

The Community Perception About Colíder's Colonization In Brazil

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ABSTRACT: This article aims to register the history of Colíder's colonization in order to understand the meanings that the settlers community has in relation to three aspects: publicity, encountered difficulties and the confrontation with the "Settler". This register was made through the three settlers' testimony: José Afonso Pereira, Gema Ignês Postal Barbiero and Helena Maria Miranda, who arrived in the region from 1974. Colíder city is located in the midwest region of Brazil and it was colonized by a private company called "Colonization, Industrialization and Rural Development". The settlers' migration to the new city in searching of better conditions was compromised by the non-compliance of the colonizing company in providing the necessary documentation of the land possession. The reality is richer and more complex, and what has been presented is a simplification. Therefore, the study is justified, since it is hoped that the registration of these informations will help the future generations to understand how was Gleba Cafetal's occupation, now Colíder.

Keywords: Colíder; History of the Colonization; land possession.

I. INTRODUCTION

The colonization of the Brazilian interior in the 70's of the last century had as characteristics to stop the spontaneous migration and the uncontrolled territorial occupation. For reasons of national security, the military government created the National Institute of Colonization and Agrarian Reform (NICAR) – in Portuguese (INCRA), whose objective was to promote, to coordinate, to control and to execute the process of migrants' removal among the regions in a selective way (Souza, 2004). The town of Colíder (Gleba Cafetal), located in Mato Grosso state, in the midwest region, was built from a settler Raimundo Costa Filho's project of private colonization. He was a native from Londrina, in Paraná state and the owner of the settler company, called "Colonization, Industrialization and Rural Development" (COLIRDE) – in Portuguese (COLÍDER) - in 1973 (Schaefer, 1986). The purpose of this study is to understand the meanings that the settler community has about the colonization in three aspects: publicity, encountered difficulties and in the confrontation with the Settler. It is hoped that the paper contributes to the future generations understand how happened the Gleba Cafetal occupation, now Colíder.

II. STUDY OF THE SETTLERS COMMUNITY

There is no official data on the amount of the acquired land by the settler Raimundo Costa Filho and his partner Sebastião Loro de Lima for the opening of the new city (Seluchinesk, 2008). It is speculated that, at first, it has divided an area of 24 thousand acres that went to 330 thousand acres, bought in part with illegal titles, without NICAR fiscalization. In this way, official colonization took second place, taking private colonization its place and receiving the incentives and facilities previously granted to the official colonization (Schaefer, 1986). In order to populate the city, the Settler company undertook an advertising campaign in Paraná, where highlighted the high quality of the soil, the tropical climate and the facility of the payment of the urban properties and rural lands with the guarantee of obtaining the deed of the land at the time of the last payment. The target population interested in migration was formed by squatters, small farmers, small traders who saw in this acquisition a possible economic improvement for their family. Uncontrolled by NICAR, many families paid for their lands without receiving the deeds of the properties, which prevented them from making bank financing for agricultural funding or improvements to their urban properties. The difficulties in obtaining the documentation of the properties made some families return to their hometowns. The documentation charge by the settlers to the Settler company was made shyly because of the Settler company's violent attitudes and his professional killer ("jagunços" in portuguese).

This study adopted the method of semi-structured interview with the settlers who had arrived in the 70's, trying to know the meanings for publicity, difficulties in acquiring the possession of the land documentation or in the construction of the houses and in confrontation with the oppressive authority during the colonization process. The three interviews were as follows: Mr. José Afonso Pereira, born on June 30, 1954, arrived in Colíder in 1976, at the age of 22, was a teacher, trader, worked at the Traffic State Department

(TRASDE) – in Portuguese (DETRAN) - and vice- mayor of the city, now is retired; Mrs. Gema Ignês Postal Barbiero, born on May 2, 1954, arrived in Colíder in 1976, at the age of 44, housewife, the Colíder first mayor's wife, Antonio Agostini Barbiero. She studied until the 4th grade and now is retired; Mrs. Helena Maria Miranda, born on July 10, 1932, arrived in Colíder in 1974, at the age of 20, she has finished High School and is retired.

Settler José Afonso Pereira

Mr. José says that when he arrived in Colíder, it was a small village. His first job was as a mathematics teacher, because at the time there were no teachers for school. He worked in the trade and taught classes for grades 5th and 6th, thus forming a greater contact with the students and their parents because of the meetings they held at school.

About the publicity made by the Settler company he says: "There, in Paraná, there was the fame that Colíder was a place of a big future because it produced coffee. The land was all sold as small parts of 10, 20, 25 bushels and it promised that they would have all assistance, such as school, road, land with documentation. So everybody came with that expectation that here would be the place of development, and because of this the people were coming here very fast".

On the encountered difficulties, he highlights the acquisition of the land possession documentation: "There were many. The settlers realized the lie. And the beginning was traumatic because the Settler company deceived the settlers, sold and resold their land more than four times. Moreover, they did not provide the documents that guaranteed the land possession. The NICAR did not give a document, the people did not finish paying the rest to the firm either, because they did not receive the document".

On the settlers' confrontation with the oppressive authority, he says: "There was a lot of conflict because the people were oppressed, how can I say, pressured by the Settler company to pay. The settlers who threatened don't pay their land anymore were also threatened by the company's "killers", who committed much violence in these nine years of colonization (or decolonization) (Schaefer, 1986). We met here the priest Geraldo, the nun Soledade, who came here to take care of the religion and education. They themselves were threatened by the company. Because it was the nun Soledade's obligation as a charity sister in the education area, to advise the parents not to pay while they did not receive the documents and the company wanted to force the people to pay without documentation. And this happened in 1980, with Sebastião Loro de Lima's death, a massacre. "The situation between the Church and the Settler company became unsustainable, because of the Church which denounced that the company was a land false owner and did not accomplish with the sales contracts. So, the religious, fearing for their lives, withdrew from Colíder. A sequence of disagreements between the Settler Raimundo Costa Filho and his partner Sebastião Loro de Lima culminated in Sebastião's and his foremen's murders by Raimundo's killers. (Seluchinesk, 2008).

Settler Ignas Gem Postcard Barbiero

The lady reports that she did not want to move to Colíder, since she lived in Santa Catarina with her relatives and friends. "But the husband came, so I had to accompany him." When she arrived in 1976, the small community had 100 people and all the migrants lived as friends.

About the publicity made in Santa Catarina for the land sales in Colíder, she says that the marketing was passed from one to another, in an informal way. Her husband heard about Colíder, the new town, from a farmer who had lands in Mato Grosso. This farmer encouraged him to move to his state. The farmer "informed to her husband that the land was the same, very good, fertilized, equal in Paraná to plant, and that there was no cold, frost and snow".

On the encountered difficulties, she points out that the village was not prepared to provide quality of life to the new settlers: "When I arrived here, there was nothing: there was no light, there was a small market, there were some small trades, almost nothing. The constructions were of wood, we brought the windows from the Santa Catarina house, because here there was nothing, except the wood".

About the confrontation between the members of the population and the Settler company, she remembers "Raimundo, who we knew, but we took care, because they killed him. We took care of ourselves." She reports that the husband "worked on a farm and had many friends." This friendship with the State political authorities culminated that, in a meeting in 1981 between the governor Frederico Campos and her husband, and her husband was named Colíder's mayor. The governor "liked my husband's sincerity very much". The lady highlights that, despite all the pressure from the Settler to cover up some situations about the properties documentation, her husband "did not let the Settler company cause any trouble because he wanted the things in a right way."

Settler Helena Maria Miranda

Mrs. Helena Maria Miranda lived in Guaíra, in Paraná state, before moving to Colíder in 1974. She has completed High School and worked as a teacher at the Colíder School from 1975.

About the publicity made in Paraná encouraging the migration to Mato Grosso, Mrs. Helena remembers that the advertisement stressed the opening of new good lands for planting "for those who likes agriculture, there is very good, the people are going to there".

About the encountered difficulties in relation to the building houses and buying basic household items, she reports that the small town was a "region that only had forest". Families came in trucks loaded with people, furniture, seeds or plant seedlings, and sometimes with some domestic animal such as cows, chickens and dogs. The first settler's job was to open the Amazon Forest little by little and with the help of the Settler's tractor to carry the furniture. The houses buildings were all of wood with a few stones in the foundation. With the teacher's salary, Mrs. Helena helped her father to build their first house. To eat, people planted coffee, rice, beans, cassava and whatever they could produce. "In the year 1975 there was a lot of malaria and the region did not offer conditions for treatment. The solution was to go to the next city, Sinop, and on the way, we met people being transported in nets to bury".

About the confrontation with the oppressive authority, she reports the school case, where she worked as a teacher. In the same process that all the schools that emerged during the colonization in Mato Grosso (Tomé, 2009), Mrs. Helena worked in the city's central school, but also in the small ones located in the farthest communities, coordinating the students' necessary documentation, school meals, the teachers' location in all schools. In this beginning of works in the 70's, the Settler company provided the didactic material to be distributed free to all students. From 1980, with Sebastião Loro de Lima's murder, the school order was prejudiced, with the teachers' dismissal without justification. "It was taken away all the staff that worked at the school." She reports that during the class someone came in and said, "You won't work here anymore. Everyone goes to the room and when you get there you will be dismissed". About the land purchase, the lady reports that it was common "the gunmen work together with the land sellers", occurring many fights and deaths. Because the manner in which Mr. Sebastião was murdered "we can't done even with an animal, much less with a human being". Professional killers went to Sebastião's farm, "they threw him into the car trunk with his foreman, they applied injection and mistreated them, after they burned the bodies".

III. DISCUSSION

The northern region of Mato Grosso in the 1970s was the target of a big migratory process in Brazilian territory. Migrants, mainly from the Southern Region (Paraná, Santa Catarina and Rio Grande do Sul states), left their cities and towns to occupy these new empty spaces.

From Getúlio Vargas's government, with the so-called "March to the West" in the 1940s, the Midwest and North Regions were constantly the populational study objects because of their low populational density. In a country with so many unknown or little-known geographic spaces, mainly in the central-north, and with an east-central coastal essentially human concentration, it was developed business activities of colonization towards this ignored interior. In the first half of the twentieth century, the settlers known as "Rubber Soldiers" and the small farmers went to there. They were unbelievers in their home states and wanted to find the abundance destination. The territorial occupation policy was more aggressive, it began with the Military Coup in 1964 - the Amazon became an immense area of interest capitalist exploitation, both nationally and internationally. Previously it was the interests of the automotive industry, with the demand for rubber, which projected the Amazon region within the international economic scenario, now, the Government created occupation and domination strategies, favoring the great investors' elite. Forest people have been expropriated from their land always inherited, riverside populations were decimated, and violence prevailed in the ideological-social doctrine that supported this occupational policy (Tomé, 2009).

The colonization process took the national defense levels in the 70's, which may be highlighted: a) territorial security factor - with Brazilians being established in all parts of the territory; B) as income distribution - once the possession of a land piece was advertised as accessible to everybody; C) as a matter of colonization control - in the attempt to avoid land invasion, by squatters and settlers that hide in the forests, as well as the documentation, sometimes falsified, by companies that settled there (Picoli, 2004).

The settlement of these cities was done through advertising marketing in cities, mainly in the Southern Region of Brazil, since the settlers who owned private colonization companies were from these states. The informal oral advertising, in which a friend or neighbor says about the land quality in Mato Grosso and its advantages, circulated convincingly in rural areas, where small landowners found difficulties to maintain their properties, often, incorporated by large estates (Alves and Joaonni Neto, 2010). They were given the opportunity to trade their small estates for large land states, small home-grown crops for large harvests. Mato Grosso land was presented as excellent for planting and great profits were ensured as certain.

In this phase of settlers' arrival who came from the south of the country, the settlers' information about Colíder colonization speaks about massacres, exterminations, murders, illegal land possession, falsified documentation. And in this period without-law in which the "strongest" took part of the administrative community, the one with the most political-economic conditions to buy documentation and hire professional

killers, took land possession from the "weakest", the one without defense conditions or under disadvantageous conditions both political and in relation to weapons.

IV. CONCLUSION

"There is the necessity that the remembered event rediscover its liveliness" (Davallon, 1999: 25); As long as there are people to tell the stories about Colíder's colonization, Sebastião Loro de Lima's murder will continue to be remembered as an example of the years of oppressive policies and violence against settlers by the Settler company. The three settlers studied in this research highlighted that the publicity made them have the illusion of an easy and cheap land acquisition. The illusion was broken at the moment they arrived in Colíder and realized that their property already belonged to another or that their purchase was not documented. The land purchase at a low price and its resale at a higher price was a constant on the Settlers' and some individual's action, since the federal or state inspection did not supervise. The encountered difficulties did not avoid that the community resisted and strengthened itself. Together and beside the Church for a few years, the settlers confronted the colonizing businessmen by staying in place and helping each other.

At the time that Colíder became a municipality in 1981, Mayor Antonio Agustini Barbiero began the process of organizing landowners' documents in a more effectively way and the opening and paving of the roads allowed the residents' displacement and the goods transportation between rural and urban areas.

Many transformations happened with the urban interventions, among them, the architecture, in which the wooden houses were replaced by masonry, although still today, there are many remnants of this tradition from Paraná. Socioeconomic aspects are diversified and the interviewed pioneers consider the city future as worrisome, since they don't see the possibility of development, because the livestock is still the economic base and the exchange for another activity would lead to the migration of a large part of the population.

In view of the above, it is expected that it will serve as a reference for further researches, since the bibliographic material on the subject is almost non-existent and can contribute to future generations understanding how was the Gleba Cafezal's colonization, now Colíder.

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