

EUROPEAN UTOPIANS IN AMERICA: THE DIARY OF KALIKST WOLSKI

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The United States of the 19th century took in an extensive European migration. However, independently of the influx of thousands of immigrants, the country constituted a place of interesting social settlement experiments undertaken by organized religious or political groups. Such groups wanted to put into practice their dreams and conceptions concerning happiness and an ideal society. They wanted to do it within the democracy of the New World. That is why, in the first half of the 19th century, there came into being settlements whose organization followed Owen's and Fourier's ideas. Many of these settlements have already found their historians, who, basing themselves on diaries and archives, have examined the operating principles and the development of utopian groups in the United States. Yet, there was a settlement still virtually unknown to them. It was organized in 1855, in Texas, by a group of French and Belgian followers of Fourier. The story of this group, which for a short time lived in a settlement called Reunion, has been told by a Polish participant — Kalikst Wolski.

In the first half of the 19th century, the development of the capitalist economy in France and the United States, as well as the class struggle and the pauperization of workers connected with this development, were accompanied by the spread of philosophical and social views concerning the organization and regulation of international and interpersonal relations. Social relations were discussed which would lead to the happiness of an individual within contemporary society; the happiness which could provide the possibility of fulfilling a person's desires, of developing one's innate capacities through activities within a community.

One of the conceptions which was to be put into practice in France and America, could be traced back to Fourier's works (1772-1832). In agreement with Fourier's assumption, the social system was to be based on agricultural and industrial communities called phalanxes. Common habitation, common work, communal education of the children, common ownership of properly distributed goods were meant to be fused with the constant development of the individual; the communities were to consist of people of various professions and talents.

It was Victor Considérant (1803-1893), Fourier's student, who tried to transform his teacher's theories into reality, and who popularized them for many years. Considérant was an extremely interesting personality. For several years he edited the journals *Phalanga* and *La Reforme Industrielle*, in which he urged his readers to create communities of 1,100 members to cultivate the soil and produce goods together. After being elected a member of Parliament on April 14, 1849, subsequent to the events of June 1848, he presented a project for organizing a phalanstery near Paris. This was to help French, or rather Parisian, workers develop their personalities and lead a suitable and prosperous life. Since he was unable to secure adequate financial backing to make the attempt in France – and because he opposed Napoleon III – Considérant decided to carry out his experiment in the United States and to participate in it directly. In the United States, on the fringes of settlement and, sometimes, within it, numerous attempts at creating religious and agricultural communities were reported to have been successful.

From the press and from private correspondence, Considérant knew of the activities of George Ripley and his wife. In the early forties, the Ripleys created the Brook Farm Institute of Agriculture and Education, which was to bring transcendental ideals to everyday New England life¹. The settlement at Brook Farm was situated nine miles from Boston, in West Roxbury. The property covered an area of 192 acres. Founded by 15 persons, at the end of its activity the venture counted about 200 people. Many had had no previous experience in agriculture and this, among other things, led to the failure of the experiment after a fire.

The farm had its own weekly *Harbinger* (1845-47). The Brook Farm experiment showed Considérant the possibilities and the advantages of creating an agricultural and intellectual community. Considérant also knew of similar successful experiments undertaken elsewhere in America by Albert Brisbane (1809-1890), who was a strong supporter of Fourier's ideas. In 1839 Brisbane started a series of communities in the United States organizing them on the lines suggested by Fourier. In 1840 he published his master's works in English. He also cooperated with the editor of the *New York Tribune* and, consequently, was able to publish in that paper. What is more, Horace Greeley supported the publication of periodicals such as *Future* and *Phalanx* devoted to the spread of Fourierism. In the '40s, North American Phalanx, founded by Brisbane, began to operate successfully near Red Bank in New Jersey. Its products were sold in New York at considerable profit.

Conscious of the successful activities of Fourier's communities in North America, Considérant decided to put into practice his own concepts and ideals. In 1852 he went to the United States to study the phalanstery in New Jersey and to find a proper place for a group of French and Belgian

¹ *Autobiography of Brook Farm*, Henry W. Sams, ed., Englewood Cliffs 1958; John H. Noyes, *Strange Cults and Utopias of 19th Century America*, New York 1966.

settlers. In New York city he received help from Brisbane and then he travelled on horseback across Texas – a state newly included in the Union.

After his return to Paris, he published *Au Texas, le premier report de nos amis* (1854-1855) a work full of enthusiasm for the climate, soil and inhabitants of that area, not yet fully colonized by white settlers. Soon afterwards, due to skillful propaganda and personal connections, a group of shareholders was formed, which made the expedition and the settlement in Texas possible. Future settlers were to pay back the debt together with interest some time later. The corporation had at its disposal about 300,000 francs in Belgium and France. Considérant, its leader, ordered a purchase of 5,700 acres of land in Texas. It seemed that the volunteers willing to go there and work and pay back the debt had been found. The plan was to send about 300 people overseas – craftsmen, farmers, gardeners, artists – who were to work and live together. It was assumed that the colony would become a refuge for those persecuted by or dissatisfied with Napoleon III's government.

By the end of 1854 the corporation, with Considérant at its head, had the first group of volunteers ready. They were shipped to New Orleans, where their interpreter, Kalikst Wolski – hired by Considérant – was waiting. He was to lead the group of French and Belgians to their newly acquired property near a village called Dallas. The settlers' living accommodations were being prepared by one of the company shareholders, J. Cantagrel. Cantagrel was a French political figure, now engaged in putting his ideas into practice. The first information about the French and Belgian settlers in Texas, their trials and their organization, comes from Kalikst Wolski's report of them.

It seems that more should be said about Kalikst Wolski himself. Born in 1816 in the Lublin area in the Southern part of Poland, after completing his education in zarist schools, Wolski participated in the November Uprising of 1831, though only fifteen, serving in the 5th regiment of infantry fusiliers. On the failure of the insurrection, Wolski emigrated to France where he worked for six years as a proof-reader in a publishing house. When he graduated from a technical university with a diploma as construction engineer, he built a dam on the river Dippe. He also planned the railway joining Bordeaux with Besançon and Milhause. Wolski had not lost interest in politics, however, and remained in close contact with the French socialist movement, particularly with Considérant. In 1852 Wolski, too, went to the United States, where he worked and travelled. It is during this period that he was involved in the experiment at Reunion which interests us here. In 1860, with the Civil War in the offing, Wolski decided to return to Poland and settled in Galicia, where he worked in the administration of highways. Later, he and his daughter entered into close contact with the circle centered on Helena Modrzejewska, an actress. Wolski spent the rest of his life in Krakow.

Wolski wrote a lot. His recollections of his stay in the United States appeared in the Polish journals *Kłosa* (*The Ears*) and *Kronika Rodzinna* (*The Family*)

Chronicle) in the years 1865-67. Wolski was one of the first to present to Polish readers the practical results of attempts to realize Fourier's ideas on socialist communities. In 1876 his memoirs, *Da Ameryki i w Ameryce (To America and In America)* were published in Lvov and London².

The major part of Wolski's diary deals with his participation in the organization of Considérant's settlement in Texas. The notes which survived, supplemented by later recollections, reveal unknown details of the life of the pioneers, who wanted to make their social ideals come true. His memoirs contain a lot of information about travelling and communication in Texas and about the initial problems the European settlers had to solve when faced with a new climate, flora, fauna and people. Victor Considérant tried to prepare himself very well for the organization of his own agricultural phalanstery. He listened to Brisbane's instructions and made Wolski get acquainted with the functioning of the community in New Jersey. This explains the presence in Wolski's diary of enthusiastic descriptions of that settlement which operated successfully and met the demands of its members.

On the other hand, in Europe, the organizers of the expedition collected funds and gathered the people of various professions who could be helpful in a community of that type. The volunteers left Europe equipped with the necessary tools, provisions, shoots of trees and bushes, vegetable seeds. They were very enthusiastic and sure of success.

The first group of settlers, consisting of 34 men and no women, came from Antwerp to New Orleans on board the Lexington in February, 1855. They were led by Cousin. Wolski met the group in New Orleans. After a three day pause to unload the ship, the following ten days were spent in New Orleans, completing the stores deemed necessary, including tents and more food. The group then boarded the South America, which brought them to Galveston, « the most important and the nearest port in Texas ». During the journey « the weather was beautiful, though very hot, and everybody stayed on deck to get used to the climate ». A far cry indeed from Antwerp; it was the beginning of March.

The group stayed in Galveston for several days looking for a guide and deciding the route. At the time, no maps of the state existed. Considérant had bought land three miles from Dallas, on the Trinity River, in North-East Texas. It was decided that the next stop would be in Houston. The idea was to buy a garden there in which the European shoots could be planted to be later transported to the farm. Also, « some carts and oxen should be bought to be able to carry the loads through the woods and deserts »³.

In Houston, a garden and a house were bought with the help of an American solicitor. The property was situated five miles away from the town, with

² Kalkst Wolski, *Do Ameryki i w Ameryce, Podróże szkice obyczajowe i obrazki z życia mieszkańców Ameryki przez...* Lvov 1876, 121-307.

³ Wolski, *op. cit.*, 227.

water near by to protect the trees. The house with its garden was to be a resting place for future settlers and for the next volunteers. For, according to the plan, another group was to leave Europe soon. The trees and bushes were immediately planted in the garden and two settlers – gardeners – were left to care for them. The settlers devoted a part of the garden to growing vegetables, whose lack they already felt. A special guide was hired to lead the group through the unknown country ahead. He was a Hungarian emigrant, who had come to the United States in 1851 with Kossuth. He knew English and apparently also local habits. Thus a Pole and a Hungarian could be found in Texas leading a group of French and Belgian settlers.

Horses and oxen had to be bought from nearby farms, for the settlers discovered with some surprise that no institution like the market place, so common in Europe, existed in Texas. The horses were necessary to « look for and get together the oxen scattered during the night »⁴. Wolski observes:

to purchase oxen, horses and wagons, it was necessary to drive around the countryside a lot, since they know no markets in Houston and in the whole of Texas. In the middle of one of the town squares there was indeed a building, where commerce went on every day: but they sold only wheat flour they brought from Galveston, corn flour made here [on the spot], whiskey, salt bacon, sometimes beef, mutton or veal, and Negroes of both sexes. To get what we needed, we had to go to the colonists, living several – sometimes more than ten – kilometers away from the town⁵.

Slowly, the settlers got to know American customs: for example, general hospitality:

the custom allows everybody that comes to a colonist's house to sit at the table and eat whatever is on it – fried bacon and corn flour cakes, very weak black coffee prepared in the German fashion, and tea nearly as black as the coffee.

They also learned about the environment, the climate, the value of American currency; and the constant danger of snakes. The latter problem was a very serious one both for travellers and for the citizens of Texas. Wolski talks about snakes in several pages, discussing the possibilities for organizing aid for those who have been bitten and noting that, in Texas, people use gun powder and whiskey as a cure.

Three horses and 20 oxen were purchased, as well as carts to carry the food, tools, cloth, seeds, personal belongings, gun powder, guns, water, whiskey barrels. On the 1st of April, 1855, the group left Houston, bound for Dallas. The journey lasted 32 days. There were four carts and 33 settlers. Four men were hired in Houston to accompany them and to help with the oxen. Wolski says that:

⁴ *Ibid.*, 246-7.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 261.

the small army who are to fight the soil and reptiles is led by a compass and several carpenters and farmers equipped with axes to make their way through bushes and gullies.

The procession moved slowly, adjusting their pace to that of the oxen. At night they made bonfires and dug ditches around the tents to get protection from snakes. Night watches were kept. During the journey, apart from the troubles with the snakes, oxen and lack of water, the settlers came across a grassfire. But they knew what to do:

We ran for spades and axes and started to make a wide patch for the carts and oxen in the burning grass⁶.

They were also afraid of Indians, because they were conscious of the latter's unfriendly attitude towards whites. But only once did they meet, without incident, any Indians.

At the end of May they reached Reunion – as they called the land bought by *Considérant*. It was to be a farm of all the colonists who pursued the conception of a phalanstery. *J. Cantagrel* had been at the place for five months before the settlers' arrival. *Cantagrel* supported *Fourier's* ideas and closely cooperated with *Considérant* and a council of members from France and Belgium. Earlier, he had been a member of the French Parliament. It was he who, authorized by *Considérant* and the council in Brussels, bought the land in Texas, paying 4,800 dollars (about 25,000 francs of the period) for 1,200 acres, and prepared the house for the newcomers. With *Considérant*, was *Roger*, a young medical student from Brussels; this young man in a short time learned English and was very useful for the settlers.

May 4, 1855, was the day of the settlers' arrival and the day of the first terrible disappointments. The colonists had imagined that comfortable houses would be waiting for them. Yet reality was different. *Cantagrel* – in accord with *Fourier's* vision – had ordered the construction of only one large house:

a big hallway ran across the house. The outside walls had porches around them. Inside there were big rooms without doors or windows as was common in Texas. There was a long table with benches in the dining room⁷.

There were only four rooms. The tired settlers dreamed of staying alone to rest, apart each from the others. In the first council meeting held that very day, the discontent was so great that the settlers' first decision as a community was for separate houses for everyone. It was assumed that the colonists' families would arrive soon and then living in one house would become impossible anyway. On the other hand, everybody agreed to follow in Reunion the economic pattern developed in the North American Phalanx in

⁶ *Ibid.*, 265.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 281.

New Jersey, an agricultural community, 60 kilometers from New York city, with members, organized in 1845.

Considérant had planned to create several agricultural cooperatives in Texas, which would be « situated close to one another ». Thus, they could lend each other mutual support, and in six, eight or ten years, if they reached a certain maturity, one to three large phalansteries could be formed, thus fulfilling Fourier's vision of « cooperative societies of work, talent and capital »⁸. That explains why the example of the North American Phalanx in New Jersey – which Considérant, like Wolski, visited – was to be copied in Reunion. The council of colonists was formed and it decided on all problems of everyday life. Once a week the settlers were to choose a type of occupation they wanted to pursue during the week to follow. Because of the climate, local working hours were accepted:

Physical or mental work lasts from 4 a.m. to 10 a.m. and then from 3 p.m. until the evening.

Many settlers slept during the mid-day break. As Wolski put it:

a market, i.e. a set of general agreements, was organized, where everybody could decide what useful work he wanted to perform during the week to follow.

At first, the most urgent matter was building separate houses and cultivating the soil. Wolski, who knew English, was to conduct business in Dallas. Two men were chosen as cooks, another two as waiters. Cantagrel was responsible for everything until Considérant should arrive.

Eleven days after arrival, the 14th of May, Wolski noticed that the building of houses was proceeding slowly. He believed that the slowness and exactitude of the French and Belgians was the reason. They lacked the American speed. Wolski observed, with perhaps a slight tone of complaisance:

Americans are extremely active. They do things quickly; they build quickly; and they think beforehand about the utility of what they do⁹.

In reality, the European colonists found it difficult to get used to the climate and the food. They tried to apply the agricultural methods traditional to the areas in Europe they knew, since they knew nothing of farming techniques characteristic to Southern American areas. Consequently they suffered defeat. For instance, they planted their corn separately from their vegetables, as they were used to doing, and the sun burnt the vegetable garden. Only later did some settlers from Dallas on neighboring farms explain that vegetables were usually planted amid the corn in the South so that the leafy stalks might protect them from the strong summer sun. Many other similar mistakes were made. Getting experience was expensive in every way and discouraging: the

⁸ *Ibid.*, 283.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 284.

more so since full summer was approaching, when re-planting of greens would be impossible. Neither was local food – meat and corn bread – satisfactory for them, used as they were to eating patterns including a lot of vegetables, hardly available for purchase here. The same held true for other food stuffs, like cheese, considered basic components of a « normal » diet.

The climate, the language barrier, loneliness within a group isolated from family and country and, indeed, from all cultural contexts which were familiar, came on top of hard physical labor, to which not all settlers were accustomed. Together, these factors made it difficult for the settlers to maintain their psychological and their physical health.

The psychological situation improved slightly when, on June 20, 1855, Considérant came to Reunion with his wife and mother-in-law. They brought with them Cantagrel's wife and two members of the French legislative chambers. Considérant's wife, a rich and young woman, shared her husband's desire to put into practice the ideals of an agricultural cooperative society. According to Wolski, she romantically desired not only to become a full member of the community, but also to encourage others by her own example in this first, very difficult, period. She was even a cook on the way from Houston to Dallas. She helped the other people and intended to work on the farm. Arriving in Reunion, she was fascinated with the new and primitive living conditions and immediately created a kind of salon in a near-by cedar wood. Settlers took to spending the evenings sitting in a hammock or chairs gathered there, participating in a meeting which Wolski described as:

very often particularly interesting discussion or even highly sophisticated conversations, though most frequently light, humorous, talks were conducted there till the small hours¹⁰.

This « salon » was the occasion for more relaxed contact between settlers, and helped them come to terms with the difficulties. But this romantic « salon » could not manage to improve the settlers' spirits for long as summer set in. They felt worse and worse in the intense dry heat of Texas. They were terrified by the climate, the snakes, the lack of communication with the rest of the world and the long distances. Mail was sent and delivered from Dallas to Houston only once a week.

The colonists, separated from their families in Europe, lacking news of the outside world, were losing enthusiasm to work in the heat. They began not to believe in the possibility of improvement in their fate. Their primitive life lacked too many things they had had in Europe. They ate the same food each day: fried bacon, corn-cakes, black coffee, only occasionally cheese, soup (without vegetables) or fresh meat. Such a beginning did not suggest successful results for their activities.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 284-5.

Even the arrival on July 17 of seventy-five new members did not help much. The newcomers, who had shipped from Le Havre, were led by Dr. Savardon. Among them were several colonists' wives. Unfortunately, together with the newcomers came not only news and variety, but disagreement.

According to Wolski, the disagreement had already begun during the long sea voyage. The wives accompanying the new settlers started to quarrel, which led to arguments among their husbands. The disagreements intensified during the tiring journey to the farm, particularly after a tailor by the name of Maget joined the group. He created a party which criticized all the decisions of the leader and his friends.

Wolski's text gives us very interesting information about the existence of another group of Frenchmen who organized another community – the Icarian society – in Iowa. The critical tailor was a member of this group, but left it after a quarrel, coming to Texas. It seems then that information circulated between some French groups which emigrated, despite the different theoretic positions, so that knowing who was where was a common patrimony for a broad spectrum of experimenters.

The group conducted by Dr. Savardon, divided by argument, discontented with the journey, tired by the summer and the long march over-land, hardly made it to Reunion. Among them were craftsmen, farmers, intellectuals and artists. They came, this time, from Switzerland as well as France. Among them were an ex-officer from Algiers and an ex-subprefect from Avranches.

Independent of the Considérant group was another small group of Frenchmen, living in Dallas, Wolski writes:

In the last few days I have a new job. There are some Frenchmen, about ten of them, who had arrived earlier in Dallas. These people are political emigrants. They have been in the Northern part of the country till now; they want to organize a colony similar to Cabet's Icaria [In Iowa]. None of them knows English, but what is worse, they are without money. There are some lawyers, ex-notaries, court clerks, things of that sort. Well now, they are not capable of working hard. Mr. Gold, the trader in whose shop our colony spends a lot of money, had hired them a big house with a garden. They think that in the future they will organize the sale of vegetables from their garden to towns-people and to our colony. I think that they will spend a long time in misery¹².

Between these groups there were some contacts. As the summer wore on, the colony had a growing problem with fresh water. And some goods, especially salt, sugar and coffee were in low supply. To make things worse, shortages of drinking water began in the whole region around Dallas, and the reserves of cooking salt in Dallas were used up, too. In 1855 Dallas was a small town of about 1,000 inhabitants. The drought made freightage of goods from

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 291-2.

¹² *Ibid.*, 292.

Houston to supplement local supplies virtually impossible; it was too hot for the oxen drawing the wagons to do without water. Failing water supplies made it difficult, as well, to use work animals on the farm. The constant heat and its effects increased the settlers' discouragement. They saw no chance of survival in Texas, nor of return to their homelands. More and more of them became ill. Two settlers died: a young man of 25, an ex-officer, was the first; the other was Ruppert, a Swiss who had edited a newspaper in Paris.

Wolski wrote in September:

In the last fifteen days six people have died and several others are ill. There are [many] in hospital... Tailor Maget speaks ill of Doctor Savandon to our colonists. He says that the doctor is the one who created the whole problem, because he is a bad physician; but everything has propagated discouragement and made mischief... For two days we have been eating everything without salt, and we have coffee and tea without sugar. And probably this situation will last another two or three months... Unwilling and fearful, they write a lot of things to France and Brussels, many true, but still more false. A committee in Paris have asked us what is happening in our colony¹³.

This sort of situation could only lead to general panic and fear, which, in turn, led to new arguments and misunderstandings with which Considérant could not cope. More and more people were thinking about the future, about their difficult position and the lack of prospectives. This, in turn, influenced the shareholders in Europe badly and undermined the possibility of recruiting new volunteers.

Only Considérant did not lose hope. He expected the heat to end, the rain to come, and the situation to improve. None of these things happened. Some of the most discontented settlers moved to Dallas together with their wives. They bought houses on credit and one of them opened a saloon. In September two other men died: eight of the one hundred thirty persons who in August made up the community had died. The idea began to grow that Texas was an impossible place to organize an agricultural society:

Mr. Dailly, Editor-in-chief of the monthly magazine, *Revue d'Architecture*, published in Paris — a man of great abilities, a devoted adherent of Fourier and a friend of Considérant — who came to Reunion to supervise the construction of our farm buildings, went away yesterday to Central America — Panama — to try to find a better place; with [appropriate] climate, soil and communication with Europe¹⁴.

Considérant's plans to start a group of phalansteries had to be changed. He could not prevent the quarrels among the hard-pressed settlers; he did not know how to direct people, how to make them carry out tasks or how to encourage them. He believed in «good will», which the tired settlers no

¹³ *Ibid.*, 304.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 303.

longer had in any greater supply than they did provisions. Wolski's report becomes sadder and sadder. He, too, changes his opinion on the prospects of the experiment. The letters from Europe now brought the information that impatient shareholders intended to come and withdraw their capital in person. None the less, some attempts at survival were made: wild grapes were harvested and wine was pressed, though it was sour. A part of the land was already fenced and cleared. New buildings were built. The property itself, now « improved », was more valuable than it had been.

But on November 1, 1855, one of the shareholders from Belgium arrived and requested 10,000 francs back. Since there was no cash available in the community, he was given a piece of land where he settled for some time, persuading some of his countrymen to work for him for wages: the entire principle of the settlement came into doubt. The Swiss, who could see the disorder and lack of discipline, began to leave the community and to acquire their own piece of land for settlement. At the end of October the last group of settlers joined the colony. There were 30 persons in the party, with a Mr. Birqui as their leader. All of these people were from Switzerland; perhaps they might have made a difference. But they came at the last moment of the society's life, too late to be of use. In November, 1855, the colonists' council expressed its conviction that the experiment was doomed. And still Considérant did not lose hope. He bought several thousand acres of land near Austin in Southern Texas and planned to move there. This time he chose land with a river, which, according to Wolski, increased the chances of success. Cousin stayed in Reunion to sell the property and pay back the original shareholders. « Those settlers who worked hard during the six months », comments Wolski, « were paid handsomely [in the end] »¹⁴. Cantagrel returned to Brussels.

On the 15th of November, Wolski himself finally left Reunion after receiving his « handsome » pay, traveling with another member of the society, Bussy, to New Orleans. Though its remnants survived for another four years on the land, now divided among private owners, the community had disintegrated.

Wolski's conclusions as to the reasons for failure of the experiment based on Fourier's philosophic principles are interesting. Wolski believed that:

Europeans, and Frenchmen in particular, are not mature enough to benefit from the cooperative society, especially when women lacking some breeding get involved¹⁵.

Wolski had no doubt that if the settlers had instead been Americans, the colony would have survived.

In addition to this human socio-political factor, Wolski felt that Considérant had not thought carefully enough or been well enough informed to choose

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 305.

a proper place, so that the climate and disease added their share to the negative balance as well.

Wolski's conclusions may be supplemented by others: Considérant lacked sufficient energy for the role in which he was cast and which required him to « govern » without traditional sanctions to back him up. He was unable to impose peace and quiet. Neither could he force the settlers to overcome initial difficulties arising from the novelty of climatic and soil conditions. A good organizer in an urban European setting, he was but a poor leader of pioneers, because he believed idealistically in the « instinctive » wisdom of the settlers. He did not know how to convince them of the necessity of work for the community. Perhaps, as well, the choice of the settlers itself was wrong, for other utopian groups held together a longer time. The colonists, whose names and condition we generally do not know, were, however, certainly not conscious of the difficulties and the hard physical labor that awaited them in Texas, nor culturally and physically or professionally prepared to meet them. Many had never had farming experience before. Among them there were city dwellers and artists who were easily discouraged, as well as technically incompetent. This in itself was enough to prejudice Reunion's success. It is possible, too, that a significant part of the poorer settlers treated the experiment simply as a means of getting to America and settling there without paying. This impression is borne out by the fact that many of them later took up farms of their own, or artisan activities, or opened shops, achieving success and becoming well-off. A number of those who had some money behind them returned to Europe. Finally, it is true that most of the other utopian socialist groups in America were situated in areas which had better soil and a more favorable climate than those existing in Texas.

Yet all these utopian agricultural societies ended after some time as well, however they recruited their adherents and however favorable the milieu.

Considérant moved to San Antonio, where he received American citizenship. Many scholars claim that the failure of utopian socialist experiments, including those following Fourier's ideals, led to the creation of the co-operative movement in Europe. This movement, which like the phalansteries, had no reason for existence in America. Interestingly, Considérant returned to Europe in 1869, in the aftermath of the Civil War, and became active precisely in the co-operative movement, dying in poverty and obscurity in 1893.