

Nature and economic progress on the Northwest region of São Paulo (1910-1920)

Natureza e progresso econômico no Noroeste Paulista (1910-1920)



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Abstract: The history of the colonization of great part of Sao Paulo's countryside is deeply related to the expansion of coffee bean production which began in the midnineteenth century. The bounden desire to reach fertile soil boosted millions of workers towards these new agricultural borders, which were spreading through contiguous movements toward the most hidden regions of this territory, provoking the arising of cities, many of them that grew along the Brazilian train complex that was also expanding, impelled by public and private investments interested in the capital flow generated by this intense coffee bean production. The Northwest region of Sao Paulo, inserted in this macroeconomic process became, in 1920's, one of the richest coffee bean production zones of Sao Paulo and its condition of rising pioneer fringe allows, in a particular way, the study of men and nature's interaction in the past, under the critical look of environmental history.

Keywords: Pioneer Northwest; coffee bean production; environmental history.

Resumo: A história da colonização de grande parte do interior paulista está intimamente relacionada ao processo de expansão da cafeicultura, iniciada em meados do século XIX. O desejo imperioso de alcançar solos férteis impulsionou milhares de trabalhadores em direção às novas fronteiras agrícolas, que se alargavam em movimentos contíguos, rumo às regiões mais recônditas do território, fazendo surgir cidades, muitas das quais crescendo ao lado da malha ferroviária que se ampliava impulsionada pelos investimentos públicos e privados interessados nos fluxos de capitais oriundos dessa intensa atividade cafeeira. A região Noroeste, inserida neste processo macroeconômico, tornou-se, na década de 1920, uma das mais ricas zonas produtoras de café do estado de São Paulo, e sua condição de franja pioneira em ascensão permite, de modo especial, o estudo das interações entre o homem e a natureza no passado, sob o olhar crítico da história ambiental.

Palavras-chave: Noroeste pioneiro; produção cafeeira; história ambiental.

I

The writer Euclides da Cunha, knowledgeable of the most far off national borders, caught sight of Northwestern São Paulo. In his essay *Ao longo de uma estrada (Along a road)*, written in 1901, he

complained of the lack of investment in highways and railroads to help reduce the isolation of São Paulo hinterland areas. The path in question, called *Taboado Road*, which inspired the article, would link Jaboticabal, at that time an entryway to Northwestern São Paulo, to Taboado Port on the banks of the Paraná River. This would open an important access route after the necessary construction of "an 880-meter bridge over the great river, the only expensive work of art needed" (Cunha 1923, p. 253, freely translated by the author) into the state of Mato Grosso. This would allow the displacement of trail-blazing manpower to reach the fertile lands found in those parts, which had as a reference point the city of *Cuyabá*. The author of *Os Sertões (Rebellion in the Backlands)* also lamented in his text that the Northwest region of the state was still bound in isolation. Without a large highway in good conditions to facilitate the transportation of agricultural production, there was instead "a ghastly stretch of road, winding and narrow, invaded by woodlands, rolling up steep slopes, sinking into ravines, threading, forming a tunnel covered by reeds, or dissolving into extensive muddy bogs - a poorly levelled trail, dozens of leagues long". (CUNHA, 1923, pg. 245, freely translated by the author). The author recognized this as a limiting factor to economic development of that vast and still largely unexplored territory. However, in two footnotes inserted later into the text, Euclides da Cunha revealed an unmistakable enthusiasm for the expansion of the national railroad system that occurred forcefully at the turn of the nineteenth century. According to the author, in the specific case of Northwestern São Paulo, this promised to boost its economic life, weakening the arguments that plagued him during his travels through the region.¹

Nevertheless, the period between the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth century was a time of great growth for the Brazilian railroad network, particularly in the states of São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Minas Gerais. Government and private investments contributed to this significant increase, mostly driven by the coffee economy that, despite constant fluctuations, still remained the main national crop. This expansion can be observed when analyzing the evolution of this transportation infrastructure growth process by figures. In 1889, the national railroad network had 9,583 km of rails; it jumped to 14,915 in 1899 and reached 29,341 in 1922.²

Regarding the state of São Paulo, the *Araraquara Railroad*, commonly known as *Araraquarense*, was the last of the four major railroads that marked the clearing of its until then unfamiliar *sertão (backlands)*. It was created in 1896; therefore, more recently than the *Cia. Paulista*, from 1868; *Cia. Sorocabana*, from 1872; and *Cia. Mogiana*, founded in 1878. Both played a key role in the colonization and opening of new areas for agricultural occupation in the State, which Odilon Nogueira de Matos defined in an accurate and explanatory way as *penetration roads* (1990). Following the progress of each of these long railroads that pushed their way towards the most remote regions,

under the best sponsorships of pioneers who were eager for the arrival of locomotives, allows us to understand the very process of transformation and changes in economic and population flows that followed the destructive, dizzying pace at which the new lands were occupied, which indelibly ended up altering the state's landscape.³

These various frontier areas, which received national and foreign workers in search of cheap and fertile land, were defined by geographer Pierre Monbeig (1984) as *pioneer fringes*. New rapidly occupied territories which, due to intense agricultural activity initiated primarily due to coffee groves between 1880 and 1940, eventually led the São Paulo hinterlands to a prominent position in the state and the national economy. These pioneer fringes experienced different trajectories and stages of occupation; however, they shared a great power to attract investments, labor, and capital - a readily apparent situation when looking at how fast forest areas were transformed, which until the mid-nineteenth century had remained marginal economic activities vigorous cities and agricultural regions. Speed in all sorts of changes, encouraged by the influx of people in search of work, surrounded by complex political, economic, and social relations, created a situation of extreme agitation in which "everything is commotion, everything is confusion, everything is dynamic". (MONBEIG, 1984, p. 23, freely translated by the author).

In this ever-changing reality, outlining and naming a space of analysis was no easy task, given that urban centers in these São Paulo pioneer regions appeared and disappeared as answers to the wishes of the local elite and to the numerous crises and economic changes that built and dismantled fortunes, almost simultaneously. Hence, we are talking about Northwestern São Paulo in general, which includes not only a specific geographic area - the state's western highlands located between the Lower Tietê and Turvo/Grande river basins - as well as a politically demarcated area with counties established and recognized by the State, which started in the city of Araraquara opening towards the state of Mato Grosso, and passing through Jaboticabal and São José do Rio Preto, one of the oldest centers of reference and settlements in that region of São Paulo.⁴

With this said, the Northwest region became a pioneer expansion zone during the 1910s and 1920s, when it began to attract thousands of workers in search of untouched land nestled into not such a rugged landscape. This land was very favorable to the kind of extensive agriculture commonly practiced, which Antonio Tavares de Almeida evaluated as "nature without importance. It neither surprises nor draws exclamations. It makes the traveler weary and disappoints the artist". (ALMEIDA, 1943, p. 13, freely translated by the author).⁵ There was constant demand for new lands due to the predominant planting method on which the entire coffee production relied on, based on burning and

using the land as much as possible until its exhaustion, when new lands were then incorporated into the system. This form of production did away with much of the natural vegetation areas in São Paulo, usually divided into regions of denser woodlands, many of which are commonly included in the Atlantic Forest Biome, as well as Fields, Capoeiras (areas of secondary growth) and key patches of Cerrado (savannah).

The soils of the northwestern region were not as fertile as the venerated *purple soil*, which made the city of Ribeirão Preto undisputedly famous in the late nineteenth century. However, even with *sandier* composition, the lands that were found to effectively meet the coffee farmers' needs, who continued to rely on fire as a way to ensure good yields in their plantations. It was the creation of the Araraquara Railroad and the start of its activities in the early twentieth century that established the perfect conditions for the Northwest to break into the disputed coffee market, enabling competitive transportation of large harvests to the final destination for the foreign market: the city of Santos. What happened then was that the cities of Araraquara and São Jose do Rio Preto were transformed into capitals of a new pioneer fringe that was opening, a frontier that, in the 1930s, started its apparently uninterrupted march towards two fronts. The first went towards the Paraná River and Mato Grosso; the second headed to Southwest São Paulo, until it stopped in Northern Paraná. (MONBEIG, 1984).

In the process of forming and consolidating Northwestern São Paulo as an occupied fringe, the city of São José do Rio Preto benefited from an unexpected event that permanently influenced its history. After reaching the city in 1912, supported by its small population, the company responsible for managing the newly installed railroad faced serious financial and administrative problems that hindered the continuity of its projects and investments. The result was that Rio Preto inadvertently became the end of the rails, the last station of the *Araraquara Railroad*. This condition lasted until 1933, when this railroad line, now owned by the state government, continued its expansion towards the banks of the Paraná River, a goal that was reached in 1952. Hence, São José do Rio Preto, raised to the status of municipality in 1894, became the center of reference as a wide expansion area, right at the height of its pioneer movement, which brought huge investments, attracting workers pursuing their own dreams of wealth. Thus, if not so long ago those parts had seemed cut off from everything and everyone, now the reality had changed, renewing the hopes of those seeking work along paths made possible by this complex and challenging tributary order of coffee plantations.

The condition of *hinterland port*, an expression commonly used to refer to São Jose do Rio Preto in the 1910s and 1920s, led to the arrival of all kinds of investments, which radically changed the region. A strong population wave began to settle in the city, filling a significant demand for workers due to the ongoing formation of new farms producing mainly coffee, followed primarily by cattle

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ranching. The urban area itself also began to change as a result of modernization initiatives mainly brought about by the local elite. Through newspapers and magazines that began to circulate in the city, more steadily as of the 1920s, these groups exposed their dreams of building a modern city, mimicking signs of progress imported from capital cities - notably Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, such as cinemas, public walkways, squares, streets with sidewalks, hotels and theaters; symbols of modernity that was idealized and longed for. (CAMPOS, 2009).



Image 1: Illustrative representation of the Araraquara Railroad layout, highlighting its main railroad stations. At the top of the image, to the right, the location of the nationwide railroad is shown. Source: I CENTENÁRIO..., 1954, p. 40.

Amid the desires to build a promising city that could dialog with places considered more *civilized*, what emerged was a discourse that pitted nature against society. In other words, nature

appears in this context of pioneer agricultural expansion into inland São Paulo as a force that must be overcome, a barrier to be crossed over in the name of progress and economic growth. This concept is imbued with the idea of a society that must fight against nature, sparing no efforts to transform it. From there, new agricultural areas would be opened and animal and plant species of commercial value would be introduced, with specifically economic objectives. This ideal has been predominant in relations between man and the natural world in contemporary times and can be observed in various parts of Brazil and the world.⁶

In addition to this conflicted interaction with nature, starting in the mid-nineteenth century there was an exponential increase in human power to modify biomes and their ecosystems, often with adverse consequences for both. Human action stems from our condition as a species that thinks, conceives, and transforms the surrounding environment, which has always occurred throughout our history, but in much smaller proportions when compared to the impacts of the Industrial Age. According to J. R. McNeill (2000), the power of societies to intervene in the natural world gained strength in the twentieth century, making the environmental impacts - such as erosion and soil contamination, water and air pollution, extinction of animal and plant species, among other possible examples - very serious problems. Impacts that were no longer restricted to a local and regional area, but which commonly reached, at different times, a transnational scale.⁷

II

This unmistakable desire to transform the natural world is one of the most striking features of such societies that formed in pioneer areas. In the specific case of Northwest São Paulo, *albums and almanacs* published in this regional area, deeply marked by lifestyles linked to the rural world where the struggle against nature - exemplified by cutting and burning, an observable reality in everyday life, powerfully revealed how remarkable was the desire to overcome the natural world, which swayed the decisions and desires of mankind of that time. Definitely, nature conservation and progress were two ideas that did not adapt in the context of strong economic expansion.

These albums and almanacs have their origins back in the eighteenth century. They brought a variety of information, in the form of miscellany, and provided readers with commercial recommendations, lunar calendars, anecdotes, historical data, and technical improvements in typographic art and reproduction of images, many of which were in color. The *Nouveau Dictionnaire Portugais-Français*, published in 1887 by J. I. Ratchet in Paris, defines the term *Almanach* as a catalog of general interest information related to public, civil, military affairs, etc. In this sense, the varied

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subject matter distinguished these publications from daily newspapers which, in addition to having a different format, were committed to issues linked to current events not found in almanacs, which made them closer to magazines than newspapers. However, although they sparked the curiosity of the reading audience and the interest of publishers, they were losing their importance throughout the nineteenth century, failing to renew their language amid the changes of the period, which significantly altered available literary models and the ways people related to the act of reading. (CHARTIER, 1998; FERREIRA, 2002).

However, the stylistic models provided by almanacs and albums stayed alive in the first half of the twentieth century. Although their language was considered *outdated*, perfectly suited to apologetic purposes of political groups that arose in inland São Paulo and wanted to express their victories and achievements. Campinas, Ribeirão Preto, Piracicaba, Rio Claro, São Carlos, Araraquara, and São Jose do Rio Preto - are all cities that had initiatives for launching this type of publication extolling progress and local and regional economic advancement; thus, offering important symbolic support to elites who sought to establish themselves in the political scenario, especially in the cities created throughout pioneer occupation zones.⁸

The *Album de Rio Preto*, published in 1919, can be taken as an example of these types of editorial action. Organized by the dentist Raul Silva, a multi-subject writer with an intense role in the city's cultural and social life at the time, the work is considered by local historians and memoirists as the first publication to offer accurate information about the city's history.⁹ It was organized according to the prevailing standards for almanacs and albums, and its essential content can be summarized as follows: first, a historical account with official content, starting with the origins of the town until its political emancipation, with a manner of speech exalting the supposed leading pioneer families. Then, a series of photographic reproductions, accompanied by brief explanatory texts that sought to show how the city progressed in its most important aspects. Then we see images of the most luxurious houses, belonging to the city's affluent population; the city's central square; the telephone company (with the list of users - anonymity was what no one wanted), as well as various types of commercial activities and services in the city (barbers, blacksmiths, tailors, surveyors, jewelers, photographers, butchers, shoe stores, restaurants, deposits of various kinds of products, bars and bakeries, pharmacies, taverns, day care centers and nursing homes, notaries and registrars, among others). Those with financial means filled entire pages with specific ads, many of which showed the owners themselves, often accompanied by their employees, usually proud to pose in front of their reputable establishments.¹⁰ Countless signs

of bourgeois modernity, more readily available in capital cities, were gradually made available in that backland microcosm to delight and be enjoyed by its inhabitants.

With regard to the evidence offered by the *Album de Rio Preto* for the study of environmental history, there is then a pleasant surprise: photos and texts showing the situation of agricultural activities not only in São José do Rio Preto, but also in the cities that made up its micro-region.¹¹ One can see reproductions of farms; livestock activities; plantations; machinery for rice processing; coffee machinery and warehouses; saddlery. One can also see the types of animals that were present in the urban setting; carts and bullock carts, men on horseback; dogs - a striking presence in the photographs; all sharing city space, in that society proved to be intact and proud in its pioneering condition. They represented broad aspects of the city space that was built precisely on this interaction between man and environment, made possible by coffee culture advances and which gradually went beyond the limits of the coffee crop to other agricultural and commercial activities.



Image 2: According to the published ad, the parlor of Francisco Perroni, aside from barbershop services, offered "a large and widely varied assortment of perfumes from the most famous global brands". In front of the owners and customers, a dog, an animal that was already a part of the daily life in pioneer cities. Source: SILVA, 2010, p. 115.



Image 3: Workers at Casa Magaldi, a *wet and dry goods* establishment that sold everything from perfumes to barbed wire, also accompanied by a dog, who was apparently not bothered by the formal posture required for the official photographic moment. On the other hand, could the photographers have been dialogging, perhaps inadvertently, with the long-standing tradition in modern western painting, and viewing dogs as an important symbol of civility? Source: SILVA, 2010, p. 112.

An *ethos* all its own, existing over the course of this process of land clearing, based on the overwhelming quest for economic progress, which did not consider the possible costs of this action for the natural world, is revealed at various times in the *Album de Rio Preto*. First, in the view of an exuberant nature waiting passively for the human work required to reveal its splendid idle wealth. Thus, São José do Rio Preto is described as a "Rich municipality with highly fertile land, admirable native pastures, bordered by three large navigable rivers, dotted with majestic waterfalls of prodigious force". (LINS, 2010, p. 26, freely translated by the author). At another point in the Album, "the undisputed and unrivaled fertility of the land of Rio Preto" is highlighted. (SILVA, 2010, p. 95, freely translated by the author). These statements are consistent with the affirmative and publicity nature of the publication; however, which clearly show this ideal of progress that should be built from the available natural resources. In this sense, human labor represented a key component of this whole argument, given that untouched or preserved nature would have no use for those companies established amid the São Paulo backlands. The ideal of progress required immediate human action over the natural world, carried out through agriculture, cattle ranching, and all of the unmistakable marks of a forming society. It is from this utilitarian perspective that the *Album's* organizer states:

In perhaps a near future, when the easy means of transportation are broadly known by our fertile, rich, and enormous municipality are widely known, a source of incomparable value will contribute effectively to the progress of Rio Preto, driving its already notable industry, providing it with prodigious amounts of white coal that will give it the strength required to move its mechanisms.

Because the municipality is generously gifted by Nature with fabulous resources, with its majestic and powerful waterfalls, the industry will find incomparable elements that will further progress, making Rio Preto into a prominent industrial center in our State.

Various products will come from our rich soil, which machines will need to transform into fabric: everything produces in Rio Preto, and everything in abundance! Despite its starting phase, the cotton culture is already considerable in relation to the State's total production.

In the old and historic Colony of Itapura, left to the ravages of time, still showing its well-aligned and tree-lined streets, rises the majestic, imposing Salto do Itapura, perhaps the most beautiful and one of the largest of the State, to challenge the weather and the greed of men.

[...] All this vegetative force, which lies there abandoned, will one day be turned into beautiful cornfields under the radiant sunshine through the intelligent work of the civilized man. (SILVA, 2010, p. 28, freely translated by the author).

That brief fragment also shows another striking example of the beliefs that formed the ideal of progress then present among companies born in the interior, influenced by a vision of authors such as Greg Garrard (2006) called *cornucopian*, which sees nature as an inexhaustible source, always available to be transformed into capital by hard and constant work. The result of this intervention in the natural world would be the wealth and progress sought by the people who eagerly dominated the backlands and who showed confidence in the future, from the outside perspective, through the *Album de Rio Preto*. By revealing the city at the time of its formation, with its already paved streets, brick buildings, shops, and rich farms, presented in a time of splendor, the publication established itself as the ultimate proof of victory in that Northwest which, up until the mid-nineteenth century, appeared on maps as *unknown land* - a reality that the pioneers wanted to leave permanently behind.



Image 4: The *Progress* house, also a convenience store, located in Cedral, in the municipality of Rio Preto. The presence of saddled animals in front of the establishment reveals the principal means of transportation in that area, despite the progress heralded by the Album. Source: SILVA, 2010, p. 146.

This attitude of populations that headed to Northwest São Paulo in relation to the natural world, during the intense process of economic development driven by the coffee culture, can only be glimpsed through its traces - which are often tenuous and difficult to understand. Environmental historians, when approaching these fragments, as Donald Hughes (2006) indicates, endeavor to understand the different levels of interaction between societies and nature in the past. In this sense, the *almanacs* and *albums* published in various São Paulo cities in the early twentieth century as a way to spread a message of belief regarding progress and the future, can today reveal to researchers not only these different forms of interaction, but also the origins of a number of limits imposed by an excessive and uncontrolled exploitation of the environment, which is still identifiable in the landscape today. These are problems that affect current generations, left by those distant pioneers now sleeping deeply, unaware of the uses we make of their memory, while we live in conflict with the consequences of their ecological choices.

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Notes

¹ In the work *Euclides da Cunha: uma odisséia nos trópicos (a tropical odyssey)* (2009), Frederic Amory situates the essay *Ao longo de uma estrada* with the same production period of two other texts, published in the newspaper *O Estado de São Paulo*, all addressing issues related to the problems with settlement and exploration of the most remote areas of Brazil. In 1907, that essay was inserted into the book *Contrastes e Confrontos (Contrasts and Clashes)*. However, a six-year gap separated the first publication in the daily press from the second in book-form; enough time for the author to add the following note in the latter publication: "Fortunately, today this article is false. We have changed a lot in five years. The Northwestern Railroad, launched vigorously towards Mato Grosso, will very soon revolutionize the entire economic and political situation in South America. It will extinguish the platinum Bosphorus... Furthermore, other lines of penetration point to a firmer direction of our progress." CUNHA, Euclides da. **Contrastes e Confrontos**. Porto: Livraria Chardron, 1923, pg. 250.

² The 1950s was the culmination of this period of growth, with a total length of railroad lines reaching 37,019 km in 1952. This information may be accessed in: **I CENTENÁRIO DAS FERROVIAS BRASILEIRAS**, Rio de Janeiro: IBGE, 1954.

³ The *Cia Paulista de Estradas de Ferro de Jundiá a Campinas* reached Campinas in 1872, marking a first step of railroad expansion toward the state's hinterlands. *Cia. Sorocabana*, heading in another direction, arrived at Sorocaba in 1875, reaching Botucatu in 1889. On the other hand, *Cia. Mogiana*, which headed toward the Triângulo Mineiro region (Minas Gerais State), crossed through Casa Branca in 1883, reaching Ribeirão Preto in 1887, when its rich and coveted *purple* soils made the region one of the most important coffee regions in São Paulo. As for *Araraquarense*, its first working line departed from the city of Araraquara to Taquaritinga in 1901, arriving in São José do Rio Preto in 1912. Aside from these known companies, there was a varied network of stretches controlled by smaller companies, many of which were established with capital from the farmers themselves. These helped to consolidate an intricate transportation system, greatly facilitating trade in products and services and the movement of people, a fact that significantly changed the economic reality of regions served by this extensive railroad map. On the formation of the São Paulo railroad network, see: MATOS, Odilon Nogueira da. **Café e Ferrovias - a evolução ferroviária de São Paulo e o desenvolvimento da cultura cafeeira**, Campinas: Ed. Pontes, 1990; VIEIRA, Flávio. Os caminhos Ferroviários Brasileiros. In: **I CENTENÁRIO DAS FERROVIAS BRASILEIRAS**. Rio de Janeiro: IBGE, 1954, p. 87-176; TELLES, Pedro Carlos da Silva. **História da Engenharia Ferroviária**. Rio de Janeiro: Notícia e Cia. , 2011.

⁴ To demonstrate how this spatial demarcation is arbitrary and susceptible to various possible readings, the example offered by Sergio Milliet warrants emphasis, in *Roteiro do Café* (1946), originally published in 1938. The author of this highly influential work for studies of the coffee culture in São Paulo, directs his narrative according to the divisions offered by existing railroad companies at that time. Thus, he incorporates into *Araraquarense* all tributary cities along the main stretches, along with side branches of the Araraquara Railroad. It is certainly a quite coherent, though limited way to approach the region's history, due to already demonstrated importance of railroads for São Paulo's agricultural and urban development. It would not be a surprise if the echoes of this approach are still audible in this work.

⁵ Antonio Tavares Almeida, author of *Oeste Paulista* (1943), was one of the first to seek a sociological reflection that could help understand the formation processes of newly settled populations in those inland São Paulo cities. Apart from this intellectual curiosity - which he shared with writer Pedro Nava during his travels through the region practicing medicine after a particularly tumultuous period of his life, he worked in politics, serving as mayor of Monte Aprazível between 1929 and 1930. On relations between Pedro Nava and Antonio Tavares de Almeida at the end of the 1920s, see: NAVA, Pedro. **O Círio Perfeito**. Rio de Janeiro: Ed. Nova Fronteira, 1983.

⁶ Reflections on the negative consequences arising from relations between man and the natural world, when influenced by notions of progress and economic development, especially as of the nineteenth century, can be found in: HORNBERG, Alf; McNEILL, J. R.; MARTINEZ-ALIER, Joan. **Rethinking Environmental History: world-system history and global environmental change**. Lanham, MD: Altamira Press, 2007; FRANCO, José Luiz de Andrade et al. **História Ambiental - fronteiras, recursos naturais e conservação da natureza**. Rio de Janeiro: Garamond, 2012.

⁷ The nuclear disaster at the Chernobyl plant in 1986 is perhaps the most significant example of this internationalization of environmental problems. About this accident, access: McNEILL, J. R. **Something new under the sun**. An environmental history of the twentieth-Century World. New York/London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2000.

⁸ The cities of Campinas, Rio Claro and the state capital itself had almanacs organized by José Maria Lisboa from Portugal, one of the most active entrepreneurs of his kind, since 1870. These were the *Almanak de Campinas*, dated 1871, the *Almanak de S. João do Rio Claro*, from 1873, and the *Almanach Litterario de São Paulo* between 1876 and 1885. In the twentieth century, we can mention other initiatives from different publishers, such as the *Almanak de Piracicaba*, 1900; the *Almanach de Ribeirão Preto*, 1913; the *Almanach de São Carlos*, 1915; the *Album de Araraquara*, 1915; and the *Album de Rio Preto*, dated 1919. This variety of projects demonstrates how the model remained present in the interior of São Paulo as a form of apologetic advertisement of inland societies.

⁹ The report published in the *Album* about the origins of the village was written by Fernando Oiticica da Rocha Lins, a lawyer graduated from then Faculdade de Direito de São Paulo, according to information collected by ARANTES, Lele. **Dicionário Rio-Pretense**. São José do Rio Preto: Casa do Livro, 2001. Other relevant information on the history of the city of São José do Rio Preto, access: VALLE, Dinorath. **Jornais de Rio Preto**. São José do Rio Preto: Ed. Gráfica A Notícia: 1994; BRANDI, Agostinho. **São José do Rio Preto - 1852-1894**. São José do Rio Preto: Ed. Casa do Livro, 2002; CAMPOS, Raquel Discini de. **A princesa do “Sertão” na modernidade republicana – urbanidade e educação na Rio Preto dos anos 1920**. São Paulo: Annablume, 2004.

¹⁰ We cannot forget that the *Album* was also an economic undertaking financed almost exclusively by money from ads published on its pages.

¹¹ In the case of the *Album de Rio Preto* from 1919, these other cities are presented, respecting the spelling used at that time: *Mirasol*, *Engenheiro Schimidt*, *Cedral*, *Ribeirão Claro*, *Tres Corregos*, *Ignácio Uchôa* and *Ibirá*. For a broader overview of the area of São José do Rio Preto in the 1920s and 1930s, see: MAHL, Marcelo Lapuente. **Ecologias em Terra Paulista (1894-1950) – as relações entre o homem e o meio ambiente durante a expansão agrícola do estado de São Paulo**. 2007. Thesis (Doctorate in History) – Universidade Estadual Paulista “Julio de Mesquita Filho”, Assis, 2007.

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