

The materialized identity of the houses of Polish immigration in the scenario of Curitiba Metropolitan Area, Brazil

La identidad materializada de las casas de inmigrantes polacos en el escenario metropolitano de Curitiba, Brasil

A identidade materializada das casas dos imigrantes poloneses no cenário metropolitano de Curitiba, Brasil

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This paper is a study of the development of Polish immigration in Paraná, Brazil that brought about the permanence of houses of Araucaria as part of the remains of the interrelation between the environment and architecture. Considering the material as well as immaterial aspects of the wooden structures and the way in which they changed the scenery the results of the study found that three of the twelve colonies studied, (those that noted rural properties that had a morphofunctional representation dynamic), can be characterized by the generations of interrelatedness between the houses of Araucaria and other wooden structures. This occurred in a space destined for family-based agriculture.

Key words: **Polish migrant architecture; Araucaria; Family Farmer; Organization of Rural Property; Morphofunctional Dynamics.**

La investigación revisó el proceso que se desarrolló con la inmigración polaca en Paraná, Brasil, el que llevó a la permanencia de las casas de Araucaria como uno de los remanentes de la interrelación entre medioambiente y arquitectura. Considerando tanto aspectos materiales como inmateriales de las construcciones en madera y la forma en que modificaron el paisaje, los resultados llevaron al hecho de que tres de las doce colonias analizadas, en las que se observaron propiedades rurales con una dinámica de representación morfo-funcional, se pueden caracterizar por la generación de interrelaciones entre las casas de Araucaria y otras construcciones de madera. Todo eso, en un espacio destinado a la agricultura de carácter familiar.

Palabras clave: **Arquitectura Migratoria Polaca; Araucaria; Agricultor Básico; Organización de la Propiedad Rural; Dinámicas Morfo-funcionales.**

A investigação revisou o processo que se desenvolveu com a imigração polonesa no Paraná, Brasil, o que levou à permanência das casas de Araucaria como uma das remanescentes da inter-relação entre o meio ambiente e a arquitetura. Considerando tanto aspectos materiais como imateriais das construções em madeira e a forma com que modificaram a paisagem, os resultados levaram ao fato que três das doze colônias analisadas, nas que se observaram propriedades rurais com uma dinâmica de representação morfo-funcional, podem ser caracterizadas pela geração de inter-relações entre as casas de Araucaria e as outras construções de madeira. Tudo isso, em um espaço destinado à agricultura de caráter familiar.

Palavras-chave: **Arquitetura Migratória Polonesa; Araucaria; Agricultor Básico; Organização da Propriedade Rural; Dinâmicas Morfo-funcionai.**

Introduction

The story tells that from 1728 would start the land clearing of the current Southern Brazil, through the construction of the Estrada do Real Caminho do Viamão, between Viamão, in Rio Grande do Sul, and Sorocaba, São Paulo, crossing the Paraná Province. The “tropeirismo” gained momentum and with it would appear the first farms and settlements in the territory occupied by the Araucaria Forest¹.

To the proportion the advance occurred into the Paraná Province, the main location in terms of Araucaria Forest, paving the way for the Estrada da Mata, the indigenous peoples, local pioneers, saw them gradually retreated to smaller and smaller areas².

The increasing land occupation would repeat in Southern Brazil not only the loss of a unique sociocultural heritage, kept from the interaction between the native people and the natural elements of the region but forest resources that would never be recovered³.

The own marketing of yerba mate, discovered from the indigenous, would negatively influence on this exploratory scenario, which would become even more serious when this cycle would be, years later, continued by the extraction of timber⁴.

The Empire would not have an initially defined operating Araucaria policy, which, somehow, slowed down their control in a few years, while yerba mate industrialization proceeded rapidly. This, however, would not prevent that in the same period would happen an exponential growth of logging companies, which would employ local labor and outside labor as well, as to produce raw materials for many products, from houses to barrels to pack the exported yerba mate⁵. Such predatory exploration was not limited to Araucaria, also reaching species like walnut, cinnamon and cedar, in the South; and mahogany, in the Northern of the Paraná Province⁶.

The initial request of wood for building purposes, happened during the Marquis of Pombal Government in the Colonial Brazil in 1755. Its main purpose would be to rebuild Lisbon and restore the Portuguese vessels. However, what is more ahead, it would be observed an extraction focused on obtaining areas for agricultural activities, especially coffee, which had been strengthening. Timber taken for now would not present meaningful participation in the colonial market⁷.

In Paraná, the extraction of timber would have started in the coastal forests, which since 1801 have supplied wood to Rio de Janeiro. It would increase the flow in 1826, corresponding to approximately 8.21% of the district goods issue volume toward major centers of the Brazilian coast and the River Plate⁸.

In 1825, based on the changes that were going to be set in Brazil, the Imperial Government would restrict the extraction of timber to use in constructions, through a decree, which would determine the “hardwoods”⁹. However, this measure and other attempts would contradict and, by diverse influences, become ineffective in the preservation of wood. The very high tax on the use of deforested land, including classified as unproductive, would become strong stimulus to logging¹⁰.

It would be noticed, over the years, the definition of a distinctly predatory economy on wood: directly, the uncontrolled extraction of “hardwoods” with high value on short-term market; and indirectly, through the intensive deforestation for agricultural use and subsequently livestock¹¹.

In Paraná, the opening of the Estrada da Graciosa in 1873, communicating Curitiba to Antonina, and the implementation of the Estrada de Ferro Paranaguá-Curitiba, in 1885, would leverage the exploratory activity of wood. With these two routes, the production would drain the plateau up the coast from where was sent to various destinations. Elsewhere, rail and river transport would also develop, making fast and efficient trade of timber. The railway linking São Paulo to Rio Grande do Sul, just as its precursor Estrada da Mata, also represented a strategic access to places of interest at that time¹².

By the paths created, grew sawmills and with them, towns and villages. It is estimated that at the end of the 19th century would be about 64 sawmills in Paraná, which would then be around 108 in 1906. This sharp advance employed approximately 1,158 workers, which consisted of 24.5% of the local industry labor¹³. The extracted timber was mainly sent to Rio de Janeiro; Europe, where England represented a reasonable client until the 1950s; and River Plate Region, especially Argentina, which was the most constant foreign buyer¹⁴.

Brazil became one of the largest exporters of “hardwood” in the world, while Paraná got gradually “transformed” into fields, crops and pastures. It would be stood out, carrying out these interventions, influential names in politics and economy of the then Province, as the billionaire Percival Farquhar¹⁵, owner of Southern Brazil Lumber and Colonization, the company responsible for devastating the region between Ponta Grossa and União da Vitória in the first decades of the 20th century¹⁶.

Until World War I, the Brazilian timber market suffered the competition from Riga pine, produced in the Region of Riga, Latvia, inferior in market quality compared to Araucaria, but with more tradition, both nationally and internationally. However, with the outbreak of war, the European wood market would be undermined, leaving to the Araucaria the sinister role of replacing it. In a short period, the Araucaria would meet the demands of the markets of São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Buenos Aires¹⁷.

According to the Rede de Viação Paraná-Santa Catarina (RVPSC) in the 1937 report, the production of 201 sawmills registered to the network in Paraná was approximately 3.43 billion dozens of boards per year. The National Pine Institute (NPI), created in 1941, reported that there were 2,843 sawmills recorded in the South, of which 738 were located in Paraná, in 1948. Four years later, the Registration and Statistics Division (RSD), which composed the NPI along with other organs, mentioned that around 3.2 billion cubic meters of Araucaria wood had been extracted from the States of Paraná, Santa Catarina, Rio Grande do Sul, and São Paulo. Twenty years later, Brazil would export about 1.0 billion cubic meters, with 45% of that amount coming from Santa Catarina, and 55% of Rio Grande do Sul and Paraná, already with reserves in strong decay. In the latter two, diagnosed through documentation found a similar trajectory: the use of deforested areas for short-term agriculture. When exhausted, they were abandoned and replaced by others in which the cycle could be restarted¹⁸.

Currently, all States in the South, especially Paraná, keep remnants of what had been the Araucaria Forest until about the 19th century, when began the massive exploitation of its wood. That would promote, at that time, a real change in the landscape that would not be long to spread throughout the region, causing catastrophic order effects¹⁹.

The occurrence of sequenced production cycles, such as coffee and yerba mate, combined with the construction of flow paths to the coast, has contributed decisively to the fate of the Araucaria Forest. Through period's historical data it would be noticeable that everywhere would be possible to find Araucaria wood, from a large lot to a small one, from a barrel with export yerba mate to a house that would serve as a shelter to the lumberman²⁰.

The architecture in that context participated as confluence of the existing material and immaterial events, allowing buildings to record moments of history, sociocultural thoughts and expressions that would develop in that scenario²¹. Around such vision, it was structured the objective of this research, as stated previously, partially intuitive and observational, but solidly supported by specialized literature. The aim was to analyze interrelations between the environment and the architecture according to the process of historical and cultural manifestation of the peasant farmer, emphasized in this study, in the scenario of the Polish immigration within twelve colonies located in four municipalities of the Curitiba Metropolitan Area (CMA) in the period of 1871 to 2014.

Seeking an approach more precise, focusing on the observed human element and the development of peasant farms, depending on their local importance, it was aimed also to

contribute to the rescue of the trajectory described by the expansion of peasant farms from the perspective of wooden architecture, noting the role played by construction in the establishment of housing and in the exercise of professional activities; and in addition to the above goal, interpret the generation of a morphofunctional dynamic²² between the elements of rural properties, based on the presence of the Araucaria wood in the analyzed locations and the identified participation of the farmer in the occurrence of this process.

Agriculture as a starting point

In the second half of the 19th century, hovered Eastern Europe a state of absolute lack of freedom. While most of the continent capitalism took hold as the dominant mode of production, Central Europe was still based on the feudal regime. This meant that, consequently, the land overlapped in terms of value to any other good²³.

Germans and Russians set “anti-Polishization” and “anti-Ukrainization” policies throughout the region, suppressing local people in their right to language and own religion²⁴.

However, what were in the Austrian rule spheres was a pronounced lack of land to the Galician peasant, for the agrarian economy based on slavery²⁵, would gradually crumble under the influence of capitalism, which was expanding in the region. This process would entail a significant loss of life quality of those farmers, which would have contributed, along with other factors, to their subsequent emigration to Brazil²⁶.

Among these groups of peasants, the “chalupniki” and the “komorniki” would correspond to most of the Galicians who migrated to Brazil. To a lesser extent, the artisans and intellectuals, who established predominantly in colonies. The children and grandchildren of these immigrants, while leaving the countryside, since 1950, transformed Curitiba in the second largest Slavic city in America, second only to Chicago, in the US²⁷.

Slavic immigrants who arrived in Brazil would face a very different scenario from that found in Europe. Even if they came in search of land for agricultural production, this practice, previously protagonist of the interests that moved the immigrants would fight for space with activities that would meet unique conditions in Southern Brazil, causing them to act differently²⁸.

This aspect, however, did not exempt them from a difficult period of adjustment in which had to live with many limitations, such as the high prices charged for utensils and equipment²⁹, which would be mostly imported and that they, as immigrants, would bring with them if they knew the reality found at their destination. Another difficulty corresponded to the lack of cereal seeds and vegetables to which they were accustomed in their regions of origin. This situation would cause in the letters sent to relatives and acquaintances, usually tied to the invitation to visit to Brazil, requests to bring them products from Poland, or the port of Bremen, where they usually embarked to Brazil³⁰.

Whoever comes, bring enough (...) Bring seeds: rye, wheat, beans, parsley potatoes, garlic, apple, pears, plums, all kinds of herbs that are found in Poland³¹.

Do not waste kitchen objects and bring with you everything you can. Also, take vegetable seeds, such as cabbage, onions, carrots, beets, parsley (...) ³².

Bring with you all sorts of grains and other seeds... everything that grows in Poland³³.

The Polish would in fact bring seeds, implements and instruments: the straw chopper, the "magoal", the manual mill, the "radnik", cutlass and the semicircular iron blade³⁴.

Over time, the local landscape molded to the shape of cultivation, introduced by Polish immigrants, mingling with rye crops, potatoes and cabbage³⁵. Brazilians, in turn, recognized the merits of Polish agriculture and considered them the best in the practice of deforestation for agricultural purposes³⁶.

At first, the settlers, lacking any direction, would arrive to work in a similar way to those who were in Poland, knocking the bush and plowing the land. However, soon they would realize that they could not follow this technique because of the stumps that remained in the soil. Then they would follow the traditional fire system, already used by the natives, bringing down the forest for cultivation of the selected stretch, depriving cut of very thick trees, such as pines and imbuia, for example, and set fire to the bushes after drying. They would plant corn and seed rye and wheat, among other crops, in the middle of carbonized stumps. Being stumps virtually eradicated or rotting, the land could now be considered poultry, in which the land could be rolled away with a plow, allowing its use by one or two years, followed by rest periods, which should be covered by poultry. This method, however, would inevitably have consequences also for immigrants, as highlighted by Gluchowski (1927), for the colonies near Curitiba, where, after an interval of 25-50 years of the land exploitation, only with the use of synthetic or natural fertilizers the land would obtain satisfactory harvests.

Regarding the limitation of properties, the Polish would become responsible for the decline of the semi-nomadic lifestyle prevailing in the cattle population occupied in Paraná's countryside. These changes would be projected on the economic and social structure of the region³⁷.

In this predominant production system in the Polish colonies, it is highlighted the participation of all family members, from children to seniors, in various functions in order to maintain the self-consumption and the generation of surplus, aimed at commercialization on a small scale. This aspect, developed in the course of the first decades of the Polish colonization, would associate this type of organization to a very close model that currently is conceived as elementary farming³⁸.

According to Piñeiro (2004), the family production is characterized as a form of production and reproduction that combines family work on owned land, linked to distinct markets, and can accumulate capital. The goal of elementary farming is producing agricultural goods to sell them in the market and so get a return that would allow them to keep the reproductive needs of the family

group. Polish immigrants have possibly been largely responsible for influencing such methods in Paraná and, particularly, in what is the current CMA.

According to the Brazil's Census (2010), the country had 160,925,804 inhabitants (84.36%) and CMA 3,199,357 inhabitants (91.57%) residing in urban areas, while rural corresponded to 29,829,995 inhabitants (15.64%), and 294,385 inhabitants (8.43%) for the same references, respectively. Amongst the municipalities that were part of this research, a smaller part of the population was also concentrated in rural areas, namely: Curitiba (183,500 inhabit./6.00%), Campo Largo (18,206 inhabit./16.20%), São José dos Pinhais (27,315 inhabit./10.34%), and Araucaria (8,918 inhabit./7.49%)³⁹.

The Brazilian countryside today, although subjected to a strong exodus in the second half of the last century, concentrates a very large population. Higher in the case of Brazil (29,829,995 inhabit.), the population of most countries of the European Union (EU), namely: Austria (8.3 million inhabit.), Belgium (10.7 million inhabit.), Bulgaria (7.6 million inhabit.), Cyprus (800,000 inhabit.), Croatia (4,398,150 inhabit.), Denmark (5.5 million inhabit.), Slovakia (5.4 million inhabit.), Slovenia (2.0 million inhabit.), Estonia (1.3 million inhabit.), Finland (5.3 million inhabit.), Greece (11.2 million inhabit.), Hungary (10.0 million inhabit.), Ireland (4.5 million inhabit.), Latvia (2.3 million inhabit.), Lithuania (3.3 million inhabit.), Luxembourg (500,000 inhabit.), Malta (400,000 inhabit.), the Netherlands (16.4 million inhabit.), Portugal (10.6 million inhabit.), Czech Republic (10.5 million inhabit.), Romania (21.5 million inhabit.), and Sweden (9.2 million inhabit.)⁴⁰.

It would not be a coincidence that intrinsically the attractions generated by the urban environment, promoting the rural exodus, inside a huge dynamic triggered in brief period of time, would be a significant loss of the typical identity of the rural areas, which until then prevailed in Brazil. With the descendants of Polish immigrants in their colonies, it would not have been different.

Wood architecture in Araucaria Houses

The importance of wood as a building material depended on the knowledge to identify it as part of a coherent architectural production with the environment, subjecting to possible adjustments in line with the reality of each location⁴¹.

In most of Europe, until the beginning of the 17th century, wood was the most common material in buildings, but gradually lost ground, although, ironically, that period had coincided with the intense logging in the American colonies -mostly Brazil. Still, at that time, it had already established in Europe very strong figure of the carpenter⁴².

The carpenter would execute practically the activity of an artisan, being often times linked to professional associations. The apprentice would spend, in general, six to seven years

with a master carpenter, from whom he would receive the essential teachings for future trades. Wood technique hid few, if any secrets, in the 17th century, when it reached the peak of these associations. At the time, there was a clear distinction between the carpenter and homebuilder: the carpenter was who could work to make a wooden object from the raw material, the tree, i.e. manufacture barrels, furniture, cars, and houses. The homebuilder was specialized in these, although also ended up getting involved in the preparation of floors. He was a master of his duties, a character respected in the community⁴³.

To the builder of homes, the reputation raised would be essential to show that he was a good professional, not feeling forced by construction regulations or contracts, but on behalf of his personal integrity. Supervising the placement of cement stones, sorting and cutting the trees, selecting the carpentry frameworks for each case, and the building of the structure. It ensured the connection of the boards and coating boards, and all that was necessary to complete and complement the houses. Thanks to their benefited knowledge, there were generated drawings in the same proportion like the architects, engineers and builders today⁴⁴.

However, with the advance of capitalism in most of the European continent, unions and organization of teachers and learners began to decline, causing the wood to become protagonist in another scenario: the doors were open for building of the New World⁴⁵.

In Brazil, the indigenous people were precursors in the use of wood in architecture of houses. Prepared and appropriate according to their needs, beliefs and customs, indigenous buildings achieved a wide range and distribution, still one of the few cases of historic preservation of wood architecture found nationally⁴⁶.

Since the beginning of Brazilian colonization, immigrants employed in their construction, techniques and materials that until then, were not commonly used by the natives. The stone and clay soon became common raw materials in the local architecture, followed by wood, always used as a complement of the Portuguese construction, and not on the main element of condition⁴⁷.

In the roof structures, wefts of wattle and daub, frames and stairs, and arrangements of linings and floors, wood took a malleable role in the colony's development process⁴⁸. Three construction techniques with the use of wood, however, would stand up in this context: hand mud, molds for execution of walls, and stone masonry⁴⁹.

After centuries of evolution, the extraction of timber would receive industrial connotations, allowing it to standardization for constructive purposes. Such a system would function in a simple way, using abundant labor, which would act since the sale of kits of timber to the assembly of more complex structures, such as homes with up to three floors, plus basement in masonry, churches, hospitals, and clubs, among others. Along the way, amongst the first buildings of the 19th century and the 1960s, it was solidified what Batista (2007) points out as a constructive logic board and welted joints, an enhanced technique in buildings on damp areas, which would be complemented by other elements besides timber, such as metal fittings, window frames, ceilings, etc.

Among this naturally developed style, emerged some peculiarities -exemplified by double walls of houses and with horizontal boards, as well as constructions based on the external lock, on the system "male and female"⁵⁰.

Methodology

The Polish, besides representing the largest group of immigrants in the State of Paraná⁵¹, revealed to the author from the first steps of this work, a particular touch of the way they mediated the relation environment-architecture. This group along with the Ukrainians had, together with their technical feature, a different pace in the evolution of its buildings, as they were adapting to the Brazilian reality.

The style like Araucaria wood, designed by Polish in construction activities, deserved attention in this study. Having received particular historical and cultural appreciation, to make it part of the "modus vivendi" and "modus operandi" of these immigrants in their homes, environments that converged plural relationships -from religious to familiar- besides being practically their only private spaces along with their land, similar to other buildings of significance to these immigrants, such as churches and associations⁵².

The territorial distribution was in Paraná as a whole, as well as in the CMA, having established some relatively populous colonies at the time, usually associated with other immigrants, while having their identity defined by account of this aspect. The foundation of the same, in turn, would occur mainly between the 1870s and 1910s, to the proportion that immigrants came to the province⁵³.

In this study, we selected 12 colonies, inhabited by descendants of Polish immigrants (from the Silesian, Prussian and Galician regions), and other nationalities located in four municipalities of the CMA. Three criteria were established based on theoretical revisions and its interpretation according to the environment studied: (a) the number of buildings built with Araucaria wood; (b) the presence of agricultural activities that characterized elementary farming, under the concepts made by this work; and (c) presence of what was here denominated morphofunctional dynamic, between the elements of the rural property.

This research presents analytical-historical, exploratory, and qualitative nature, conducted by theoretical surveys about the involved settlements; and descriptive, through the characterization of elementary farming developed in the observed properties of the typology⁵⁴ assigned to each of the Araucaria houses selected for representation. The discussion on the morphofunctional dynamic identified in each studied case established an interface between Araucaria buildings and the elementary farmer, a descendant of Polish immigrant, in the historical and cultural events highlighted in this relation as part of the identity formation of that farmer.

This study made an effort to empirically identify, through sensations resulting of the means itself, the semiotics of buildings as elements of a property and charge of established immaterial relations with the members of this spatial arrangement, modeled by family farmers and members of a family descended from Polish immigrants.

At first, the field activities were developed in two visitation circuits in which all 12 colonies were explored twice each, described and finally selected according to the criteria described previously.

Procedures adopted are described in the steps below:

- **First step:** Before heading to the colonies, it was investigated the presence of plantations in properties from free satellite images (Google). Using the same tool to identify names or surnames of immigrants or descendants of Polish in streets that could indicate a greater concentration of properties of interest in the colony or in the relevant district. In addition, it was sought popular information directly in the neighborhood or in the colony -initially in religious institutions, educational or local tourist service. Second, next to the oldest inhabitants. Finally, without excluding the cited strategies, there were made random expeditions to selected locations. Following a walking route of the colonies, bicycle and on foot, in the case of the current districts of Curitiba. Observed closely these places, from which were extracted information regarding the presence of wood houses, agricultural activities practices, current access conditions, and other factors. This scan was performed twice in each colony at this stage;
- **Second step:** Drawing up a profile of each colony or district visited through the refinement of collected data;
- **Third step:** Choice of colonies to analyze within the list of the 12 areas visited. The amount of which would depend on the identification of at least one farm per colony or district that meets the following requirements: (a) the presence of at least one wooden house (made of trunk or sawn wood) of residential purposes; (b) the existence of at least one area for the crop, which was featured as a family nature, within the classification undertaken by this research; and (c) identification, not eliminatory, according to the study objectives, of some other type of wooden buildings, to work purposes or storage, for example, which could provide a preview of what is called morphofunctional dynamic of components of a rural property;
- **Fourth step:** Selection of possible farms that fulfill the requirements set in the previous step in order to enable the application of research tools, in each case, according to the sequence -interview, photography, and drawing. It was used the method of successive and complementary exclusions, or for the establishment to be classified as an elementary farming kind, it was necessary that it simultaneously met all conditions set by the reference of this study, and so on; and

- **Fifth step:** Execution of methodological procedures established for the collection of specific data. It was used, on average, five-day field work (about 40 hours per week) in each colony considered in the analysis (about 60 days or 480 hours in total), until the properties of interest were selected. After that, two more days (16 h) were required for the application of the recording instruments -interview, photography, and drawing- and characterization of properties in each case (six days or 48 hours in total).

Results and discussion

After 143 years since the founding of the first typically Polish colony in Paraná, in what is now the Pilarzinho neighborhood of Curitiba⁵⁵, a time not so long compared to colonization by other groups in other regions, emerges from that historical context still incipient theme in terms of discussions.

Miscible to episodes, which refers to yerba mate cycles and wood, which moved for decades the local reality, the Polish immigration has emerged as a harmonic current to the relationships that were established in that period. The settlers, not only for sociopolitical reasons or for another nature that repelled them from their nation of origin at the time, seemed to have arrived in Brazil in a different time, out of which probably could not observe the events analyzed here.

The changes involving the province and most of the South of Brazil in the second half of the 19th century incorporated nearly all living there or transiting. Extractive activities entailed the development of cities and various services associated with it increased the demand for infrastructure and consumer goods.

Surprised with the landscapes they found, even partially transcribed by some immigrants in the description of the forest with leafy pine trees, abundant water, animals of different species, mild winter weather compared to Poland, in short, many must be the impressions that led the Polish to change their lifestyle. In addition, that line of transformation would possibly fortify the identity of the settler, causing it to express himself in his "hunger for land", in the development of a unique wood architecture, prosperity of planting, work dedication, among many other imprints that would be attributed to the Polish immigrants particularly⁵⁶.

Integrating the Paraná population, as a member of their ethnic complexity prevailing, the settler would transmit habits, customs, and influence to those with whom they had contact. The same would occur in unequal proportion by the local community in relation to immigrants who needed to adapt to a new reality. The succession of generations in immigrant families would establish a new situation, linked to the inheritance received, however, closely linked to the contemporary universe. Understanding this history would be like imagining the life cycle of an Araucaria, where a pinion carried by an azure jay would germinate, grow first branches and roots,

and develop in a young tree -with cone shape, which, over the years, even grew more, changing its top- getting the shape of a cup, characterized as adult. The trunk of the tree would practically maintain the same appearance throughout their lives, such as their growth rings, however, part of their survival structures needed to change to a larger light gathering, since the environment would require it to become more favorable to this resource.

Coincident or not, the survival of Araucaria and the Polish immigrant would cross paths supported by multiple factors, which would yield a particular relationship, perhaps nostalgic, to become the closest immigrant landscape and crafts of its origins. The Araucaria house, in the meantime, emerged as the perfect representation of the houses seen as an extension of the environment. A shed, an aviary, a second home or an average plantation, each expected component of a Polish farm would consist of a fusion of the wood element to immaterial aspects, becoming predominant in what was essential to the immigrant's life⁵⁷.

It is estimated that today live in Brazil more than two million Polish⁵⁸ descendants, and in Paraná, the Slavic descendants -including, therefore, the Ukrainians- cover over 20% of the total state population. These individuals would correspond to the fourth or fifth generation of immigrants predominantly settled until 1910⁵⁹.

Brazil or perhaps France had been the third country that welcomed Polish immigrants. Firstly, the US possess more than ten million descendants; and, secondly, comes Russia, without a precise demographic survey⁶⁰.

The cultural heritage left by the Polish community was invaluable. Of non-material to materials elements, through buildings, techniques, symbols, ideas, religious teachings, sport, literature, cuisine, ethnic traits, among several others, easily observable in the constitution of Curitiba and municipalities that later developed around it. Incidentally, the Paraná as a whole owes much to the Polish, as they have proved fundamental in various periods of the State's growth.

With advancing years, the immigrant's initial estrangement would lead to a sense of belonging to the new land, which more than ever would be theirs, because there they would adapt a part of their past, in order to create the present and dream about the future⁶¹. To make this possible, a kind of "rebirth" would be required mainly to the older settlers -a process that not all would support- but that would prove essential to the basis of the Polish community in Paraná.

Evidently, each colony would show its particularities, if only because they were located in places far apart, where contact between its members would happen scarcely. Often, it would be even desired, as the Polish, besides bringing Europe disagreements among themselves -according to their regions of origin, with immigrants of other nationalities, as well as to have created other on their arrival in Brazil -as the disagreements with the native caboclo- would show in the first decades a social position quite aloof. This "internal division" between the colonies of Polish immigrants contributed to heterogeneity in each of them, which would have strong relationship with its proximity to the urban environment and the interaction demonstrated between

Polish and immigrants of other nationalities in the colonies, and those to dwell in neighboring municipalities. This interactional network would be of crucial importance for defining the current situation of colonies.

Most of the colonies formed by Polish immigrants and other nationalities today present a significantly different organization from that observed in its first decades of existence.

Firstly, eight of the 12 colonies analyzed in the study became neighborhoods of Curitiba with territorial boundaries and administratively established by the Institute of Research and Urban Planning of Curitiba (IPPUC).

Secondly, in the case of this study, including the still called colonies -D. Pedro II, Thomaz Coelho, Muricy, and Antônio Rebouças– it was identified a shared modification of structural level, socioeconomic, and cultural production of these sites, which in a way, accompanied the development flow occurred in nearby regions.

Using a comparative relation, based on photographic, documentary, literary, and audiovisual records, it was possible to state that, once prevalent, agricultural activities currently plays a secondary economic function, if not tertiary or absent, in the productive scenario of each of the colonies, considering that many of which are dominated by industrial activities and the services sector.

The expansion of the CMA caused some districts of the capital to practically “merge” to neighboring municipalities, similar to what is identified between Curitiba and Campo Largo (in the area that houses the colonies D. Pedro II and Antônio Rebouças), and between Curitiba and Araucaria (in the region where the colony Thomaz Coelho merges to the Cidade Industrial neighborhood). The physical proximity of these locations, narrowed not only for the access roads but also the incorporation of the nearby space image, as if one were part of the local landscape of the other, generating a state in which the geographical division has become more a formality condition than an attempt to integrate these regions.

In proportion as Curitiba grew, the “development factor” moved from the city center towards the edges, leading to the development of “new” neighborhoods, as would happen with a few colonies of immigrants, mainly of Polish and Italian origins. The establishment of other access alternatives, in addition to those traditionally used in the production cycles and migratory processes that marked the region, promoted the part of population displacement previously concentrated at the center of what would become the neighborhoods of Pilarzinho, Abranches, Santa Cândida, Orleans, Santo Inácio, Augusta, Lamenha Pequena, and Riviera. Other neighborhoods, in turn, would have presented similar fate. This transformation, however, would prevent to think that these former colonies failed to grow on their own, even with the end of the migration processes. As discussed earlier, could rightly expect otherwise, for many Brazilians and immigrants of different nationalities from the beginning, inhabited most of the colonial core and contributed to some extent to the growth of these areas.

Final considerations

At the end of the 18th century would begin the clearing of territory in Southern Brazil. Paraná, in the middle of the following century, would go through the same fate, which followed the coast towards the hinterland.

Along the way, which does not cease to be a rediscovery of the till then Paraná Province, would come to Araucaria wood, still undervalued for exploitation. There would be on the market products whose profits would prove surpassing to any return achieved through the wood: yerba mate and coffee. This change, however, would be only a matter of time.

Meanwhile, even participating in the export of products that stood out in the Brazilian trade balance, Paraná would prove limited in generating subsistence foods, especially to supply the one that, in 1848, would become its capital city: Curitiba. In addition, the Paraná, in the Province condition, was for several decades under the ruling of São Paulo Province, achieving independence only in 1853.

This scenario would become even more withdrawn when, years later, the yerba mate and coffee cycles would begin to cool down in view of their commercial devaluation and competition to be established.

The Araucaria, essentially characterized by its rectilinear wood, low density, and lacking of crossed knots at the bottom, would prove to be the best alternative to lift the down economy. In the course of half a century, having an amount of wood without precedent removed from the Araucaria Forest, flow that would extend over a vast area of Paraná, Santa Catarina, and Rio Grande do Sul.

Originated from a reality stuck in the feudal mode of production, which still prevailed the traditional peasantry, the Polish settlers needed to adapt to local conditions, which in the first decades, would present them a challenge. Added to this factor, the Government would try to dissolve the tripod latifundia, monoculture and slavery, but in practice it would suggest a real continuation of the exploratory work until then predominantly African element or originating from it. This assumption, however, would be a strong historical contradiction.

The universe formed by colonies gained dynamism in the first decades of the 20th century, when it would occur the so-called “Brazilian fever”, attracting mainly Polish immigrants, who would go mostly to the State of Paraná. Now the State would develop agriculture in a unique way, adapting it and creating methods, techniques, tools and diverse resources, which would become true contributions to the agricultural scenario at the time. They would learn to conduct and to expand their crops, probably breaking with the characteristics that would be linked to the preterit image of the peasant, soon abandoned in the early years of colonization.

The Polish legacy, however, would have reached the summit from the creation of Araucaria houses, a likely endogenous construction, and sublimely would characterize the interaction of

immigrants to the environment. Variations between what would represent an art of carpentry and functional of a dwelling would provide numerous interpretations focused on the wooden house itself and the harmonious relations that kept them close to a spatial arrangement.

The three main elements -the Polish immigrant, elementary farming, and wood architecture of Araucaria houses- integrated within the CMA, which would be part of the core of this work, would gain more importance for further dialogue with the present relationships, enabling new reflections on the ongoing transformations.

The ethnic participation of Polish immigrants in Paraná would show to be indisputable, having in view the number of descendants in the State, especially in Curitiba. This aspect would greatly influence the culture, language, cuisine, and many other social components incorporated into contemporary reality.

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Notas

- ¹ Zig Koch & Maria Celeste Corrêa, *Araucária: a floresta do Brasil meridional*. Curitiba, Olhar Brasileiro, 2002.
- ² Altiva Pilatti Balhana, "Política imigratória do Paraná", *Revista Paranaense de Desenvolvimento*, Nº 2, may/ june 1969; and "Imigração e colonização". *História do Paraná*. Curitiba, Grafipar, 1976.
- ³ Nilson Thomé, *Ciclo da Madeira: História da devastação da Floresta da Araucária e do desenvolvimento da Indústria da Madeira em Caçador e na Região do Contestado no século XX*. Caçador, Universal, 1995.
- ⁴ Thomé, *op. cit.*; Koch & Corrêa, *op. cit.*
- ⁵ Balhana, 1969, 1976, *op. cit.*; Koch & Corrêa, *op. cit.*
- ⁶ Joel Larocca Júnior, Pier Luigi Larocca & Clarissa de Almeida Lima, *Casa Eslavo-Paranaense: arquitetura de madeira dos colonos poloneses e ucranianos do Sul do Paraná*, Ponta Grossa, Larocca Associados, 2008.
- ⁷ Imaguire Júnior, *A casa de araucária*. Tese Concurso para Professor Titular do Curso de Arquitetura e Urbanismo. Departamento de Arquitetura e Urbanismo, Universidade Federal do Paraná, Curitiba, 1993.
- ⁸ Imaguire Júnior, *op. cit.*; Thomé, *op. cit.*
- ⁹ "Hardwood" is a kind of wood that resists the weather, the storms, the wood-eating insects, the permanent humidity, etc. A "hardwood" is always hard to be worked. It is heavy, almost always thicker than water and of deep color. The term "hardwood" was perpetuated in the language, designating the old woods classified by colony authorities as good, especially for shipbuilding, performed in del'Rey yards. At other times were called "King's wood". It was prohibited tree cutting, the woods were separated to the Government, which began to call them "hardwoods" by means of a law that precisely aimed at preservation of species useful to the State. It is erroneous the explanation that claims to be "hardwood" the ones that complies with the "laws" concerning the construction Eduardo Corona & Carlos Alberto Cerqueira Lemos, *Dictionary of Brazilian Architecture*, São Paulo, EDART, 1972. Araucaria Wood, in turn, is not included in this decree, possibly because it is little known, being more familiar to indigenous and "tropiceros". In this regard, it is argued that the sense of "superiority" of imported timber would have prevailed on Brazilian wood, slowing their exploitation. Imaguire Júnior, *op. cit.*; Imaguire Júnior & Marialba Rocha Gaspar Imaguire, *A casa de araucaria*, Curitiba, Instituto Arquibrasil, 2011.
- ¹⁰ Imaguire Júnior, *op. cit.*
- ¹¹ Wilson Martins, *Um Brasil diferente: ensaio sobre fenômenos de aculturação no Paraná*, 2nd ed., São Paulo, T. A. Queiroz, 1989.
- ¹² Balhana, 1969, 1976, *op. cit.*; Koch & Corrêa, *op. cit.*

¹³ Koch & Corrêa, *op. cit.*

¹⁴ Imaguire Júnior, 1993, *op. cit.*,

¹⁵ Farquhar was also owner of coal mines in Central Europe; sugar mills in Cuba; the Brazilian telephone company; Rio de Janeiro's Light & Power; Mogiana and Paulista railways; responsible for the control of Argentina Railway and Uruguay Railway, which was connected to the Compagnie Auxiliaire de Chemins de Fer au Bresil, of Porto Alegre. He built the Ferrovia Madeira-Mamoré; Specialty Steel Company and Itabira-Acesita, the Itabira Iron Ore, which would become the Companhia Vale do Rio Doce (now Vale) during the Second World War. Irã José Taborda Dudeque, *Espirais de Madeira: Uma História da Arquitetura de Curitiba*, São Paulo, Studio Nobel/FAPESP, 2001.

¹⁶ *Idem.*

¹⁷ Koch & Corrêa, *op. cit.*

¹⁸ Thomé, *op. cit.*; Koch & Corrêa, *op. cit.*

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²⁰ Romário Martins, *História do Paraná*, Curitiba, Travessa dos Editores, 1995; Ruy Christovam Wachowicz, *História do Paraná*. Curitiba, Imprensa Oficial do Paraná, 2001; Paulo Roberto Castella & Ricardo Miranda de Brites (orgs.), *A Floresta com Araucária no Paraná: conservação e diagnóstico dos remanescentes florestais*, Brasília, MMA, 2004; Anésio da Cunha Marques, *As paisagens do mate e a conservação socioambiental: um estudo junto aos agricultores familiares do Planalto Norte Catarinense*, Tese Doutorado em Meio Ambiente e Desenvolvimento. Programa de Pós-Graduação em Meio Ambiente e Desenvolvimento, Universidade Federal do Paraná, Curitiba, 2014.

²¹ Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory*, New York, NY, Alfred A. Knopf, 1995; Tim Ingold, *The Perception of the Environment. Essays on Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill*, London & New York, Routledge, 2000; Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses*, 2nd ed., London, Academy Press, 2005.

²² The morphofunctional dynamic represents the functional construction of the switching process that would form the area, which could be provided by adding one or more new constructions or by simply function changing between them. This dynamic would occur, for example, in housing function that a wooden house represented, which, over time, could turn out to be replaced by another house (wood or brick masonry) in that role of housing, leaving to the first the function of a storeroom, or being preserved for family, religious or historical reasons. There would still be the possibility that the timber would give way to a growing area or simply an empty space (with or without a defined function).

²³ Larocca Júnior, et. al., *op. cit.*

²⁴ Eastern Europe consisted mostly by Galician Catholics: from the Greek rite, the Ukrainian; and from the Latin, the Polish. Larocca Júnior, et. al., *op. cit.*

²⁵ Enslavement in the Austrian Galicia would end only in 1848, while the Russian occupation of the region would only happen in 1864. Larocca Júnior, et. al., *op. cit.*

²⁶ Ruy Christovam Wachowicz, *O camponês polonês no Brasil- raízes medievais da mentalidade emergente*, Tese de concurso à Docência Livre (Disciplina de História Medieval). Departamento de História, Universidade Federal do Paraná, Curitiba, 1974.

²⁷ Chicago received Polish immigrants, which became urban workers, making up most of the local working class. The formation of new social structures, replacing the familiar clutter of processes and community, which characterized the immigrants in their countries, was an outstanding phenomenon within that ethnic macro laboratory, William Isaac Thomas & Florian Znaniecki, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America: Monograph of an Immigrant Group*. Vol. I, Primary-group Organization, Boston, Gorham, 1919. Larocca Júnior, et. al., *op. cit.*

²⁸ Wachowicz, 1974, *op. cit.*

²⁹ Tools for farming as well as carpentry tools, such as hammers, spikes, saws, wood shavers, chisels, gimlets, among others. Ruy Christovam Wachowicz, *O camponês polonês no Brasil*. Curitiba, Fundação Cultural/Casa Romário Martins.

³⁰ Wachowicz, 1974, *op. cit.*

³¹ Superintendency of the Polish Immigration Centennial in Paraná, letters N° 30 and N° 31.

³² *Ibid.*, letter N° 58.

³³ *Ibid.*, letter N° 38.

³⁴ Wachowicz, 1974, *op. cit.*

³⁵ Arquivo Público do Paraná, 2007.

³⁶ *Preglad Emigracyjny*. Lwów. Year II, 1893. p. 29.

³⁷ Wachowicz, 1974, *op. cit.*

³⁸ Maria de Nazareth Baudel Wanderley, *O mundo rural como um espaço de vida: reflexões sobre a propriedade da terra, agricultura familiar e ruralidade*. Porto Alegre, UFRGS, 2

³⁹ IBGE. *Cidades*. Available at: <http://cidades.ibge.gov.br/xtras/p.erfil.php?codmun=410690>. Access on: 18th Sept. 2014.

⁴⁰ European Union. *Os países da União Europeia*. Available at: http://europa.eu/about-eu/countries/member-countries/index_pt.htm. Access on: June 24th, 2014.

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⁴² Naomi Stungo, *Arquitetura en madera: nuevas tendencias*, Barcelona, Blume 1999.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Stungo, *op. cit.*; Heikkinen, Laiho & Tiainen, *op. cit.*

⁴⁶ Sánchez et al., *op. cit.*

⁴⁷ Fábio Domingos Batista, *A Tecnologia Construtiva em Madeira na Região de Curitiba: da Casa Tradicional à Contemporânea*, Dissertação Mestrado em Arquitetura e Urbanismo. Programa de Pós-Graduação em Arquitetura e Urbanismo, Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Florianópolis, 2007.

⁴⁸ *Idem.*

⁴⁹ Imaguire Júnior, *op. cit.*

⁵⁰ Batista, 2007, *op. cit.*

⁵¹ Romário Martins, *Origens do Povoamento de Curitiba: Terra e Gente do Paraná*, Curitiba, Diretoria Regional da Geografia do Estado do Paraná, 1944.

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⁵³ Ruy Christovam Wachowicz, *Abranches: um estudo de história demográfica*, Curitiba, Vicentina, 1976.

⁵⁴ Considered the classification suggested by Imaguire Júnior and Imaguire, *op. cit.*

⁵⁵ Wachowicz, 1976, *op. cit.*

⁵⁶ Tim Ingold, "An Anthropologist Looks at Biology". *Man*. Vol. 25, Nº 2, jun. 1990, pp. 208-229. Ingold, 2000, *op. cit.*; Schama, *op. cit.*; Pallasmaa, *op. cit.*

⁵⁷ Ingold, 1990, 2000, *op. cit.*; Bachelard, *op. cit.*; Schama, *op. cit.*

⁵⁸ By comparison, the approximate population of Curitiba, which would have been the second city in the world to receive more Polish immigrants, is in 1.864.416 inhabit. IBGE. Cidades. Available at: <http://cidades.ibge.gov.br/xtras/p.erfil.php?codmun=410690>. Access on: 18th Sept. 2014.

⁵⁹ Larocca Júnior, et. al., *op. cit.*

⁶⁰ Centro de Documentação da Casa da Memória–Arquivo Histórico. *Imigração Polonesa*.

⁶¹ Bachelard, *op. cit.*; Schama, *op. cit.*