of a Germanist ideology to the young descendant of Confederados who, after a sponsored tour in the US South, called received legends into question, discerning views of the past of colonization may yet produce a more accurate account of how those migrations actually took place, even though that resulting account cannot compete with, say, the "Festas do colono" celebrated variously in Rio de Janeiro, Espírito Santo, Paraná, Rio Grande do Sul.[38] The inherent profiteering of the business of colonization, and the privileges that incoming colono cohorts often obtained in its wake, has receded from view in such celebrations and the cultural complexes that sustain them. On offer instead are canards of colono initiative, self-reliance, and achievement.

One wonders how these stories would temper themselves if they reckoned with the fact that they came by design and all too often by corporate fiat. For one thing, such a reflection would illuminate the production of profit as much as the historical construction of privileges that underwrote the very migrant identities that cover up the way those privileges were obtained. Quite importantly, the resulting history would invite us to follow the money and to reckon with how political and social classes with the means to transit between government and private enterprises were enriched at the expense of legions of colonos and the masses of enslaved women and men they were called to "substitute." Colonization by company was just one means to do so, and it was a versatile, consistent, and popular one among ruling elites. Companies served as a refuge after political defeat as with Ottoni, Bocaiúva, and d'Escragnolle Taunay and as a readying ground for professional ascent as with Abrantes and Olinda. Colonization was never about a place or a people so much as a financial interest and a drive for political ascendance. Hence, examining the historical mechanisms of peopling for profit allows us to put an ear not to the paeans of migrant achievement or the cries of huddled masses, but to the hushed self-dealing behind government formation and the whispers that blow through the high halls of power.

[38] Giralda Seyferth, *Nacionalismo e identidade étnica: A ideologia germanista e o grupo étnico teuto-brasileiro numa comunidade do Vale do Itajaí* (Florianópolis: FCC Edições, 1982); Frederik Schulze, "'*Auslandsdeutschtum*' in Brazil (1919–1941): Global Discourses and Local Histories," *German History* 33, no. 3 (2015): 405–422; Carolina Vila-Nova, "Dois jovens paulistas aprenderam a louvar os confederados americanos. Um mudou de ideia," *Folha de São Paulo* (19 Nov. 2020).

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