From Adventurers to Settlers: Norwegians in Southern Brazil

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The present article analyzes, as a case study, the immigration of a group of Norwegians who in 1851 co-founded the settlement Colônia Dona Francisca, which became what is today the city of Joinville in southern Brazil. More specifically, it aims to discuss the relationship between this form of migration, mostly made up by single men, and several important international historical contexts at that time, such as dynastic relations, Norway’s socio-economic conditions, the Californian gold rush and the Brazilian immigration policy. On the other hand, it also focuses on the process of adaptation of those migrants to a community composed mainly of German and Swiss families. The issues concerning gender, kinship, and memory will be dealt with in a further article.

The analysis of the notion of immigration is the object of different fields of knowledge such as history, anthropology, demography, sociology, psychology, and health sciences, each with their own temporalities, specificities, theoretical frameworks and methods. Migration has thus been studied through several approaches, which roughly fit into frameworks such as the melting pot theory, cultural pluralism, push and pull factors, and so forth. The push-and-pull approach is frequently applied to groups that practice male primogeniture, where the eldest son inherits the family property, while the other siblings are expected to migrate, definitively or temporarily, in order to find the means for their subsistence.

1 The field work was sponsored by a Grant from the Brazilian Ministry of Education.
2 In Brazil the word colônia has several meanings: Colônia with a capital C is part of the designation of a specific place, such as a settlement or small town, while colônia with a lower case can mean a private family property or a measure of land area.
3 See Valdemar Carneiro Leão, A Crise da Imigração Japonesa no Brasil (Brasília: IPRI, 1990); Herbert S. Klein, “Migração Internacional na História das Américas,” in Fazer América, ed. Boris Fausto (São Paulo: Edusp, 1999); Lelio Mármora, Las Políticas de Migraciones Internacionales (Buenos Aires: Editorial Paidós, 2002); Caroline B. Brettell, “Theorizing Migration in Anthropology. The Social Construction of Networks, Identities, Communities, and Globalscapes,” in Migration Theory. Talking Across Disciplines, ed. Caroline B. Brettell and James F. Hollifield (New York: Routledge, 2008).
Migration can be conceived as a constitutive element of the habitus of a social group, where migrating, whether definitively or temporarily, may be part of its tradition, even if not totally naturalized. Bourdieu also shows that migration may be a “need turned virtue” when incorporated, as a “structuring structure,” into the adjustments caused by the phenomenon of modernization/globalization.

As a starting point, one can note that the Norwegians dealt with in this paper differ from those belonging to the main stream of immigrants who established themselves in Brazil, as well as from the large contingents that left Norway due to push factors, and opted for the United States and Canada, which beckoned them with significant pull factors. The small group of immigrants studied here did not intend, when they left Norway, to establish themselves at the Colônia Dona Francisca, nor did this colony offer them any attractive pull factors. On the contrary, the very harsh living conditions experienced during the initial stages of the colony came to characterize the colony itself as a push factor (difficulties related to the environment, financial and health issues, etc.), which led to the re-emigration of most of the group to other places and which did not stimulate other immigrants to follow the pioneers.

Devoto shows that the initiative or intention of migrating constitutes an important element since it places the immigrant as agent of the action, in the role of protagonist. Very often, the push factors or local constraints generate the need for migration, but it is the person, or the group to which this person answers to, that defines where to go, how, and why. It is also worth noting that the issue of gender has a significant cultural component: very frequently, the men migrate while women are made to migrate, displaced according to social or labor circuits.

Østrem and Sæther point to three perspectives for the understanding of Norwegian emigration to Latin America: the quantitative data collected the implications and perspectives as well as the methods employed. Figueiredo for her part suggests that

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4 Pierre Bourdieu, A economia das trocas simbólicas (São Paulo: Editora Perspectiva, 1982); Le Sens Pratique (Paris: Les Editions de Minuit, 1980).
5 Carlos Ficker, Historia de Joinville (Joinville: Editora Letradágua, 2006); Maria Teresa Elisa Böbel and Raquel S. Thiago, Joinville os pioneiros: documento e história (Joinville: Editora Univille, 2001).
6 Fernando Devoto, Historia de la inmigración en la Argentina (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 2003).
7 Steinar A. Sæther and Nils Olav Østrem, “Norwegian emigration to Latin America: numbers, questions and methods,” in Nordic Migration: Research Status, Perspectives and Challenges ed. Nils Olav Østrem and Christina Folke Ax (Stamsund: Orkana, 2011).
When considering migration as a definite one-way move, it is possible to analyze it as two separate steps: the process of leaving the home-society, referred to as emigration, and the process of joining a new one, or immigration. Conceptually, clear boundaries can also be established between domestic migration...and international migration.8

It should be noted, however, that while the issue of crossing borders is from an etic perspective an important factor in view of national policies, from an emic viewpoint – that is, from the perspective of the migrating individual himself – it may solely mean to “cross a river, on the other margin of which one speaks and lives a little differently.”9 Such is the case with the Swedes who migrated to Brazil and, later on, “crossed” the Uruguay River and established the Colonia Oberá in Argentina. It is also the case of the German-Brazilians who established seventeen settlements along the two margins of the Uruguay and Paraná rivers, which define a political border, and formed a group of colonies articulated through ethnic, kinship, and godparenthood ties. Geographically, eleven of these are situated in Brazil, five in Argentina, and one in Paraguay. Underlying the sociological/demographic phenomenon of immigration there is a logical process of conception and organization of this displacement. As described elsewhere a man when displaced to another country may be considered as an immigrant person or as an immigrant individual adventurer.10 In terms of Dumont’s model, the former acts as part of a larger holistic system that encompasses its members, that is, as part of a constituted group.11 And as such, he may be a sort of “bridgehead” for the group, which will follow him in a chain of migrations, often over several decades and generations. On the other hand, a lone migrant may be the expression of individualism, whose actions are not related to any larger group.

The Norwegians here considered seemed to be a peculiar case: they cut their social relationships in Norway and built new relationships as “ship brothers” as well as relations with the German and Swiss settlers in Dona Francisca Colony.

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Furre points out that since 1825 approximately eight hundred thousand Norwegians have migrated, chiefly to the United States and Canada, and mostly

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8 Clarisse Carvalho Figueiredo, “Invisible Migrants Norwegians in Brazil, 1820–1940” (University of Oslo, 2012).
9 Marvin Harris, Theories of Culture in Postmodern Times (London: Altamira Press, 1999).
10 Ellen Fensterseifer Woortmann, Herdeiros, Parentes e Compadres (Brasília: Editora UnB, 1994).
11 Louis Dumont, Homo Hierarchicus (London: Penguin, 1970).
in the second half of the nineteenth century. The author observes that only Ireland has surpassed Norway as regards the percentage of their population that has emigrated. According to Günther roughly ten thousand people emigrated yearly from Germany alone to North America until the 1830s. This figure increased to twenty thousand after 1837 and to more than thirty thousand after 1845, and, after 1847, to over seventy thousand emigrants per year. A small fraction of these latter immigrants headed to Brazil, where, along with Swiss and Norwegians, they established Colônia Dona Francisca.

Qualey identifies Norway’s geographical characteristics as one of the factors that motivated mass emigration: three-quarters of its surface could not be cultivated because of its mountains, and the remaining one-quarter was largely covered by forests. He also points out that, contrary to England and Germany and other countries that used their coal and iron reserves to promote industrialization, Norway, which experienced a significant population growth during the same period, remained limited to agriculture, trade, and fishing. Qualey highlights the fact that the settling of Norway’s territory was very heterogeneous. According to the 1845 census, from a total of 1,328,471 inhabitants, 53.3 percent lived in the southeast districts, 33.3 percent lived in the western districts, which include the harbor towns of Bergen and Trondheim (from where the group in question departed), and only 13.3 percent inhabited the northern districts.

On the other hand, socio-political factors contributed to the configuration and maintenance of the migratory process until the mid-twentieth century. Even the separation of Norway from Sweden, achieved in 1905, did not alter this strong tendency towards emigration to USA and Canada. It is interesting to note that Brazil, despite a demographically small-scale Scandinavian immigration wave, was one of the first countries to recognize Norway’s independence.

According to research conducted by Barros Basto, the migration of Norwegians to Brazil was sporadic and mostly spontaneous. Statistics account for the entry from 1888 to 1968 of only 1,136 Norwegians. Most established themselves in urban areas after World War II, working in the commercial and industrial sectors. In the IBGE Report 1939/40 there is no mention of Norwegians, only of Swedes, who emigrated in larger groups. In Brazil the Quota Law of

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12 Berge Furre, História da Noruega (Blumenau: Edifurb, 2006), 43.
13 Markus Günther, Auf dem Weg in die Neue Welt (Augsburg: Wissner Verlag, 2005), 78.
14 Dilney Cunha, Suíços em Joinville: o duplo desterro (Joinville: Editora Letradágua, 2003).
15 Carlton C. Qualey, Norwegian Settlement in the United States (New York: Arno Press, 1970).
16 Furre, História da Noruega.
17 Fernando Lázaro de Barros Basto, Síntese da história da imigração no Brasil (Rio de Janeiro: n. e., 1970), 43.
18 “Relatório 1938/40,” ed. Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (Rio de Janeiro, 1941), 147.
with the intent of attracting new immigrants, actually raised the number of entry permits for Scandinavians to three thousand.

The migration of a Norwegian male group to Joinville had its singularities because of its profile. It involved a group of men who shared professional qualifications: agriculturalists, carpenters, masons, bakers, and even a veterinarian and a medical doctor. Contrary to the significant emigration of Scandinavian domestic maids to the United States, especially to New York and Chicago, after a period of “apprenticeship” in Christiania (Oslo) and Fredrikshald, there are no references concerning emigration of any groups of single Norwegian women to Brazil.

According to the HULA data base, however, in Rio de Janeiro one finds twenty registered arrivals of Norwegian women, apparently isolated cases of single ones. Outstanding among them is the case of the Norwegian pianist Walborg Bang, who in 1893 married Alberto Nepomuceno, one of the main composers and regents of erudite music in Brazil, both students of Edvard Grieg.

Similar to other groups, Norwegian emigrants ensured the social reproduction of their places of origin while also ensuring their own social reproduction with new opportunities for themselves and their families. When they left Norway, those who came to Joinville did not necessarily share meaningful categories such as land, family, and work, but developed them once they became settlers. Three milestones may serve to indicate the passage from adventurers to settlers: acquisition of plots of arable land for cultivation, marriage to daughters of other settlers and the resulting incorporation into kinship and social networks.

All the Norwegian emigrants were, at least officially, Lutherans. According to Sassen, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, thousands of Lutherans, mainly peasants, fled Scandinavia and Central Europe because they had converted to forbidden sects and were persecuted by authorities. This was not, however, the case of those who eventually arrived at Colônia Dona Francisca.

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19 Resolução n° 7 de 24/10/1938.
20 "Relatório Rio de Janeiro," in Revista Nacional de Imigração e Colonização (1940), 147.
21 Margareta Matovic, “Maids in Motion: Swedish Women in Dalsland,” in Peasant Maids: City Women, ed. C Harzig (London: Cornell University Press, 1997).
22 http://www.hf.uio.no/ilos/hula.
23 Ellen Fensterseifer Woortmann, Significados da Terra (Brasília: Editora UnB, 2004).
24 Bourdieu, Le Sens Pratique.
25 Saskia Sassen, Migranten, Siedler, Flüchtlinge: Von der Massenauswanderung zur Festung Europa (Frankfurt: Fischer T. Verlag, 2000).
In the memoirs of some of these adventurers (who left Norway to join the gold rush in California) and in other sources, one observes that at least some of them were devout Lutherans. This is what one deduces from a newspaper advertisement seeking a mineralogist, a pastor, and a doctor (in this order) to accompany the group. A detailed chronogram on the Olsen Family sites shows that on the night of October 25, 1850, the day before they were due to board, thirty-two members of the group, which totaled 106, gathered at the Lutheran Church of Our Lady (Vår Frues Kirke) in Trondheim to bid farewell and profess their faith. This constitutes part of a clear rite of passage with a propitiatory content, under the aegis of religious principles, comparable to those described in the letters of Swiss emigrants published by Schelbert and Rappold and of German immigrants analyzed by Woortmann.

Some religiosity becomes evident in the letters sent to Norway. In one of these, the writer thanks God for protecting their ship from a lightning storm that had sunk a French ship. When mentioning the death of J.G. Ryther, “the old traveler of the world,” another letter-writer invokes Paradise: “He faced death in peace, and we hope that he has reached more beautiful landscapes than those the Earth has to offer.”

If the group of Norwegians who ended up in Brazil did not respond to any metaphysical calling, they surely responded to the call from the gold rush in California, news of which, according to Blegen, had first been heard in Norway during the spring of 1848. They shared with other migrants the quest to become wealthy, succeeding in America, and then return to their place of origin. In fact, Qualey attributes the significant rise in the emigration of Norwegians to the United States to the spreading of such news, and to the return of an enriched passenger on the ship Restaurationen in 1825.

In addition to the causal factors already mentioned, those who left Norway could be considered as part of what Mendras defines as “structurally banned” according to gender, birthright, age, or some other principle. Each society

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26 Olsen Family Site: www.familiaolsen.com.br.
27 Arnold Van Gennep, *Ritos de passagem* (Petrópolis: Editora Vozes, 1978).
28 Leo Schelbert and Hedwig Rappolt, *Alles ist ganz anders hier: Auswandererschicksale in Briefen aus zwei Jahrhunderten* (Freiburg: Walter Verlag, 1977).
29 Woortmann, *Significados da Terra*.
30 Olsen Family Site: www.familiaolsen.com.br.
31 Theodore Christian Blegen, “Immigrant Women and the American Frontier,” *Norwegian-American Historical Association* 5 (1930).
32 Klein, “Migração Internacional na História das Américas.”
33 Qualey, *Norwegian Settlement in the United States*, 5–16.
34 Henri Mendras, *Sociedades Camponesas* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Zahar, 1978), 5–16.
defines who may or may not leave, and who must return according to inheritance and succession rules. As far as Norway is concerned, primogeniture was a fundamental factor in the configuration of a context where the departure of non-heirs was encouraged, either making part of the migrant contingents heading for urban centers or to the so-called New World. The structurally banned are part of those who “must go” (Wandermust) that is, who have to migrate due to different modes of constraints that would make the social structure unsustainable. These constraints fit into what many authors define as the aforementioned push factors.

Very often, this Wandermust is (re-)construed as a virtue and (re-)labeled as Wanderlust, that is, the desire or longing to leave and wander across the world as a result of a spirit of adventure, a typical component of the ideals of European Romanticism in the nineteenth century. This need, again from the perspective of van Gennep, may also be seen as part of a rite of passage into the adult phase: the man detaches himself from his family and place of origin and inserts himself into the world, remaining there for a certain amount of time, so as to return to his place of origin or settle elsewhere as an adult – in other words, he must have been, although temporarily, an adventurer, to be reckoned as part of the social system.35

Norway, however, did not take part in the larger circuits of seasonal workers.36 Such a practice of “temporary proletarianization” was related more to economic frontiers than to political ones. It was fundamental for the sustainability of traditional rural areas.

According to the memoirs of the youngest member of the group of migrants that ended up in Brazil, this group constituted itself in 1850 because of the news about California and decided to take part in the gold rush.37 It organized itself into a collective venture, where each member participated through the purchase of shares, as advertised in newspapers such as Lillehammers Tilskuer (figure 3.1).

According to these same memoirs, the decisions were all made in assemblies held at the town hall, and the arrangements were made through common agreement. It was at an assembly that the group decided to send the worker Rudolf Lyng to Hamburg in order to hire a vessel. Instead of that, he bought the Sophie, a frigate from Hamburg, and hired Captain T.V. Lessen. Thus, after a final assembly and the farewell service at the Church of Our Lady, they set sail

35 Van Gennep, Ritos de passagem.
36 Sassen, Migranten, Siedler, Flüchtlinge: Von der Massenauswanderung zur Festung Europa.
37 Cf. Olsen Family Site: www.familiaolsen.com.br Trondheim, April 4th 1927.
from Trondheim on October 25, 1850. The group was made up of 106 shareholders, now turned passengers, on their way to the gold mines of California.

The Atlantic crossing was not easy, with doldrums, thunderstorms, and a period of quarantine. On January 20, 1851, after a three-month-long voyage and a period of quarantine because of yellow fever, they docked at Rio de Janeiro for repairs and new provisions. Because of the state the frigate was in, however, the captain refused to continue, arguing that the vessel was in no condition to be put out to sea. The subsequent sale of the Sophie (not without loss), the theft of equipment, their long stay in Rio de Janeiro, the illnesses that befall them, and the death of some of the shareholders imposed severe difficulties upon the group. In Rio de Janeiro they were re-directed by the Brazilian Imperial Government to the Colônia Dona Francisca and became part of the context regarding Brazilian immigration policies.

When the Portuguese court came to Brazil in 1808, fleeing Napoleon’s troops, the country’s territory opened itself up to “the friendly nations” and to European immigration. The arrival of immigrants followed the model developed by Catherine II of Russia for the Ukraine, similar to that of the agro-military colonies of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, later on adopted by the British Empire in some areas of Australia and New Zealand. The choice of this model was attributed to the empress of Brazil at the time, Leopoldina of Habsburg and Lorraine.

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38 www.norwayheritage.com.
39 See details in Böbel and Thiago, Joinville os pioneiros: documento e história; Ficker, Historia de Joinville.
This model proposed the placement of families of free immigrants, producers of foodstuff, in government lands and in close proximity to towns, and of demobilized military troops in strategic points along Brazilian borderlines. It was within this context that colonies made up of German and Swiss families, and later immigrants of other origins, established themselves in Nova Friburgo and Petrópolis close to Rio de Janeiro, in Santo Amaro near São Paulo, in São Bonifácio and São Pedro de Alcântara near Desterro (now Florianópolis), and in São Leopoldo near Porto Alegre on the southern border. The list of immigrants coming into Rio Grande do Sul between 1824 and 1853, for example, shows that there were very few of the so-called isolated, that is, young single men without any family ties, and that among these there were very few Scandinavians. Later immigrants included demobilized military officers from the Second Schleswig War (1864), a few Swedes, and a few isolated Norwegian men, who were later married to German or German-Brazilian women.

The entry of Norwegians as founders of the Colônia Dona Francisca had its singularities. On one hand, they were part of the Brazilian government's policy of substituting slave labor for free immigrants as well as of the policy of “whitening” the Brazilian population.

It was also the result both of fortuitous circumstances and of dynastic policies and other factors characteristic of the era's international policies. These factors date back to 1843 and to the marriage of prince François of Joinville (son of king Louis Phillippe of France and of queen Marie-Amélie of Bourbon and Naples) to princess Francisca Carolina de Bragança (daughter of Pedro I of Brazil and Leopoldina of Habsburg and Lorraine), sister of the reigning emperor of Brazil, Pedro II. The fourth article of the Marriage Treaty (Law no. 166 of September 29, 1840) established that the bride's dowry should include “assets in the form of lands belonging to the Nation,” specified in its third paragraph as comprising “twenty-five square leagues, which may be chosen in the best locations...in the Province of Santa Catarina,” totaling twelve square kilometers. In the years to follow, these lands were duly chosen and demarcated.

This personal dynastic proximity between the Brazilian imperial family and the French royal family contributed to the Colônia Dona Francisca being contemplated later on with significant structural projects such as the opening of roads (to transport its products and to interconnect it with new colonies) and
the installment of telegraph lines and railroads. The Catholics of Colônia Dona Francisca also received from the princes who owned the land and from the Brazilian imperial family personal and symbolically important forms of support regarding religious and educational issues, which were very highly appreciated by the settlers.

Because of this personal dynastic relation, neighboring lands were later purchased by other members of the nobility, such as the duke d’Aumale, brother to prince François, and prince of Waldenburg-Schönburg of Saxony, who in 1853, according to an advertisement in the *Allgemeine Auswanderungs-Zeitung*, “purchased twelve thousand morgos of land...which he intends to be settled with laborers from his own county.”43 Note that a morgo is equivalent to 2,500 square meters.44

Combining dimensions of macro and micro history, one finds that the impacts of the Liberal Revolution of 1848, which began in France and spread all over Europe, were fundamental to the conception of the project and the establishment of the Colônia Dona Francisca, thus named in homage to the princess, and, later, the urban center named Joinville in honor of the prince.

The 1840’s in Europe were a particularly difficult period, and a group of negative factors stimulated emigration. Among these, one may point out the severe crisis in the industrial sector, with high unemployment rates. Problems involving agricultural production, resulting in the so-called Potato Famine in 1846 and 1847, also motivated mass emigration of families and individuals of lower rural and urban social classes. To these factors may be added the French bourgeoisie’s growing dissatisfaction with their being denied old political gains and with the aristocracy regaining former privileges. This context of generalized dissatisfaction led to violent uprisings, to the outbreak of the Revolution of 1848 and to king Louis Phillipe being deposed. As a consequence, the French royal family was exiled in Clermont (England) with few resources and in precarious living conditions.45

The difficulties faced by France and England had repercussions in Brazil. They prompted the princes to speed up the establishment of the Colônia Dona Francisca, so as to ensure a source of income. In 1848, through their representative, the French military engineer Louis Aubé, a contract was signed with the *Hamburger Colonisations Verein* that belonged to Christian Mathias Schroeder, senator of Hamburg. He led a group made up of wealthy businessmen and

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43 Böbel and Thiago, *Joinville os pioneiros: documento e história*, 128.
44 Ficker, *Historia de Joinville*, 83.
45 Ibid.; Böbel and Thiago, *Joinville os pioneiros: documento e história*. 
importers, who were interested in the settlement project that was being proposed.

Within the framework of nineteenth-century colonialism, this group from Hamburg, who had already developed some business in Rio de Janeiro, agreed to take part in the enterprise. As owners of several ships, they were interested in the profits to be made through the transport of immigrants to the colony, and on the way back, the transport and sale of raw materials in Europe. Moreover, as representatives of the growing European process of industrialization, the colonization companies were responsible for and maintained what was almost a monopoly over the distribution and trade of industrialized products with the developing markets in the New World. In Ferro’s view they were part of a growing phenomenon in which the world as a whole and the colonies in particular were subjected to the dominating economic mechanism.

Still at a macro level, it is worth mentioning that the Liberal Revolution of 1848 spread through the streets of Germany, where there were upheavals and a bloody repression, where liberals were arrested and violently repressed. The victory of conservatives and the surge of a counter-revolution made it unbearable for the liberal elites, forcing them to flee. Some of them migrated to the Colônia Dona Francisca in pursuit of new opportunities and the achievement of their ideals.

On the other hand, in Switzerland, the failure of the rural putting-out model, substituted by industrial weaving and successive agricultural crises, clearly referred to in the letters from peasants who had emigrated, led to the emigration of thousands of peasants. Part of these made up the Swiss contingent that, together with Germans and Norwegians, founded the Colônia Dona Francisca.

One should observe that, contrary to what generally happened to German, Swiss, and other immigrants, who were identified at the Brazilian registers by first name, surname, age, place of origin (city, region, and country), religion, and other (at times random) aspects, the records containing lists of Norwegian immigrants are, curiously, not very detailed. They contained only references to their surnames, first names, age, profession, and country. There are no references to cities, or regions of origin, nor to religion, which would, presumably, be Lutheran. This lack of information makes it difficult to discuss the context

46 Ficker, Historia de Joinville.
47 Ibid.; Böbel and Thiago, Joinville os pioneiros: documento e história.
48 Marc Ferro, História da Colonização (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1996).
49 Schelbert and Rappolt, Alles ist ganz anders hier: Auswandererschicksale in Briefen aus zwei jahrhunderten.
from which they came. Their memoirs and other sources lead us to believe that they came from the Trondheim (Trondhjem, at that time) region, even though the advertisement shown above was published in Lillehammer.

*Sophie set sail in 1850 with 106 shareholders on board.*\(^{50}\) After the difficulties faced, and the loss of the vessel in Rio de Janeiro, part of the group subsequently continued to California. According to the accounts of the representative of the Hermann Liebich Colonizing Society of Rio de Janeiro, seventy-four were sent to the Colônia Dona Francisca. Only sixty-one remained there. The other thirteen returned to Rio de Janeiro on the Norwegian ship *Colon* – the same vessel that had brought the first group of German and Swiss immigrants, co-founders of the Colônia.

According to the original list transcribed in Böbel and Thiago, the immigrants from Norway were, as a rule, young men.\(^{51}\) The sixty-one men were aged 19–45. Two of them (3.3 percent) were aged nineteen, thirty-nine (63.9 percent) were in their twenties, sixteen (26.6 percent) were in their thirties, and four (6.6 percent) were in their forties. This suggests a coherence with the initial purpose: a group of single young men, many of whom were celibate for some time, who had left their places of origin with the intent of finding gold, and, if successful, returning to Norway or establishing themselves in a new country, getting married, starting a family, and ascending socially.

When considering the professional background of the Norwegian group of men, one observes that they form a *workteam* as defined by Galeski to express the complementary nature of intra-familiar work, that is, a team that makes up an organic and highly qualified functional group that brought along with it a strategic cognitive capital, even if ecologically different, to the new colony.\(^{52}\) The professionals chosen in Trondheim included, for example, the medical doctor Wilhelm A.W. Möller, graduated at Heidelberg, aged 24, who for two years acted as the doctor responsible for setting up the first hospital in Dona Francisca.

In the aforementioned list, thirty-eight men defined themselves as agriculturalists, capable of opening up clearings and pathways besides preparing the soil for cultivation. There was also a diversified group of 23 whose professions contributed to the building of houses and other edifications as well as other qualifications such as draining swamps, strategic to improve the living conditions of the settlers of the new colony: two carpenters, one cabinet maker, one

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\(^{50}\) Böbel and Thiago, *Joinville os pioneiros: documento e história*.

\(^{51}\) Ibid., 57–58.

\(^{52}\) Boguslaw Galeski, *Basic Concepts of Rural Sociology* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1975).
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house-covering specialist, and one brick mason; two others were capable of dealing with hydraulic energy and steam engines. In addition, there were three sailors and two merchants, useful for beginning a colony whose only way of communication and transport was through rivers. Other professions in the group complemented that organic system: two bakers, one shoemaker, and the already mentioned Rudolf Lyng, who opened up the first brickyard. As Rodowicz-Oswiecimski points out:

This group, with a few exceptions, was made up by veritable models from the point of view of the economy, order and labor, besides being, in a general sense, some of the more qualified settlers.53

Thus, the group of Norwegians, as opposed to the Germans and Swiss who came with families and many children, could be considered as full producers, according to the profile described by Chayanov54 and Tepicht55 – male adults at a “productive age” able to develop full-time jobs and a variety of alternatives in the local labor market.

The arrival in March 1851 of the Norwegian ship Colon, with 118 German and Swiss passengers, and the remaining sixty-one Norwegians of the German frigate Sophie can be considered the starting point of Colônia Dona Francisca, as can be seen by the following description:

Mr. Schroeder [son of Christian Mathias Schroeder, director of the Hamburger Colonisations Verein and senator of Hamburg] took care of everything. He ordered the purchase of thirteen steers, as well as dried meat, wine, brandy, and fruits in great quantities...a banquet to commemorate the immigrants’ arrival... Mr. Schroeder, Mr. Aubé, and Colonel Vieira presided the table, and thus Germans, Swiss, Norwegians, Frenchmen, and Brazilians met in great cordiality. One toast followed the other, and with applause and the war songs “Schleswig-Holstein” and “Der Brave Soldat,” which Norwegians never do without, the banquet came to its end. ... After the merry “fandango” at Mr. Aubé’s home, they went back to the town. ... With the Norwegians came an excellent MD,

53 Theodor Rodowicz-Oswiecimsky, A Colônia D. Francisca no Sul do Brasil (Florianópolis: Editora da UFSC, 1992); Elly Herkenhoff, Era Uma Vez um Simples Caminho: fragmentos da História de Joinville (Joinville: Fundação Cultural, 1987).
54 Alexander V. Chayanov, The Theory of Peasant Economy (Illinois: American Economic Association, 1966).
55 Jerzy Tepicht, Marxisme et agriculture: le paysan polonais (Paris: Armand Colin, 1973).
Dr. Moeller, very much welcome. Dr. Moeller and his young companion Christendahl from Königsberg became later on our daily companions at the table.\textsuperscript{56}

The above description points out several interesting aspects: the abundance of food offered to the newcomers by the authorities, mostly two items highly valued in Europe both then and now: beef and tropical fruits. Both were rare and expensive ingredients of meals that, along with wine, were usually present only in special rituals. Cachaça, or Brazilian brandy, was certainly unknown to the immigrants. On the other hand, the banquet presided by those authorities replicated the tripartite hierarchy to which the immigrants would, from then on, be subordinated: German (Colonisations Verein), French (the representative of the princes), and Brazilian (the municipality of São Francisco do Sul, to which the Colônia would be juridically and politically attached). In this hierarchy all the immigrants (Germans, Swiss, and Norwegians) were socially classified as members with the same status, with the exception of the Norwegian MD, Dr. Moeller, who, given his superior status compared to most immigrants, would share the everyday life of the Colônia’s director and would be hired by him.\textsuperscript{57} Having studied at Heidelberg, he was quite familiar with the German language and became able to interact with the German and Swiss settlers.

The fandango points to the matter of gender, as in the following observation: “The arrival of young women motivated a general cheerfulness. They were Germans and Swiss. The placid Nordic sailors courted them quite a lot.”\textsuperscript{58}

The three groups received their plots of land, starting from a central clearing, along three different pathways: the Swiss to the west (the Schweitzer Pikade), the Germans to the southwest (the Deutsche Pikade), and the Norwegians to the north (the Nordstrasse).\textsuperscript{59} From a symbolic point of view one may observe that the three ways converged at the place where the Stadtplatz would be built, that is, the square of the future town of Joinville – nowadays the economically most important city of the State of Santa Catarina.

The Norwegians, following their traditional “spirit of association,”\textsuperscript{60} divided themselves in several groups, cultivated their lands of more or less eight morgos.

\textsuperscript{56} Herkenhoff, \textit{Era Uma Vez um Simples Caminho: fragmentos da História de Joinville}, 32.
\textsuperscript{57} Ficker, \textit{Historia de Joinville}, 84.
\textsuperscript{58} Herkenhoff, \textit{Era Uma Vez um Simples Caminho: fragmentos da História de Joinville}, 31.
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid., 11; Ficker, \textit{Historia de Joinville}, 90.
\textsuperscript{60} Furre, \textit{História da Noruega}, 40–44.
per capita, but working collectively. As usual in their homeland, they built their houses and put their incomes in a common safe.\textsuperscript{61}

In his speech, \textit{Falla} of March 2, 1852, only one year after the arrival of the Norwegians, the president of the Province of Santa Catarina mentioned three of their important initiatives: preparing the land for agriculture, opening paths, and constructing small bridges. Furthermore he mentions that

\begin{quote}
There is a brickyard [Lyng], a bakery [Pettersen or Hansen], and the production of vinegar [Ulrichsen]. There is already some production of rice, corn, sugar cane, coffee, orange, and banana trees and they opened more than eight thousand fathoms [\textit{braças}] of paths.\textsuperscript{62}
\end{quote}

The Norwegians did not have any economical capital, for it had been invested and lost in the purchase of the \textit{Sophie} and of all the mining equipment. They did, however, as already mentioned, possess a cognitive capital: the technical know-how that they had brought from Norway that could be strategically adapted to new circumstances allowing them to develop several initiatives and working opportunities. They worked for the Colônia’s directors as free laborers – in a context where slavery was still predominant in Brazil. As such they had access to food and other resources. Also, their abilities as masons or carpenters allowed them to build the first two-storied house of the Colônia, later on bought by their ex-director:

Nine Norwegians bought a plot of seventy-two \textit{morgos along} the Nordstrasse. They then built through collective labor a house with two stories. When a part of them left the Colônia, in March 1852, Mr. Benno von Frankenberg bought that property...and a further 150 \textit{morgos} of land.\textsuperscript{63}

The same author observed that this house was of outstanding quality when compared to the other ones, having window glass in both the kitchen and the sitting room (See figure 3.2).

Using their technical know-how under the supervision of Rudolf Lyng, the Norwegians built the first industry of the small colonial nucleus – a brickyard that provided brick-stones and tiles and gave name to a new street, the Ziegeleistrasse. The brickyard is also mentioned by the newly arrived Captain Frankenberg (Officer of the dissolved Army of Schleswig-Holstein), appointed director by the Colonisations Verein in Hamburg: “...a really nice establishment

\begin{footnotes}
\item[61] Ficker, \textit{Historia de Joinville}, 85.
\item[62] “Falla do Presidente da Província de Santa Catarina: anno 1852,” ed. Relatório de Presidente (Rio de Janeiro: Arquivo Nacional, 1853).
\item[63] \textit{Historia de Joinville}, 104.
\end{footnotes}
is the brickyard of those 11 Norwegians." It is also described by an officer of the customhouse at São Francisco on October 10, 1851, and by Croger. Norwegians were also responsible for building the house of the Prussian army’s captain-engineer Rodowicz-Oswiecimsky, stockholder of the Colonisations Verein and author of detailed illustrations (as the one above) and descriptions of the initial stage of the Colônia that were published in 1853.

Thus, of the 106 Norwegians who boarded the *Sophie*, seventy-four went from Rio de Janeiro to Colônia Dona Francisca, with thirteen of them returning to Rio de Janeiro on board the *Colon*. Of the sixty-one immigrants who thus took part in the founding of the Colônia Dona Francisca, forty-four moved away in the first two years and only nine effectively settled there. The remaining eight died in the first biennium. Such a high rate of mortality (13 percent) was also found among German and Swiss immigrants who arrived on the *Colon*: from a total of 118 who landed, eighteen (15 percent) died in the first years. The causes of such deaths included various accidents, drowning, and an

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64 Böbel and Thiago, *Joinville os pioneiros: documento e história*, 68.
65 Jonas W. Croger, *En Reise til Brasilien og Uruguay, Ophold i disse Lande og en Beskrivelse over dem* (Christiania: Chr. Schibsted, 1856).
66 Rodowicz-Oswiecimsky, *A Colônia D. Francisca no Sul do Brasil*; Herkenhoff, *Era Uma Vez um Simples Caminho: fragmentos da História de Joinville*.
67 *Era Uma Vez um Simples Caminho: fragmentos da História de Joinville*, 37.
epidemic of tropical fever and typhus throughout the Colônia that killed forty-five settlers, including two Norwegians.

These deaths required the definition of a new space for the immigrants: the cemetery. After several improvised places (one of them serving both Lutherans and Catholics), an Evangelical (Lutheran) Cemetery, nowadays called the Immigrant's Cemetery, was established as well as another one for the Catholics.

The following observation concerning the joint efforts of the local medical corps is interesting:

Thanks to the tireless efforts of the medical doctors Dr. Moeller [Norwegian] and Dr. Krebs [German], with the help of Dr. Deyrolle [French], an old resident of São Francisco, the epidemic...was significantly reduced.68

Norwegian immigrants contributed decidedly to the creation of the Colônia's infrastructure, as well as to its religious organization. They built both Joinville's Evangelical and Catholic churches, as pointed out by Rodolpho Olsen, grandson of the Norwegian immigrant Gjerth Olsen. His father, however, worked less because he was already dealing with cattle and horses.69 Norwegians were among the leaders of such initiatives as the creation of the local Masonic lodge and of the newspaper Kolonie Zeitung. It is important to note that they built the first hydraulic mill, the sawmill and the hospital, again making evident the importance of the cognitive capital that they brought with them. Also, some of those who came with the Sophie helped defend settlers' demands, as happened in situations such as in November 1851, when a power dispute erupted between the representatives of the Colonisations Verein and those of the princes. The directorate of the Colônia called for a meeting that included Norwegian settlers and named eleven elected representatives of the people: Captain Rodowicz-Oswiecimsky; Lieutenant Otto Niemeyer; Dr. Moeller, MD (Norwegian); Lieutenant M. Meyer; Dr. Krebs, MD; Hasselmann; Dr. Jur. Haltenhoff; B. Poschaan; veterinary Goerresen (Norwegian); Meyer; and Junghans.70

It was a rather representative constituency: out of eleven members, who included settlers of the three ethnic groups, there were both common settlers and outstanding personalities. It also showed the high degree of integration of the remaining Norwegians, now a minority of only nine individuals, of whom

68 Ficker, Historia de Joinville, 106.
69 Böbel and Thiago, Joinville os pioneiros: documento e história, 52.
70 Ficker, Historia de Joinville, 114.
two were elected. In the following year new counselors were chosen, one of them the above mentioned Goerresen, and half a year later the Norwegian carpenter Kjelstrup was also appointed.

Thus, some of the Norwegians who came with the Sophie and their descendants stood out because of their quick integration in the larger community and their proficiency in both German and Brazilian-Portuguese, allowing them to fulfill the role of cultural broker relative to other colonies, trading companies, and local as well as national political structures. Their proficiency in German was possibly associated with a previous learning process in Norway. More important, however, was the fact that they married daughters of German and Swiss settlers, thus integrating them into wider social networks.

The foundation of the afore mentioned local German-language newspaper Kolonie Zeitung in 1852, initially handwritten and later on printed, provided the Colônia with a new means of communication, a written common denominator for the community and a factor in integration. The participation of Norwegians was important whether as subscribers or more actively as advertisers, collaborators or newscasters...

In the Kolonie Zeitung there were frequent ads in which Ulrich Ulrichsen, for example, as trader and owner of small industries, divulged the high quality and the reasonable prices of his products: “Ächter Weinessig, pro Flasche 240 Reis, zu haben bei Ulrich Ulrichsen.” In another ad he announces that he has for sale tendozen cavacos, or Dachlatten (splitters of wood for roofs). All his products were made using the labor-force of free wage earners. He also announced in the Kolonie Zeitung of July 9, 1864, the arrival of “high quality imported grains, better than the ones here produced.” Ulrichsen was a constant protagonist in the community, and in 1868 he became judge of peace and organizer of the process that chose local electors (called homens bons, or “good men” in nineteenth-century Brazil).

There are also ads that express the intense strategic process of ecological adaptation and knowledge concerning potential natural tropical resources, such as the one in Kolonie Zeitung of 1862, no. 12, about a decade after the arrival in Brazil:

A lot of land, especially good for the cultivation of rice and sugar cane, at the margin of the Biguasu River, in front of Beraverava, with about 140 braças of front and 1500 braças of back, with a lot of water for mills; soil adequate for the installation of a brickyard, a lot of hardwood, mostly canela and peroba and an excellent place for a future quay. It will be a cheap sale. More details available from Ulrich Ulrichsen.

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71 Eric Wolf, Sociedades camponesas (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Zahar, 1970).
Goerresen is another example of ecological adaptation and the integration of immigrants in international circuits as consumers of European raw materials and manufactured goods. Also, although in smaller scale, he began producing raw materials for export, such as hardwood and *erva mate* tea, to Argentina, Uruguay, and even Europe. He became quite rich and expanded his political and economic relations beyond the limits of the Colônia, setting up an important wholesale export company next to the port of São Francisco – the original building is still there.

Besides Ulrichsen and Goerresen, others participated actively in the community’s life, such as Olsen, who advertised for the well-remunerated hiring of a *Steinsprenger* (a specialist in exploding rocks). These ads are interesting because they point to the immigrants’ change in social status: first they were hired to do manual work such as building houses, opening paths, and preparing the soil, and after only a decade they became themselves employers both of specialized workers, mostly poor German and Swiss immigrants, and of Brazilian peasants.

The *Kolonie Zeitung* also shows the participation of Norwegians in local and national public activities, such as noticed in the November 21, 1863, edition which mentions Markus Goerresen as donator of a significant sum of money for the building of the Lutheran church. The November 5, 1864, edition mentions his nomination as a jury member by the national juridical system. Ulrichsen also had important political roles such as public notary and deputy sheriff at Dona Francisca.72

Several Norwegians who played important roles in the Colônia later on invested resources in other places: Olsen bought land from the duke d’Aumale and founded the present-day Colônia Olsen; Peter Gustav Pettersen, after having created the first bakery on the Nordstrasse, moved on to Curitiba, the capital of Paraná Province, where he established a renowned bakery, while the shoemaker Poul Wetten moved to Desterro, the capital of Santa Catarina Province.73

Finally, one can observe that as a group of qualified professionals, the Norwegians played a strategically important role in Colônia Dona Francisca, both at its beginning and later on, as a well-integrated minority. Rather successfully, they passed from a condition of adventurers to settlers, some of whose descendants are still living in Joinville. Thus, the Norwegian migrants contributed significantly to the development of Joinville during its initial

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72 Ficker, *Historia de Joinville*; Böbel and Thiago, *Joinville os pioneiros: documento e história*.

73 Juliana Cristina Reinhardt, *A Padaria América e o pão das gerações Curitibanas* (Curitiba: Editora do Autor, 2010).
stages. Nowadays, it has more than 500 thousand inhabitants but many of them do not even know that Norwegians immigrants ever existed. For others they were part only of the multicultural myth of origin of Joinville or became part of the German-Brazilian population, such as other minor groups of immigrants. Even the few descendants who know about those pioneers know in fact very little about them.