Vibrant
Virtual Brazilian Anthropology

v10n2 | 2014
Migration and Exile

Immigration and the maintenance of the religious moral order

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Electronic version
URL: https://journals.openedition.org/vibrant/1575
ISSN: 1809-4341

Publisher
Associação Brasileira de Antropologia

Electronic reference
Paulo Renato Guérios, "Immigration and the maintenance of the religious moral order ", *Vibrant* [Online], v10n2 | 2014, Online since 30 January 2014, connection on 12 January 2022. URL: http://journals.openedition.org/vibrant/1575

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Abstract

This article focuses on the concrete conditions and the social processes involved in the maintenance or change of the moral order in immigrant communities. This question is addressed based on archival research of the events that resulted in the restoration of the authority of Greek catholic priests in the Ruthenian (Ukrainian) communities that settled in Paraná in the late nineteenth century. The analysis of the practices of the priests and of the settlers in the first years of their establishment in Brazil permits a reconstruction of the dynamics of the centralization of social life around the church, and the religious precepts of the Greek Catholic religion. The presentation of three cases in different communities with varying degrees of acceptance or rejection of the authority of the Uniate priests shows that the question of the maintenance of religious values in situations of diaspora can only be solved empirically.
Keywords: immigration, moral order, ethnic persistence, Ukrainians – Brazil

Resumo

Este artigo trata das condições concretas e dos processos sociais envolvidos na manutenção ou mudança da ordem moral em populações imigrantes. A questão pe trabalhada a partir de uma pesquisa de arquivo acerca dos eventos que resultaram na restauração da autoridade de sacerdotes grecocatólicos nas comunidades rutenas (ucranianas) que se estabeleceram no Paraná no final

do século XIX. A análise das práticas dos padres e colonos nos primeiros anos de existência das colônias brasileiras nos permite reconstituir as dinâmicas que resultaram na centralização de sua vida social ao redor da Igreja e dos preceitos da religião grecocatólica. A discussão de três casos que envolveram a aceitação ou rejeição da autoridade dos padres uniatas em diferentes comunidades mostra que a questão da persistência dos valores religiosos em situações de diáspora apenas pode ser resolvida empiricamente.
Palavras-chave: imigração, ordem moral, persistência étnica, ucranianos – Brasil.

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This article[1] aims to describe the main events related to the reconstitution of the authority of the Uniate priests in the Ruthenian communities that were established in the State of Paraná at the end of the nineteenth century. In it I aim to clarify the social mechanisms underlying the maintenance or change of the previous moral order in situations of diaspora. In a recent article, Oswaldo Truzzi (2012) showed how the criticism of the paradigm of assimilation from the 1960s onwards had the effect of eclipsing, in studies undertaken in this area, part of the dynamics that govern the transformations at the heart of groups of immigrants after they have established themselves in a foreign country. In this article I will present a restricted empirical case study, that contributes to this discussion.

The Ruthenians were an 'ethnic group', in Weber's terms (1995), the main determining factor of which was religion. Inhabitants of Galicia, the easternmost province of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, they were a people characterized, in this pluriethnic State, as followers of Greek Ukrainian Catholicism, an orthodox Christian rite that was institutionally submitted to the Roman Catholic church (Horbatiuk, 1989: 113).[2] The group that emigrated was made up almost exclusively of peasants who left their villages in search of land.

1 The present text is based on one of the chapters of my doctor's thesis, published by the UFPR Editora (Guérios, 2012), and was presented at the 35th Annual Meeting of Anpocs, in 2011.

2 Once in Brazil, from the middle of the second decade of the 20th century, against the background of fighting in their native land in the name of national identity, the Ruthenian immigrants increasingly referred to themselves as 'Ukrainians'. cf. Guérios, 2012: 177ss.

When they arrived in Paraná, from 1894 onward, the first groups of immigrants were sent to the interior of the state. The first attempts at settling the wild pine forests of the interior of Paraná had been made several decades before, and had failed due to their isolation and the difficulties of transporting produce. After 1870 the immigrants that arrived in the then Province of Paraná were settled in lands at the edge of the already established populated nucleuses, such as the capital Curitiba. In the 1890s, however, the state government renewed its interest in the settlement of the more distant lands: it now planned to begin to develop those parts of state territory that were inhabited only by Guarani Indians, and which appeared on the maps of the period as 'uncharted lands'. The Ruthenians were the first immigrants to be sent to these areas during this new phase of the settlement of the state.

The lack of structure of the Paraná settlements was in stark contrast to the world that had been the reference of the Ruthenians who came to Brazil: the social world of Galicia, where they and their forefathers had dwelt for centuries. During their first months in the settlements they experienced an abrupt break from everything with which they were familiar. I will try to reconstruct their reactions to the situation that they encountered as they settled, with special emphasis on the way in which they established a new place for themselves in these lands based on the 'disposition for action' (Bourdieu 1980) that they brought to the forests of Paraná.

New contacts under the new conditions

The first familiar element that ceased to exist for the Ruthenian immigrants was the contact with the people they knew in the villages they came from. When they left their land they broke the close ties that linked them to their neighbors, the local landowners and the priests. The families who came to Brazil mostly left Galicia alone. A number of immigrants' letters and newspapers produced by the group, such as the periodical *Pracya* ("Work"), indicate that each wave of immigrants included only a few families from each of the Galician villages. Pasevych (1951), who settled in the Rio Claro colony, states that his family left its village accompanied by four other families. When they arrived at the port of Paranaguá, according to his report, 'we separated from them – and we never met again.' Pototskyj (1897), who went to the same colony, came with a group of five families (one of which was his brother's),

and mentions only one of them as settling in the same colony as himself. Shyvchuk (1936), who settled in Antônio Olyntho, states that the only people who came from his village were himself, his parents and his brothers: 'some Jewish tradesmen frightened people to such an extent that, in the end, only our family decided to undertake the journey.' Muzyka (1936) came alone, hoping to meet his father who had come ahead of him, and whom he did in fact find after settling in the colony of Prudentópolis. In the Kobryn group (1935), that settled in Iracema (Rio Negro), only two other families came from his village. Thus, despite traveling to Brazil in groups that were mostly made up of Ruthenians, the majority of the new settlers did not know each other before becoming neighbors in Paraná, and their acquaintanceship depended on the establishment of new social ties.[3]

In several cases these new social ties were rapidly created because in order to receive land a number of Ruthenians established close relations between their families through the marriage of their children on arrival in Paraná. However, it should be emphasized that their acquaintanceship in Brazil was not of the same quality that it had been in Galicia for the ties between them were recent in contrast with their native land where they had dwelt in the same village for several generations. Furthermore, in Paraná the chances for contact between settlers were slight. This was due, in the first place, to the settlers living far away from each other. As was the case in the whole of the south of Brazil, the colonies in Paraná were organized in 'lines': a road was cleared in the middle of the forest, and the plots were allocated side by side along this road. Each settler had to build his house on his plot, which measured 250 meters at the front (along the 'line') and ran 1000 meters back. Thus every setter had a neighbor beside him, the closest at a distance of 250 meters to the right or to the left. This distribution of the settlers along the lines was very different from that of the Galician villages, where the houses were close to each other and the allotments where the peasants worked were located in areas surrounding the village. Thus even those settlers who established close ties lacked the regular face to face contact that existed in Galicia. Secondly, the traditional meeting places of the Ruthenians did not exist in the new

3 When extended families traveled together to Brazil, however, they made every effort to be settled on the same colony. Andreazza (1999: 69) gives the example of the Grabasz family, that settled on the Dr. Gonçalves line, in Antônio Olyntho. On plots 20, 27, 28, 29 and 51 of this line, either the husband or the wife had this surname; the occupiers of plots 27, 28 and 29 all came from the same village, Mikolyek.

colonies. As Muzyka (1936) states, during the first months 'there was no organization and not even meetings, either in the church or the taverns. Because in the old country, despite the imbibing of spirits, issues were often decided in the taverns. But here there is none of that.'

Lastly, the social universe of the settlements in Paraná was very different from that of Galicia; there were no landowners and the State was hardly present. The difference that the Ruthenians felt most, however, was the lack of Greek catholic churches. In the churches built by the state government in the settlements the Latin rite was practiced, of which the form, content and language were unknown to the immigrants. As Muzyka (1936) states, "we knew we would belong to the western rite [*Latin*], as part of the parish of Imbituva. The more knowledgeable submitted against their will; they thought [hard] but could find no way to resolve the situation." Surrounded by new acquaintances, with daily contact considerably reduced, and without the support of the main institutions of their native land, the Ruthenians were not submitted to the constant mutual regulation of their behavior as they had been in Galicia. The breakdown of the family and the 'fall' of women and girls, mentioned in a number of immigrants' reports, show that many of them abandoned their traditional values.

Even those who did not wish to abandon the practices to which they were accustomed found it difficult to maintain them. At one point in his report, for example, the previously mentioned Muzyka (1936) refers to the first months spent in the new colonies established in the forests of Paraná in the following way: 'There were no priests, there was no Mass, people didn't even know when the saint days fell. They asked people who had prayer books with calendars. And so the word spread.' Muzyka shows that even the structure of time had been affected in the colonies, because the cycle of saints' days was no longer followed. The daily religious observances that marked the cyclic rhythm of their existence no longer occurred. Only the major celebrations were observed. Father Vihoryns´kyj (1958: 67), in a book published about the Ruthenian immigration to Brazil, states that he heard from the older settlers of the city of Prudentópolis that on the first Christmas in the colony a large number of people gathered in a clearing in the forest near the community hall and 'shouted Christmas prayers and hymns, the sound of which penetrated the forest.' Indeed it was only Easter and Christmas that were observed during this period – perhaps because, as stated by Schneider (2002: 65ss.),

these high points in the religious calendar functioned as a fundamental mark of identity for the group (a 'memory for' in the terms of Woortman, 2000), thus serving to constitute a closer group identity.

The attempts to maintain the vitality of religious practices demanded great sacrifices. In nº 11 of the first year of the newspaper *Pracya*, for example, a priest records how in 1898, in the Castelhanos colony, one of the migrants became seriously ill and was worried that he would die without his last confession. His son decided to take him to the Murici colony, near Curitiba, 75 km from Castelhanos, where he knew that there where immigrants of Slav origin. He borrowed a handcart from a neighbor to take him on the journey, which took two days. The migrant died immediately after his confession and receiving the last rites of extreme unction. (Zinko, 1947: 27; Юбілейний Календар Імміграції: 98-103).

Thus, faced with the difficulties they encountered on their arrival in Paraná, some Ruthenians became further and further removed from the daily practices to which they had been accustomed. Without contact, without meetings and without organizing themselves into groups, isolated due to the immensely difficult task of clearing their plots for planting, faced with hunger, illness and the death of family members, they followed a path of radical social transformation. These transformation were, in fact, as extreme as those suffered by the Polish immigrants studied by Thomas and Znaniecki (1974) – in the former case due to their isolation in wild countryside, in the later due to continuous intermixing with other ethnic groups.

The search for a specialist: the arrival of Greek Catholic priests.

After some time of living in the colonies, a number of Ruthenians decided to take steps to revert this process of transformation. Once again it is Muzyka who relates that, one day, a neighbor came to his farmhouse in the Nova Galícia colony, in Prundentópolis. He brought a letter that he had received and, being illiterate, could not read it. After reading it for him, Muzyka asked what was happening in the town, as his neighbor had been there to collect the letter. The neighbor replied:

> "What did I hear in the town? Not much, only Ivan Degan was at the post office to send a letter with a request for them to send a priest. The post office

employee asked: *what is all this for?* 'A request for a priest'. So the employee answered: '*You people don't know what you've got, because there is the parish priest here for those of you who need him, so why, for what?'* Degan replied; 'We don't have one, that's the truth, and God is a good father, and he will give us one too. *'Oh no he won't'.* And he posted the letter of recommendation and Degan paid 600 reis.'

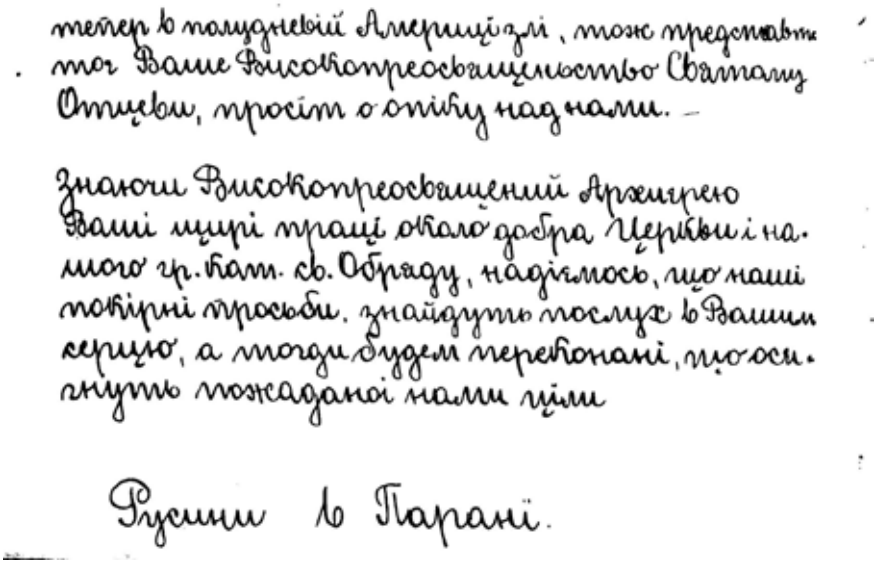
I asked 'Where was the letter sent?'
He answered: 'To Galicia. To whom I don't know.'
That was our conversation. The letter was sent in the post on January 25 1897. (Muzyka, 1936)

According to information collected by Father Zinko (1947: 10), even before leaving Galicia Degan had heard some 'good advice' from a priest in his native village, Omelian Zasterjetsia: 'If there are no priests there (in Brazil), you will have to write to the archbishop."

Muzyka records that he had met Degan on the journey to Brazil, and went to find him after hearing the conversation. When they met, according to his report, Degan confirmed the request. Muzyka said that he asked him: 'don't you worry having sent this request when the conditions here are so difficult?' to which Degan replied: 'it is exactly because the conditions here are so difficult that I decided to write and send this request.'

It has not been possible to consult Degan's letter, which unfortunately was not published in the any of the periodicals that have served as my source. However, the files of the Millennium Museum in Prudentópolis contain a copy of the original of another letter, sent in 1902, possibly by Degan – the letter is signed 'Ruthenians of Paraná'. The letter is a request for more priests to be sent, as the four who were in residence in Paraná (fathers Rozdolskyj, Kizyma, Martynuk and Myhniak) where unable to attend to the needs of all the Ruthenian community. I have included the entire text to allow for a more detailed analysis:

Your Excellence, Archbishop!
[We] Ruthenians who live in Brazil, thousands of miles from our Ruthenian church and our Greek Catholic rite, dwelling far apart in the forests and the wild countryside, transmit this petition to your person:
Your Eminence, Archbishop! Do not forget us! Send the Holy Father the Pope


теперь в полудневій Америці зді, тому предстать
мог Ваше Высокопреосвященьство Святому
Отцеви, просит о опіку над нами. –

Знаючи Высокопреосвященний Архиєрею
Ваші цирі праці около добра Церкви і на-
шого гр. кат. сь. Обряду, надіємось, що наші
покірні просьби, знайдуть послух в Вашим
серцю, а тогди будем переконані, що оси-
гнуть пожадані нами ціли

Русини в Парані.

Fig. 1. Final passage of the letter sent by "Ruthenians in Paraná" to the Archbishop (Metropolita) Sylvester Symbratovych in 1902, requesting more priests for Brazil.

of Rome a request to send us some priests. Here we have four Greek Catholic priests for the whole of Brazil and Argentina. This is not enough even for half of Paraná, not to mention the rest of the Ruthenian people in the Provinces of Sao Paulo and Sao Catarina [sic], Rio Grande do Sul, and the large number of Ruthenians in Argentina that until now have had no contact with their priest in those parts.

Your Eminence, Archbishop! We submissively (покійно – pokijno) request that you also allocate us, Ruthenians of America, a Greek catholic bishop, with whom we Ruthenians can confide and consult in our language, who will be our shepherd and raise us in the Greek catholic faith. The foreign bishops do not know how to prepare our people to worship in the Greek Catholic faith, they do not understand our wishes, our language. Send a request, so that we receive our bishop and are incorporated into the jurisdiction of the bishopric of Galicia.

Your Eminence, Archbishop! Place our request on the throne of the Holy Father! Tell him, that in this year of the Great Jubilee, we Ruthenians, here is this wild country, have not forgotten that we are of the Greek catholic faith, children of our church, and that in the wild lands we pray beneath the cross to the Lord and implore him to grant health (здоров'я – *zdorov´ya*) to the Holy Father, Head of the Catholic Church.

> Your Eminence, Archbishop! We cannot afford to bring priests at our own expense and build churches, because money here in South America is scarce; so we send Your Eminence this appeal to take care of (опіку – *opiku*) this for us. Aware of Your Eminence's generosity as the leader of the Church and of our holy Greek Catholic rite, we hope that our respectful request be heard by your heart, and that we will achieve the objective we so greatly desire.
> Ruthenians in Paraná.

The letter reveals the attitude of the petitioner towards the archbishop and the way in which these settlers justified the necessity they felt for the presence of Greek Catholic priests.

The writer of the letter requests that the archbishop tell the pope that, despite their suffering in the middle of the untamed forest, the Ruthenians have observed their religious obligations and are praying for him – and thus, the pope is to a certain extent obliged to return these favors. On the other hand, the use of the word покійно (*pokijno*) indicates the relationship that he establishes with the religious authorities. The word can be translated as 'submissively' or 'obediently'. Its use signifies far more than mere etiquette or protocol, as this was the word employed by the serfs when petitioning their lords.

This dual attitude – total submission on the one hand, while on the other demanding what is owed in return for their observances – follows the model of a petition to a feudal lord in Galician society at the end of the 19th century. The Ruthenians lived in a region where feudal serfdom lasted a long time, and even after it was officially abolished the servile bonds still remained. Any petition to a lord observed this servility: the request was accompanied by self-abasement.

In Galicia members of the clergy enjoyed a privileged economic situation compared to that of the peasantry. As Himka (1986: 431, n.18) states, the clergy could be seen as 'gentlemen farmers', as they owned and exploited the monastery's land, estimated on average at between 12 and 50 hectares – far larger than a well-off peasant's. They also had two additional sources of income – a salary from the central government and fees charged for sacramental rites. In addition, they were the only interpreters and authorized representatives of the Greek Catholic religion, with authority over the faithful among the peasantry (Himka, 1988: 10, 11). In my interview with Raphael Symchyshyn, who came from Prudentópolis and was a first generation descendant of the Ruthenians who came to Brazil, he said of his parents:

> 'They worshipped the clergy. I've never seen anything like it! An incredible respect! Incredible! Just to show you, when the priests reared cattle, in the Esperança colony, once an ox got out and went into the street, and my parents said: (*softly*) 'Sir ox, priest's ox, get out of the street'.'
> '*They talked to the ox*?'
> 'Yes! They had that much respect! Horses, dogs, they called them all 'sir'. (...) They implicitly believed what the priest said. For them the priest was someone sacred, when the priest passed by we had to stop, in the street, take off our hats and say 'Praise be to our Lord Jesus Christ!'... then the priest went on his way... that was it. Great respect for them, for these priests!'

The servile deference to religious authority in the letter to the archbishop suggests that the Ruthenians attributed a position of authority to the Greek catholic priests that was the same as that they had previously attributed to the feudal lords of Galicia.

Furthermore, the letter provides us with another indication: it reveals the justifications that the *Ruthenians themselves* provided for the request for priests..To understand why it was that these Ruthenians believed that sending the priests was essential for their survival, we must pay the utmost attention to the particular way in which they express this need.

Thus, in their letter, they ask that the bishop 'be our shepherd and raise us in the Greek catholic faith;' they complain that the Brazilian bishops 'do not know how to prepare our people to worship in the Greek catholic faith, they do not understand our wishes', and lastly they state that they need опіки (*opiky*): to be taken care of. In other words, when formulating their request, the Ruthenians say that they need a guide, someone who teaches them to remain within the boundaries of acceptable standards of existence. They ask for an authority, a specialist in the traditional way of living, who understands them and at the same time points out the path to be followed.

Similarly, when broaching the request for priests made to Archbishop Symbratovych, Muzyka (1936) informs us that after his conversation with Degan, he reflected for a long time on what he had heard. And says that he arrived at the following conclusion:

> I reflected, saw, understood our poverty, with no bread, but excluded this, did not consider it. (...) Such great want would only be at the beginning, and those whom God helps overcome all the difficulties. But if we waited, while we

> worked, then it would be too late, we would already be lost. And what would become of us later if we did not have our priest? For then our people would forget God, the holy Church, our eastern rite and our uniqueness as a people [народности – narodnosty, quality of a people (narod)]. Винародовимося. [Vynarodovymosya: vy: on the outside; narod: people; vyty: suffix that transforms a noun into a verb, here conjugated in the first person plural (vymo); sya: reflexive participle, indicates that the verb applies to the subject itself. Thus, vynarodovymosya: we ourselves will no longer be the people we are] (...). The people were scattered around the forests, far apart, with no roads, bridges, organization, no meetings, in a word, they were sheep without a shepherd. (Muzyka, 1936)

Muzyka here presents the Ruthenians as sheep without a shepherd, set loose in wild lands. The relationship he establishes is direct: God, the Church and the eastern rite constitute the uniqueness of the Ruthenians as a people – they constitute its народности (*narodnosty*). The breakdown of the family, the 'perdition', the end of community life, the interruption of the cyclical passage of time – all of the events that occurred at the beginning of the colonies that he broaches in his narration, quoted here, are synthesized by the word *vynarodovynnya* (винародовиння): according to Muzyka, in their first years in the colonies of Paraná the Ruthenians ceased to be the people they always had been. And Muzyka sees the whole painful experience of the beginning of the colonies as a result of the interruption of the daily religious practices.

In order to solve all these problems, which are in fact only one – the rupture of the familiar social order which served as their reference – Muzyka and the settlers who wrote the letter to Galicia did not ask for the intervention of the Paraná government nor of the Galician civil authorities. They saw a single solution for their dilemmas: to write to Archbishop Symbratovych. By asking for priests, they were asking, in their own words and in their own way, that the bishopric send them people capable of restoring the social order according to the standards to which they were accustomed.

The reception of the Greek Catholic priests

But how representative was this attitude of Muzyka and of the authors of the letter to Archbishop Symbratovych? Was it an isolated act on the part of just

a few settlers? To answer these questions I will examine the reactions of the Ruthenians to the arrival of the first missionaries in Brazil.

When Degan wrote the letter, in January 1897, the Archbishop had already received a previous letter with the same request: according to statements by two other priests who researched the Ruthenian immigration to Brazil (Haneiko, 1985: 55; Бурко, 1984: 5), the settlers of Rio Claro sent their request for priests at the end of 1895. The first Greek catholic missionary sent by Symbratovych, the secular priest Myhola Myhalevych, arrived in Brazil in June 1896. However, the local religious authorities did not allow him to go to the colonies, as he was married (marriage of priests is accepted in catholic churches of the eastern rite, but not in those of the Latin rite); Father Myhalevych and his family were obliged to return to Galicia immediately. The following month a second secular priest, Nikon Rozdolskyj, arrived in Brazil. After a brief stop in Prudentópolis he settled in the Rio Claro mission, then moving to Antônio Olyntho (the Serra do Tigre colony), where he stayed until his early death in 1906. Lastly, also in 1896, at the end of the month of November, Symbratovych sent the priest Ivan Volianskyj to Brazil. His mission was to examine the conditions in which the Ruthenian settlers were living and to present a report on the matter to the Galician civil and religious authorities (*op cit*: 6).

Volianskyj returned to Lviv at the beginning of 1897, and it is probable that he presented his report to Symbratovych immediately after the arrival of Degan's letter. Then on May 11 the priest Sylvester Kizyma left Galicia, the first Basilian missionary (a member of the Order of Saint Basil the Great) to be sent to Brazil; from then on, the majority of the missionaries who came to Paraná were from this religious Order.

Unlike Father Rozdolskyj, Father Kizyma did not settle in one or two colonies: he traveled to all the locations were there were Ruthenians, making great efforts to establish religious missions in all the colonies through the institution of Apostolates of Prayer. On his travels, from time to time, he wrote to his superiors in Galicia reporting on events; these superiors had just started the publication of a periodical, the *Misionar*, in the town of Jovkua, in which they published lengthy passages from Kizyma's letters. Thus we know a number of details about the work of this priest during the first years of the Ruthenian settlements in Paraná.

Kizyma arrived in Prudentópolis on July 7,1897. He stated that he settled in this colony because he was aware (probably due to Volianskyj's report) that

it was there that 'our people settled in greater numbers, and where they are the poorest and the most abandoned.' (Kizyma, 1897: 125).

Let's look now at how Father Kizyma was received by the settlers. When recounting his arrival in Paraná, he states that he ended up staying in the surrounding areas of Curitiba for ten days, because he was required to hear the confession of thousands of settlers who, when they heard of his arrival, 'hurriedly came from all around with tears of happiness, [seeking] consolation for their souls' (Kizyma, 1897: 125). When he arrived in the Ruthenian colonies for the first time, the settlers' reactions was even more intense:

> Knowing that I was coming, they set out in my direction and caught up with me half a day's walk from the colony. The greetings, meetings and tears were unending. It was difficult to restrain my tears when, on seeing me, all of them, and above all the old with white hair, prostrated themselves on the ground in front of me and kissed my feet and the earth on which I had trodden, and wept with joy like little children, for in four years it was the first time they had seen their priest. (Kizyma, [1898]: 13)

Similar scenes occurred when the second Basilian priest to come to Brazil, father Martynyuk, arrived in Prudentópolis accompanied by friar Sofrom. In his letters of this period, also written to his superiors and published in the periodical *Misionar*, friar Horoshhuk raccounts the day of his arrival in Prudentópolis:

> When we spent the night in Ponta Grossa, rumor had already reached Prudentópolis [that we were there], before we arrived. (...) [When we arrived] the coachman cracked his whip and the coach came to a halt. Oh God most holy, both of us were overtaken by a flood of emotion at being in the mission, at home. Coming out of the huts the people surrounded us and hemmed us in on every side, greeting us. (...)
> Immediately the priest who was our antecessor came out of the house and asked the people to release us, as they were about to crush us. I will not forget these moments until I die. (...) A sound was heard behind us, and gradually rose: *Mnohaya lita* [a traditional commemoration song], one of the settlers gave a speech in a tremulous voice, very moved, repeatedly drying his eyes, and waving his hat around in his hands. There were times when he coughed, as his words became disconnected. (Horoshhuk, 1905: 277, 278)

Just as the settlers were excited by the arrival of the priests, they also tried not to let them go when they were leaving on pastoral visits to the most distant colonies. On leaving Curitiba for Prudentópolis, soon after his arrival, father Kizyma narrates how the Ruthenians who lived in the surrounding areas 'came to meet me in tears and took hold of my luggage, pulling it towards them in an appeal for me to stay.' In Lucena, his departure was even more difficult:

> the combination of the tears of the children, the adolescents and of the old was like a river. With difficulty I got to the street, because they people did not want to release me. They bad me farewell with a procession, but they accompanied me for two days and two nights, heedless of hunger and the cold. With difficulty on the second day I managed to persuade them to return home. Poor folk! They all have enough to live on, they are not doing badly – but their sadness tears at the heart, for not having their priest, for not hearing the teachings. (Kizyma, 1898: 14)

The exalted reception given the missionaries everywhere they arrived and the reluctance in letting them leave show that the desire for the presence of priests was not restricted to the few settlers who actually wrote the letters to the Bishopric requesting they be sent to Brazil.

Perception of the moral breakdown of the settlers

When referring to the settlers, father Kizyma and friar Horoshhuk described the sorrow they felt at what they saw around them. Written under the initial impact of their arrival, their letters broach the material penury and above all the moral penury that they witnessed in the various colonies. Kizyma states that even the colonies near Curitiba were full of Ruthenians 'who had not confessed for years, abandoned, neglected, with no care for their souls, the children not baptized, the oldest not dying as human beings.' But the greatest shock, also seen in the testimony of settlers given decades later, was the perception of the breakdown of the family.
In the letter that he wrote to his superiors in Galicia soon after he arrived in Prudentópolis in 1897, Friar Horoshhuk stated:

> They approached without clothes, starving, wild, filthy. Here [in Curitiba] the corpses of our people already fill two cemeteries. There was no bread, and

> hunger and drunkenness are bad counselors. The Brazilians had contaminated our people with terrible corruption. Things had reached a point which perhaps had not even been reached in Sodom and Gomorra. To get money or bread husbands expelled their wives, fathers expelled their daughters, exposing them to a life of perdition. Even girls of twelve, they say, [prostituted themselves], forced by their parents to do this diabolic work. And when they began to sober up, the devil continued to transform our people into animals, and parents began to give their children away to the Brazilians. (Horoshhuk, [1898]: 142)

In his letters Father Kizyma reveals the same emotions and perceptions as Friar Horoshhuk:

> They despise themselves, the girls and the women have taken the path to perdition in these forests, like pagans; among the Godless Brazilians, they have lost their devotion and their morals, they rove around in groups with no one to assist their souls, no one to take pity on them. (...) In Prudentópolis there are around 5250 Ruthenians. They work with saws and axes, destroying the grandiose forest to plant. The people rove around like waifs, from poverty and hunger. Four cemeteries are already full. Countless bodies are buried in the forests. Due to hunger some of our people sell their children to the Brazilians for a few thousand reis (a few *ryns´ki*). Some give their children away to the Brazilians free of charge, to have fewer worries. All around we see how our people have become savage (здичіли – *zdychily*, verb derived from дикі – *dyki*, savages). Indeed it is not possible to enumerate all the things they experience here. (Kizyma, 1897: 125, 126)

Kizyma compares the religious and moral breakdown of the Ruthenians to the wildness of the surrounding nature and the lack of religion among the Brazilians: the Ruthenians, in his words, were becoming as wild as the people and the nature of the country to which they had come; coexisting with groups that did not adhere to the values to which they were accustomed, defined as *nash l´udy*, which, as shown by Ciomara Schneider (2002: 83), also implied conformity to the moral norms of the 'traditional family'.

The priests expressed their great disappointment at the behavior of the Brazilians concerning religion. There is an example in the report made by Friar Horoshhuk in 1905 on the first Mass that he had attended, seven years earlier, soon after his arrival in Brazil, in Paranaguá. The first thing he noticed was that the people spoke in loud voices inside the church. To his amazement, two dogs then entered from the corridor and began to fight and

bite each other, and the people reacted by laughing, shouting and kicking the dogs out of the church. During the procession there were no hymns, prayers or religious effigies, and the people followed as if it were a daily outing, even wearing their hats; at the end of this event, watched by the majority of the population from the balconies of their houses, fireworks were let off, and they called the whole thing гранди феста, "a big fiesta" (Horoshhuk, 1905: 213, 214). All of this appeared 'very strange' to him, despite appearing quite natural to the Brazilians. Thus it should come as no surprise that the amoral behavior of the Ruthenians was associated not only to the wildness of the surrounding nature, but to the wildness of the very people who lived in these surroundings, a people of little religion.[4]

The first steps taken by Father Kizyma were thus to attract the Ruthenians to the religious services in order, in his words, to 'bring them back to the universe of faith.' In his letter he too requests that more priests be sent: 'the priests are needed here as soon as possible, while faith is still latent in some.' As soon as he had set up his mission in Prudentópolis, he left to make pastoral visits to other colonies including Lucena and Jangada. During these visits he worked day and night to meet the needs of the settlers. Kizyma states that in Lucena, during the four weeks of his mission, the settlers abandoned their plots to attend the religious services. During this period the priest gave 35 masses, prepared all the children for their first confession and heard over 3000 confessions. Throughout the mission he refused to hear the confession or give the sacraments to settlers who would not swear they would give up drinking. (Vihoryns´kyj, 1958: 81).

In addition, both father Kizyma and father Rozdolskyj demanded that all the settlers who came to confession build a church. The work and the expense entailed in building churches demanded great sacrifices from the settlers, who were hardly able to meet the challenges of the work entailed in clearing their plots for their sustenance, and who lived in temporary huts on their pieces of land. This did not stop them, however, from undertaking the task. In Prudentópolis, as related by Muzyka, the settlers thought:

4 This perception was not exclusive to the Ruthenians. The Polish priests who visited Brazil a few years previously also expressed their shock at the fact that "in the Brazilian churches there are noises and whisperings, accompanied by dogs and talking aloud" (*apud* ANAIS, vol. V: 100, 101). Seyferth (1990) states that throughout the south of Brazil the European settlers, on arrival, considered "the religious practices of the Brazilians to lack seriousness".

> how to build in the midst of such poverty? No one had a horse, or even a cart, and the material must be brought, stones and trees for the foundations, and there was nothing to bring it with. 'All the same, we will build it' the people said. 'We will carry everything on our backs, like the birds carry the twigs for building their nests.' They quoted the proverb: 'do what God didn't do, and God will help.' 'Because it must be done, and done with good will, with all our heart, however much it hurts.' They began the work. Some cut the stones, others prepared the wood, and then the people carried the stones on their backs for 2 kilometers and, when they went to the town or the chapel, those that were able to carry stones brought as much as they were able. They were carried by the old, the young, the children. As time passed the work proved very heavy, especially for the women. One of them came and lifted a stone. 'It isn't heavy, I'll carry it', she said. After carrying it for two kilometers she was bruised, and so the priest forbade her to carry stones.

The priest realized that without a cart it would not work. So he collected money from all of them to buy a cart, and the people gave trees for God's cause. They dismantled the cart, then, one at the front wheel and another at the back, they pushed the trees from the forest to the town without horses, as they had none. The pines were nearby. But the walnut a few kilometers away. And thus they built. (Muzyka, 1936)

In Rio Claro, in the same way, the church was built by the settlers, under the supervision of Father Rozdolskyj. According to Pototskyj (1897), the work took 55 days, and involved dozens of settlers. The costs that could not be avoided were divided between the farmhouses: those nearest to the church contributed 20,000 reis, and those further away 10,000. The day of the consecration of the church, in his words, 'was a day of great ceremony for we Ruthenians (...) When the bell tolled for the first time, our hearts jumped for joy. Only those with a heart of stone did not weep for joy."

When relating the end of the building of the church, Pototskyj's account tells us of the extent that religious affiliation was associated to the home country. He wrote in his letter: 'the 5th colony already looked like a sylo [сило, a Ruthenian village]: on either side of the street were the wooden houses, and in the middle of the colony, on plot nº 15 of line 5, our Ruthenian church majestically stands.' Thus the building of the church was above all a symbolic act for the Ruthenians who had settled in Paraná: the presence of the building with Byzantine domes meant that, at last, the colonies were worthy of the name *sylo*.

The relationship between the Ruthenians and the priests and their religion is in sharp contrast to that described by Willems (1980) in the case the Germans who settled in the neighboring state of Santa Catarina. The case of the protestant immigrants is very different: on the one hand, as the author relates, 'for decades the churches of the homeland did not trouble themselves with the lot of their emigrant members'; on the other,

> 'as the number of protestant Germans in Brazil increased, the lack of spiritual direction from the pastors and teachers became more and more evident. They were abandoned to their lot.' (*apud Deutsche evangelische Blätter für Brasilien*, August-September 1937, p.33). Individuals with no theological training were elected 'parish priests' by the communities. (...) In these conditions (...) the prestige of the ministers rapidly evaporated. For many German-Brazilians the status of pastors and teachers was considered the lowest in the local society.' (Willems, *op cit*: 338).

Authority challenged: the place of the priests

By demanding that the settlers stopped drinking, giving confession, conducting the services according to the religious calendar, by ministering the sacraments and demanding the construction of churches – in all these activities the priests relied on the authority and legitimacy that they enjoyed in the eyes of the settlers to interfere in their conduct and force them to return to their religious observances. At first sight, as was the case with the Italian colonies established in the south of Brazil during the same period, described by Azevedo (1982: 195),

> the priest is the most powerful factor for order, morality and stability for the settlers (...) the newly established settlers complained more to the priest and to the church than to the school and the teachers. In fact, from this intimate contact between the settler and the priest, and particularly due to the latter's ordinary way of life, *leur communauté de vie*, a high degree of mutual sympathy emerged, 'an unchallenged moral authority over the settler. '

However, despite the Greek Catholic priests having been received as virtually divine beings in all the colonies where they arrived, this did not mean that their authority was accepted by all the settlers. On the contrary, in

a number of places they encountered resistance to their activities: whereas they were received with veneration by the majority of the settlers, this was not always the case. To reach a greater understanding of the dynamics that led to acceptance or rejection of their authority, I will examine the process of arrival and installation of the priests in three colonies – Jangada, Prudentópolis and Antônio Olyntho – in which the settlers reacted in different ways to their presence.

First, the Jangada colony, which was visited by father Martynyuk and by his apostolic companion, friar Horoshhuk. There the Ruthenians, of whom there were few, lived near an army barracks. As soon as he arrived, father Martynyuk forbade the Ruthenian girls to attend the balls given at the barracks. Some soldiers came to the house where the priests were staying to protest, and friar Horoshhuk expelled them with threats. A short while later the soldiers returned with their weapons and attacked the two men, who were wounded and fled. A Polish priest who was visiting Jangada at the time described the incident in a report to his superiors in Poland: 'Jangada is filthy. There is a military colony here. The soldiers, most of whom are black, have 'married' Ruthenian and Polish girls – it is shameful to write this. A Basilian priest who vehemently condemned this barely escaped with his life'. (*apud* ANAIS, vol. V: 121).

The Ruthenian settlers who remained in Jangada did not come to father Martynyuk's defense when he was attacked – probably due to the presence of the army – and the Basilian priests in the end did not install a permanent mission there. According to father Vihoryns´kyj's book (1958: 27), the next visit of a missionary to Jangada after father Martynyuk's only occurred in 1916, and was followed by only infrequent visits. In this colony, the need felt by the settlers for the protection of the priests did not outweigh the vicissitudes of coexistence with the local inhabitants.

I will now examine the second case, that of the colony of Prudentópolis.

As I have said, father Kizyma, who attended this colony, refused confession to those who would not stop drinking. Furthermore, as Muzyka tells us (1936). 'the priest also insisted that the mothers who had given away their children took them back. If they did not, they would not receive the sacraments.' And he also demanded that all the women and girls 'abandoned the ways of perdition'. Many of the settlers accepted Kizyma's authority and returned to a way of life governed by religious norms. In the first months of his stay he stated in his letters: 'our parents have taken back their children whom they

had sold last year or two years ago. (...) Poor folk! With tears they sold their children, with tears they bore this burden, with tears they took them back into their wretched little homes' (Kizyma, [1898]: 159). However, as in Jangada, the priest's decisions also caused disgust. Since his first letter he had already warned his superiors that 'the people are gradually waking up to reality. For this reason the Brazilian agents of perdition [the pimps], from whom the Ruthenian women fled after the installation of the mission, were angered by me and threatened to kill me' (Kizyma, 1897: 126). And it was not only the Brazilians who resisted the priest's demands. Friar Horoshhuk states in another letter that 'father Kizyma has already done much around here, but there are still those who approach him with such audacity, because they do not want to convert, establish close relations with the Brazilians and offend a man to the point that he is ready to shoot. Despite this, father Kizyma, with truly apostolic good will, does not cease to denounce them.' (Horoshhuk, [1898]: 143).

When the situation of fathers Kizyma and Martynyuk and friar Horoshhuk reached a peak of tension, he wrote to his superiors in the following words:

> We are concerned about the risk of being the victims of violence, and, who knows, perhaps news of the spilling of blood will arrive along with this letter. (...) They have sworn vengeance and are doing everything to get rid of us, and set fire to our house when we were not there. I sent father Anton [Martynyuk] to stay with our people in the forest. (Kizyma, [1898]: 159)

Kizyma's letter ends tragically, showing that he had already accepted the worst: 'The town is at boiling point, and how it will all end only God knows. Our only hope in is in merciful God, who brings calm after the storm. But let God's will be done.'

In their reports both Hotsajlyuk (1924) and Muzyka (1936) recorded the attacks suffered by fathers Kizyma and Martynyuk in 1898. The information makes it clear that in Prudentópolis some settlers resisted the interventions and authority of the priests; however, unlike in Jangada, there the majority of the population rose up against the attackers. Muzyka writes:

> Some intended to expel the priest. One night, a group gathered after supper and armed with clubs shouted swear words in the street in front of the priest's house; it was a terrible thing to hear.

The settlers called a council. In the evening they were at the meeting and calmly discussing [the matter] when the shouting mob arrived. They shouted slogans or simply swore. And our people were witnesses of all this, and they called a further meeting where they decided to guard the priest, the nearest lines taking turn, which they did for a week. (Muzyka, 1936)

In his letters Kizyma himself mentions the intervention of some of the settlers on his behalf: 'today, while I am writing this letter, they sent some people to the priest [Martynyuk], to protect him and take him to [another] house. And we never stay anywhere without a guard. Our people guard the house day and night, and I, without a revolver in my hand, do not dare to take a step.' (Kizyma, [1898]: 159).

In his next letter, he reported that the danger was gradually decreasing: father Kizyma had let the guard go, and although he still did not risk going out without his revolver at easy reach, wrote to his superiors that his work was calmer. Kizyma states in this letter that 'The Brazilians came over to our side; they declared they were prepared to vigorously defend us.' (*op cit*: 188).

In his next letter, the tone of Kizyma's writing is much calmer. He states that 'our adversaries, defeated, have moved somewhere else. The reason for their defeat was that the people converted [to the faith], leaving their pagan and immoral [way of] life, so that they lost their source of exploitation.' Kizyma emphasizes once again the role of the settlers in his defense: 'and for this our people raised themselves up and resuscitated their souls for peace.' Well pleased with his missionary work, Kizyma closes his letter with the following words: 'we now have a people of whom we can be proud (...) for this we had to place our lives at risk, but God transformed all the suffering and unhappiness into something much better. Our work proceeds once again and without impediments, and is developing very well.' (*op cit*: 204).

The case of Prudentópolis shows that the priests did not count on the support of all the Ruthenians who lived in the colonies of Paraná. A more nuanced view of these events is denied us, due to lack of access to the views of the dissatisfied settlers; we can however affirm that, from a given moment on, and with the support of part of the settlers, the priests Kizyma and Martynyuk managed to establish their authority in this colony – or, as Kizyma himself described it from the religious point of view, these settlers decided to 'follow the teachings', 'abandon paganism' and 'convert their souls to peace'.

Kizyma' and Martynyuk's success was essential as the factor that led to Prudentópolis becoming the largest center for Ruthenian immigrants in Brazil. When they saw that father Kizyma had structured the religious life of the settlers in Prudentópolis, other Ruthenians moved there in their quest for the daily coexistence that they so sorely lacked. Kizyma comments on the first Easter spent in Brazil in the following words:

> there were a great many people, as apart from the settlers here others came for Holy Week from the states of Paraná and Sao Paulo. They wept, the wretched people; they wept! And they wept because in four years it was the first time they had heard and sung the *Hrystos Voskres* [*Christ has Risen, a hymn sung only at Easter*]. Many of them stayed, bought their little farmhouses and prayed, and got married here so that they could settle nearer the Church and beside Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. (Kizyma, [1898]: 205).

One of these settlers who ended up moving to Prudentópolis after the Easter services was the father of the immigrant Paulo Muzyka. Muzyka had been retained by the Galician Guard as he was leaving Galicia, and his family left without him. He only managed to leave for Brazil some months later, and everywhere he went he asked after his father, but didn't manage to find him. In the end he occupied a farmhouse on the Nova Galícia line, in Prudentópolis, where he lived alone. Several months later, one of the immigrants who had lived in his village in Galicia and who was living in the outskirts of Curitiba came to Prudentópolis to attend one of father Kizyma's masses. When he asked after inhabitants of his village, he discovered that Muzyka was there, and finally put him in touch with his father – who had settled in Tomás Coelho, near Curitiba. Kuzeka's father arrived in Prudentópolis at the time of the services that preceded Holy Week. Muzyka relates:

> My father was overjoyed by the fact that here there was a priest [of our church] and our mass. It was Lent, and so my father went to the *poklone*. This pleased him greatly. He said to me 'there it's not bad, but I live among foreign folk. But I can sell [my house] there', and so he did and came [to live] among our people. (Muzyka, 1936)

The *poklone* (prostrations) are one of the innumerable rituals in the eastern rite of the Catholic Church that do not exist in the Latin rite,5 and constitute a series of prayers accompanied by thousands of prostrations on the ground, which continue for hours on the last Sunday of Lent. According to Muzyka's reconstruction of the story, his father moved to Prudentópolis due to the emotion these rituals aroused in him, 'among his people'. This information should be put into perspective due to the great importance that living with his son must have had for the father; however, it was Muzyka's father who moved from Tomás Coelho to Prudentópolis, and not the other way around, so the presence of the Ruthenian priests must indeed have been central to his decision. The presence of the priests and the increasing number of Ruthenians who came to live in the town led to the resuscitation of all the rituals of the various cycles of the religious calendar, including those for Easter and Christmas (described in minute detail by Schneider, 2002). Although since it's foundation Prudentópolis had counted on a large concentration of Ruthenians, it was after the establishment of the missions of fathers Kizyma and Martynyuk that it definitively became largest center for the concentration of Ruthenian immigrants in Brazil.

The third case that I examine here is that of the colony of Antônio Olyntho. The events that I will discuss took place during the second phase of the Ruthenian immigration to Brazil, after the year 1911. They are of interest in that they reveal a third type of relationship established between the settlers and priests in Paraná.

The first priests to take on missionary work in the community of Antônio Olyntho were Nikon Rozdolskyj, who visited it from Rio Claro where the permanent mission was established (Shyvchuk, 1936), and fathers Martynyuk and Myhniak (the third Basilian to arrive in Brazil, in November 1900), who also established their pastoral work there. In 1902, according to the report of father Burko (1984: 14), fathers Martynyuk and Myhniak returned to Galicia, and in 1906 Rozdolskyj became seriously ill and died. After this the community was attended by visits from the parish priest of Iracema (one of the Lucena colonies) Clemente Bjuhovskyj, who had arrived in Brazil in the company of two other Basilian missionaries in 1902. During all these years, the

5 For a more detailed discussion of the eastern rituals of the Ukrainian catholic church, cf. Horbatyuk, 1989: 134-138.

settlers of Antônio Olyntho also attended the services held by Polish priests of the Latin rite, with whom, however, they did not get on well.[6] Finally, in 1911, after a series of requests from father Bjuhovskyj, to the bishop of Curitiba and to the Archbishop of Lviv, a new missionary arrived in Antônio Olyntho to take over the parish: the secular priest Ivan Michalczuk. The history of the relationship between this priest and the community of Antônio Olyntho has been described in detail in Andreazza's doctoral thesis (1999) which deals with Ruthenian immigration to this colony and is the text which provided the basis for the following discussion.

Michalczuk worked in Antônio Olyntho between 1911 and 1950. According to people interviewed by Andreazza, Michalczuk demanded large scale attendance of the faithful at all the rituals, telling them that absence from the religious services was a mortal sin; he whipped the faithful with 'a little whip from which he was never parted'; ranted in his sermons: 'you are ignorant, you are no more than trash. You are masons. All of you together aren't worth so much as one of my horses; my dog is worth more than you; you're riffraff. I stamp on you with my shoes'; and he forbade all music and dancing on Sundays, as he himself recorded in the parish records, 'teaching them discipline' from the start, when 'the iron was hot and malleable [and] many bowed before the will of God.' As he was always ranting and always angry, he left an impression on the settler's that is crystallized in the way he was described by one of the people Andreazza interviewed: 'that priest was red'.

Michalczuk fell out more seriously with the settlers on the Santos Andrade line, a little further away from the center of the Antônio Olyntho colony. It should be mentioned here that in 1911, when this priest arrived in Brazil, the Ruthenian settlers were already better structured; he immediately took over the control of everything that had been constructed until then. In Santos Andrade the settlers gave him the key to the chapel that had been built before he arrived. However, as he only appeared to hold services very sporadically, and refused to hand back the keys, they were prevented from saying their prayers in the chapel for periods of as long as three months.

6 Andreazza (1999: 90) states that one of the Polish priests beat his followers, and that another was even murdered – according to newspapers of the time, suspicion for the crime fell on one of the followers (the paper does not specify whether he was of Ruthenian or of Polish origin). Vihorenskyj (1958: 49) states that the same thing occurred in Iracema: 'This [polish] priest had come from Lviv and was called Alexander Ivanovych. He did not treat our people well, and struggled to convert them to the Latin [rite]'.

The last straw in the differences between Michalczuk and the Santos Andrade settlers was when he took over the control of the St. Basil Brotherhood, which in addition to organizing the Apostolates of Prayer also administered the funds collected from the settlers for the running of the school and the maintenance of the church and the cemetery. On taking control he also took over the funds which he used as he pleased, according to his own criteria, while the whole structure constructed by the settlers was relegated to a state of total abandon.

Andreazza noted that several settlers who lived on this line had probably arrived after 1907. That date is significant because a number of Ruthenians who had stayed in Galicia after 1896 had contact there with the discussions of the *Prosvita* Society, a lay institution whose aim was to educate the settlers – and in a number of cases assumed an anti-clerical stance.

Thus the settlers of Santos Andrade did something that would perhaps have been unthinkable for the Ruthenians who arrived in the previous waves of immigration: they decided to sue the priest. Michalczuk, however, always won the cases. According to Andreazza, on one of the occasions on which he was summoned to justify his actions, the priest arrived in the company of over a hundred settlers who supported him, who intimidated the rebels into giving in to their demands. The settlers then attempted to solve their differences of opinion with the priest by writing to the bishop of Lviv, and even to the bishop of Curitiba, narrating the events, but Michalczuk always received the support of the hierarchy of the church.

The differences of opinion even reached a point where, in 1913, the priest registered in the parish records that several of the settlers were preparing to 'kill me, and have even offered 200,000 reis for my head.' In one of the interviews given to Andreazza, one settler even stated that in 1919 twenty armed men set up an ambush for the priest near a bridge, but didn't have the courage to attack him.

With the passing of the years , in the eyes of the settlers Michalczuk appeared increasingly powerful and invincible – and rich, as he refused to minister any of the sacraments without payment in advance. The settlers referred to these payments in their letters as 'feudal dues' rather than 'tithes', showing that they saw them as a feudal obligation rather than a religious one.

The fact that Michalczuk continued as parish priest in Antônio Olyntho until 1950 shows that, in the end, his authority prevailed in the colony. Andreazza points out, however, that the names of the people who stood out as

leaders of the community disappeared from the parish records from the 20s onward. Her hypothesis is that 'possibly at this time a selection of those who were included as parishioners occurred' (*op cit*: 107), in other words, those settlers who disliked the priest's behavior left Antônio Olyntho, and 'those [parishioners] more rooted in traditional peasant behavior remained' (*id*, *ibid*).

What the examination of the case of Antônio Olyntho appears to indicate at first sight is that the opposite to what had happened in Prudentópolis: whereas in the latter the presence of the priests had served as a magnet to attract Ruthenian settlers, in the former some of the settlers left their plots precisely because of the presence of Michalczuk.

First, however, one should question whether the difference between the cases of Kizyma and of Michalczuk is not due to the lack of availability of sources that allow us to discuss them. We have no testimony from any of the settlers of Prudentópolis who protested against the actions of father Kizyma. If one of them had spoken about this, couldn't he have presented a different version of the reasons for the protests? Could Kizyma's authority have been as oppressive as Michalczuk's? Could Muzyka and Hotsajlyuk, who informed us about Kizyma, have defended him due to being excessively biased in favor of domination of the priests, as Andreazza indicates could have been the case of the settlers who stayed in Antônio Olyntho?

We will never know for certain, given that testimony for the other side – from those who might have defended Michalczuk or those who might have criticized Kizyma – does not exist. However, there are various indications in the existing documentation that the difference in the two cases is not due to bias of the available sources, but rather to the idiosyncrasies of each priest. Let me examine these indications. In the first place, we have the report of Mehailo Shyvchuk, written in 1936: Shyvchuk was one of the settlers who stayed in Antônio Olyntho after 1920. His report is interrupted when Michalczuk comes on the scene. Shyvchuk neither defends nor attacks him; he preferred to remain silent on the presence of the priest. This shows, at the very least, that Michalczuk's presence in the town was still controversial in 1936 – whereas Kizyma, according to available sources, enjoyed the confidence and support of the settlers who remained in Prudentópolis as long as he lived.

Secondly, there are no records of protests against Kizyma, whereas Michalczuk left in his wake innumerable letters of protest, court cases and indignant testimony, that can still be heard today in Antônio Olyntho.

Finally, the sources available on Kizyma indicate that he lived a precarious existence, whereas Michalczuk demanded payment for the sacraments even if this represented a sacrifice for the settlers. As a result he accumulated a great deal of property during his lifetime: according to the information gathered by Andreazza in the registry office of Antônio Olyntho, on his death Michalczuk owned more than 100 alqueires of land.[7]

Thus the case of Michalczuk would appear to indicate that the acceptance of the authority of the Greek Catholic priests on the part of the Ruthenian settlers was not a question of blind faith. The settlers of Antônio Olyntho indeed desired the presence of a priest, but not at any cost. This was to lead to some of them leaving the colony, and even among those who remained, as the interviews conducted by Andreazza show, acceptance of the way Michalczuk exercised his authority was far from unanimous.

Conclusion

In the article quoted in the introduction to this text, Truzzi (2012) undertakes a careful examination of the vicissitudes of the concept of 'assimilation' in studies of the ways immigrants have been incorporated into Brazilian society. According to Truzzi, in the first decades of the 20th century the concept seems to have referred to an 'inappellable process', given that 'any remaining cultural traits of a group were interpreted as indications of an incomplete process towards a prevailing standard of assimilation' (*op cit*: 528). From the end of the 1970s, as a result of criticism and of social movements demanding rights for minority groups, this trend seems to have been reverted, 'in favor of studies concentrating on ethnic persistence' (*op cit*: 529). Truzzi shows how this new focus, in turn, 'relegated to the shadows the occurrence of further-reaching social processes, including studying how such groups (...) became

7 Michalczuk was not the only Greek catholic priest who managed to accumulate property by the end of his life: after only a few years of living in the country, the priests already managed to recreate their position as 'gentlemen farmers' (to use Himka's expression), owning land and material goods. Michalczuk's own property ended up in their hands. Originally, as Michalczuk was a secular priest, his property would not have been transferred to the Greek catholic clergy. However, as is registered in the Antônio Olyntho parish records, 'before his death' Michalczuk took his vows and finally became an ordained priest, and 'died as a member of the Order of St. Basil the Great', adopting the name of 'Innocence'. With this last minute conversion, his entire estate could be transferred to the Basilian Order (*apud* Andreazza, *op cit*: 131, n. 14).

integrated into the social fabric.' Lastly, the author defends the legitimacy of using the concept of assimilation, albeit with new meanings.

Efforts to understand the theoretical tendencies of research in a given field, such as Truzzi's, are fundamental for revealing trends which, if not taken into account, tend to obscure the understanding of certain social processes, regardless of innumerable studies about them. After all, as the author himself, quoting Fernando Pessoa, says, 'a way of seeing is also a way of not seeing' (*op cit*: 531). Following this line of thought, I believe that one of the ways for a researcher to overcome the *doxa* in a given area of study is to take as his or her departure point a rigorous, in-depth empirical approach, based on the historical processes observable in the field, in other words, base his study on an intensive commitment to the research of primary sources (and/or field experience, depending on the situation) that allow him to question those *doxai*. In this context, the present text that is based on such an in-depth empirical approach intends to throw light on some of the social dynamics related to the maintenance or abandonment of native cultural traits in immigrant communities,.

The three cases described form a mosaic of the relationships that the Ruthenians established with the Greek Catholic priests soon after their arrival in the colonies of Paraná. The analysis of what occurred in Jangada, in Prudentópolis and in Antônio Olyntho indicates that the idea that the priests were necessary was not uniformly held by the settlers who came to Brazil: those in Jangada lived without any contact with the priests; and in neither Prudentópolis nor Antônio Olyntho was their acceptance unanimous, given that in both these colonies some of the Ruthenians defended their presence while others contested it. Careful analysis of events that occurred in the field indicates that the maintenance, or otherwise, of adherence to the moral social order was closely linked to the specific historical configuration that established itself in each of these groups – and that the different ways in which events developed led to different outcomes, whether greater affirmation of ethnic elements or greater assimilation on the part of the immigrants of the values of a broader society.

In the case of the Ruthenians in Brazil, it was only in the colonies where the priests imposed themselves that religion maintained a central role in the conduct of local life. In colonies such as Jangada, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Uniate religion ceased to be relevant in the daily lives of the

immigrants who continued to live there; whereas in Prudentópolis (and even in Antônio Olyntho, but only after a new settler profile had been established) the priests continued to occupy a central position in the coming years, even going beyond their religious activities – while at the same time having to counteract forceful resistance to their mission. This outcome was also due to the development of specific historical processes, that have been the subject of a more far-reaching study (Guérios, 2012), to which I refer readers interested in further study of the subject.

The case of Jangada could, in a study with a strong theoretical bias, be taken as illustrative of a process of assimilation, whereas those of Prudentópolis and Antônio Olyntho could be taken as illustrative of differing processes of ethnic affirmation. In all these cases, however, as has been seen above, the question of the adherence or otherwise to the dictates of religion within these groups could only be resolved empirically. What the careful comparison of these cases indicates, then, is that the analysis of the ways in which immigrants are incorporated into the societies that receive them can at no time, regardless of the theoretical orientation or bias of the analysts, dispense with an intensive empirical investigation in order to reveal their dynamics.

Received: 19/07/2012
Approved: 24/06/2013
Translated by Mark Carlyon
Original Language: Portuguese

Photographies



Lodging built amidst the Araucaria forest in Paraná to receive immigrants in Prudentópolis in 1894. (Collection of the Millennium Museum - Prudentópolis)



Measurement of lots of Ukrainian settlers amid the forest of pines. (Collection of the Millennium Museum - Prudentópolis)



House of Prudentópolis colonist after the first cutting of the forest. (Collection of the Millennium Museum - Prudentópolis)



Father Sylvester Kizyma (dressed in white, standing on the left) in the consecration of the first Ukrainian church of Prudentópolis (Collection of the Millennium Museum - Prudentópolis)

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