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The culture and territory of polish immigration in Áurea, Rio Grande do Sul – Brazil

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Keywords

Cultural codes
Territory
Polish identity

Abstract

European immigration to the south of Brazil became one of the main migratory flows in the colonization process as well as in the agricultural development aimed by the Brazilian state. Considering this migratory flow, the Polish immigration was important to Rio Grande do Sul and, primarily, as the main focus in this study, the colonization of Áurea, starting in 1911. The main purpose is to discuss the importance of this migratory process to the cultural elements which appear in the routine of these Polish descendants who currently live in Áurea. Then, the following cultural codes were analyzed: religion, language and dialect, arts, dance, music, cuisine, architecture and costume. It was possible to observe that for decades and since the new generations, after more than one century of colonization, most of these codes are still alive in the traditions and the descendants' daily habits, their religious ceremonies, the dialect and the cuisine. However, the process of new culture assimilation in Brazil has become more latent and it is replacing the tradition which survived and has been surviving among the generations closer to the immigrants. Finally, the valorization and the perpetuation of the immigrants' heritage and memories have been kept, from generation to generation, and this process is crucial to avoid neither losing nor forgetting the history of Áurea

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INTRODUCTION

Population migration is characterized by the displacement of individuals in a given geographical space. These flows are part of a permanent or temporary process of relocation of these individuals, being motivated by different factors of attraction and/or expulsion, in which economic, religious, cultural and natural factors are among the main triggers.

Economic migration is the one that exerts greater influence on the population. It is characterized as the movements of human groups to areas where the productive system concentrates greater or better job opportunities.

In Brazil, two major distinct activities co-existed in the immigration process: colonization and immigration. The first was aimed at forming colonies of foreigners that made the occupation of certain regions permanent, the second was the private initiative, whose purpose was associated with the interests of the big farming industry (WENCZENOVICZ, 2002).

Migrations through the Brazilian territory are, for the most part, associated with economic factors, since the time of the colonization. In this migratory wake, the Polish migration is highlighted by the circumstances of the crisis of the Republic of Poland in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, which caused its inhabitants to emigrate in search of better living conditions, in a large scale in Brazil and elsewhere in the Americas (GRITTI, 2004).

The Polish immigrants arrived to the municipality of Áurea, Rio Grande do Sul state – Brazil, in 1911. The colonization of the municipality was directly inserted in the government policy of development of the southern region of Brazil, with the objective of supplying the internal and external agricultural market.

Thus, the emergence of Áurea, as well as its processes of dismemberment and emancipation, is directly linked to the leasing of land to European immigrants, especially those of Polish origin. Polish identity persists over the decades, making the territory of Áurea an "extension of the homeland left behind" in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The research on Polish immigration to the municipality of Áurea is justified by the need to understand this migration process, which corresponds to about 20% of the number of immigrants who landed in Rio Grande do Sul.

The present work has as its objective to recognize the contribution of the Polish immigrants in the spatial and cultural organization of the municipality of Áurea, analyzing the process of deterritorialization and reterritorialization of Polish immigrants in Rio Grande do Sul; pointing out the importance of the presence of Polish immigrants in the development process of Áurea; and finally, characterizing the Polish cultural codes and their representations in the municipality. Regarding the methodological procedures, the qualitative approach was used,

based on the exploratory field research, documentaries and interviews with the residents. The cultural codes analyzed were identified based on observations made in the city of Áurea. Eight different cultural codes were listed: religion, language and dialect, dances, music, art, architecture, cuisine and typical costumes. The identification of these codes was done as they manifested themselves - to a greater or lesser degree.

REVIEW OF THEORETICAL MATRICES

The cultural theme has been approached by several different sciences. In geography, this study appears as a line of research that seeks to explain human relations and their implications in space. Debates and discussions around this concept have given rise to several studies and conceptualizations, improving it as one of the key concepts for the study of the relation society/nature (PICCIN, 2009).

According to Piccin (2009), the cultural approach in geography concerns humanity as a whole, where different groups interact and change over time.

Cultural geography is understood as the study of different cultural manifestations, such as religion, beliefs, rituals, arts, forms of work, that is, ideas of a social group and a people. Thus, culture materializes itself as the knowledge of a particular social group. This sum of knowledge, which is understood by human and cultural geography as floating, and which modifies and adapts to the different media and contexts, cannot be considered as

finished or immutable, nor as a homogeneous culture (BRUM NETO, 2007).

There are many ways to visualize a particular culture in space. It is through the understanding of the cultural codes that characterize these cultural transformations, their crystallization in the culture of a people, as well as the substitution of habits for others through adaptations, by diverse forces, of traditions that transform themselves through time.

For Brum Neto (2007, p. 43),

Cultural codes are defined as symbolic conventions shared by the same social community. And, responsible for their identification, highlighting the difference, since each cultural group is permeated by a symbolic system of particular representation, (re) constructed in the constant evolutionary process of societies. [...] The culture mediated by the codes is represented and materialized in space, giving rise to typical forms that can be recognized by other social groups. Deciphering and interpreting codes means understanding the dynamics of the culture in question, the values and beliefs that guide attitudes and actions. These, in turn, are mechanically repeated as a common guiding pattern.

It is observed, therefore, that from the cultural codes cultural identity is formed. In this research, the different cultural codes identified demonstrate the mutability of culture, its symbols and signs that are perpetuated, adapted and modified over time.

Cultural identity is closely linked to the territory where it manifests itself. For Haesbaert (1999, p.179), "social identity is also territorial when the central symbolic referent for the construction of this identity is part of

or transcends the territory". Almeida (2008, p.108) is in agreement with this statement since for her "the territory is the object of symbolic operations and it is in it that the actors project their conceptions of the world."

Corrêa (2012) states that spatial symbolic forms are endowed with political meaning, which are designed to: a) glorify the past; b) reconstruct the past, giving it new meanings; c) transmit values of a certain group; d) reinforce the identity of a religious, ethnic, racial, or social group; and e) create places of memory.

Claval (2014) presents cultural identity as an action crystallized in the territory, thus carrying a geographical view of these processes. For him, identity is presented through landmarks and visible signs on the ground: churches in small towns, crosses along roads, minarets, cemeteries of uncertain geometries, whose repeated presence is a sign of belonging, of recognition, of confirmation of identities.

The territory is seen as something that generates roots and identity: a group cannot be understood without its territory, in the sense that the sociocultural identity of people would be inextricably linked to the attributes of the concrete space - nature, architectural heritage and landscape (SOUSA, 1995).

Raffestin (1993) states that territory is configured by the space, which is the result of an action conducted by a syntagmatic actor at any level. By appropriating space in a concrete or abstract way, the actor "territorializes" it. Thus, territory is understood here as an

identity constructor, where territorialization and deterritorialization are loaded with symbolisms that identify and characterize their acting agents.

CHARACTERIZATION OF THE STUDY AREA

The municipality of Áurea is located in the north of the state of Rio Grande do Sul. It belongs to the Northwest Mesoregion of the state. According to the Köppen-Geiger climate classification, the municipality has a humid subtropical climate, rainforest biome and an average altitude of 587 meters below sea level, covering an area of 158.29 km².

According to data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), found in the 2010 Census, the population of the municipality was 3,665 people, of which 2,128 people lived in the rural area and 1,537 people lived in the urban area. According to the population estimate data provided by the IBGE in 2019, the municipality currently has a population of 3,554 inhabitants (IBGE, 2019).

The economy of the municipality is essentially rural, with the production of grains such as soybeans, corn, wheat and beans. It is important to highlight the cultivation and production of yerba mate, which aims to serve the local and regional markets.

One of the striking features of the region today polarized by Erechim, which is a commercial hub and the most populous town in the region, is the ethnic and cultural diversity of its population. This has been

evident since its foundation. In the documents of entry of immigrants that refer to the period from 1911 to 1914, there are records of immigrants of German, Austrian, Polish, Russian, Italian, Portuguese, Swedish, Dutch and Japanese nationality ([GRITTI, 2004](#)).

MIGRATORY STAGES

At the end of the nineteenth century, industrialization was intensified in the United States, because of the emergence of numerous factories, as well as the expansion of plantations and coal mines, creating a high demand for workers, such as farmers, miners and professional workers ([WENCZENOVICZ, 2002](#)).

The North American industries initiated an intense campaign to recruit workers from different professions in European countries in order to boost production. Given the advantages offered, and because Europe was in a period of economic recession, large numbers of Europeans crossed the Atlantic Ocean to the United States in search of jobs and better living conditions. In this wave of immigrants, Stawinski ([1976](#)) highlights workers from countries such as Ireland, Italy, Poland and Germany.

Years later, the same propaganda began in countries of Latin America. The Brazilian government adhered to the movement, aiming to attract new arms and new elements to its lands ([STAWINSKI, 1976](#)).

According to Wenczenovicz ([2002](#)), the European migratory process was due to the

excess of labor in European villages, the lack of land for the new generations, the absence of agrarian laws, and the devaluation of rural handicrafts because of the Industrial Revolution.

After this period of German and Italian immigration, the German government prohibited German emigration to Brazil, which forced the Brazilian government to look for new sources of immigrants in less developed regions of Europe. It was in this wake that Polish immigration to the country began ([GARDOLINSKI, 1956](#)).

The Brazilian government stimulated the immigration of Europeans to occupy strategic regions of the territory and to increase food production to supply the domestic and foreign market ([STAWINSKI, 1976](#)).

Gardolinski ([1956](#)) divides Polish immigration to Brazil into three different historical moments. The first phase happened between 1869-1871, when the first 32 Polish families immigrated to Brazil. They were sent to the city of Brusque, in Santa Catarina, populated mainly by German immigrants back then. The second phase (1873-1891), in which the Polish immigration to the State of Paraná grows. The third phase (1895-1914) was the most significant in quantitative and historical terms, since there was massive immigration of Poles to Brazil after the proclamation of the Republic (1889). The period became known as "Brazilian fever." It is estimated that between the years 1890 and 1914, about 96,000 Poles landed in Brazil. Paraná received

approximately 35,000 individuals and Rio Grande do Sul received 32,000 immigrants.

The arrival of the first immigrants to the municipality of Áurea occurred in 1911, coming from the regions of *Kalisz*, *Plock*, Warsaw and surrounding areas, dominated by the Russian Empire back then (WENCZENOVICZ, 2002).

The colonization of this area, as well as other areas of southern Brazil that received waves of European immigrants, had as main objectives: to replace slave labor with free labor at a time when the expansion of the capitalism was taking place; to populate and colonize uninhabited areas with groups of small agricultural owners; as well as to structure the productive chain, aiming to contribute to the domestic supply of the country and alleviate the unevenness of the trade balance, caused by the heavy weight of food imports.

In 1908, the colony of Erechim was founded. In 1953, the District of Gaurama emancipated itself from Erechim, so that Áurea became part of the Gaurama municipality. In 1987, together with other neighboring towns with a large presence of immigrants, Áurea achieved its emancipation. It received the symbolic title of "Brazilian Capital of the Poles" in 1997, thus perpetuating its roots and connections with the Polish culture.

POLISHNESS - CULTURAL IDENTITY AND CULTURAL CODES

Polishness is characterized as the Polish culturalization passed on by the immigrants to their descendants, from generation to generation, thus keeping the Polish culture alive (KOKUSZKA, 2001).

Bauman (2013) presents the term "polishness" to explain the cultural crystallization of Polish immigrants, which is characterized as the materialization of the Polish characteristics that are taken with their emigrants to other countries. For him, this cultural trait is of crucial symbolism in order to keep alive the original tradition of this people.

The Polish-Brazilianity is the cultural mix between Polish immigrants and their descendants in different regions of Rio Grande do Sul and Brazil. This Polish-Brazilianity consists of attributes inherited from the immigrants - being represented by diverse cultural codes that today are mixed with the Brazilian culture and, above all, with the *gaúcho culture*. For Poplavski (2017, p. 48), "within the diverse ethnic and cultural 'crucible', characteristic of Brazil and the Rio Grande do Sul of today, we have the Polish element as one of the most expressive and influential."

In this way, the Polish culture is part of the diverse ethnic groups that colonized Rio Grande do Sul, constituting one of the many figures that shape the *gaúcho*, their perpetuated traditionalism, as well as their mutability under the external influences.

Polish identity persists over the decades through various customs passed down from

generation to generation. According to Delong and Dorotea (2014), this identity is constructed throughout life, in the different interactions and social practices. It is not an individual phenomenon, but a social one, where identity is what makes us recognized as a certain type of person in a given context.

RELIGIOSITY

Religiosity is a significant cultural code and one of the main propagators of Polish culture. Coming from a nation where the Catholic religion was predominant, the immigrants sought to maintain Catholic rites in the new lands (GRITTI, 2004), building the church and devotion to Our Lady of Monte Claro (*Matka Boska Częstochowska*).

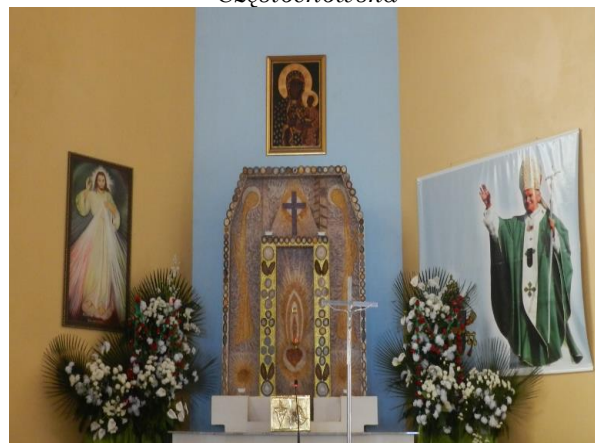
For Krupinski (1990), the main Polish traditions remain, in large part, directly linked to religious life in the community, composed not only of religious rites but also of their interrelations, in the coexistence built by the members.

The materialization of this faith and devotion of the Poles became concrete as these immigrants arrived to the municipality of Áurea. Even before they got involved in the task of opening the roads, they worked hard to build a church so they could exercise the religion they brought from their homeland.

Several buildings were built over the decades until the current church was completed, which was inaugurated in 1960. Its design and execution were directed by professionals from the European country,

aiming at the construction of a matrix that carried the characteristics of religious models from Poland (Figure 1).

Figure 1 - Altar of the Church - *Matka Boska Częstochowska*



Source: Author, 2017.

In Figure 1, the different representations of religiosity under Polish influence can be seen on the altar of the church. This influence is manifested by the image of *Karol Józef Wojtyła* (Pope John Paul II), and the image of *Matka Boska Częstochowska* (Our Lady of Monte Claro), considered the "Patroness of Poland".

The rites of the main religious festivities also carry traits of Poland. Christmas and Easter, also celebrated with devotion by the Brazilian Catholic adherents, are celebrated with strong traces of how they were performed in the European country. On Easter Sunday, food is taken to the church, where it is blessed, to be consumed only later by families. The Christmas vigil is performed only after the sharing of the Christmas wafer (*opłatek*). For the descendants of the Polish immigrants, the Christmas vows contained in the *opłatek* are "the expression of sincere, human and family

fraternity". After the celebrations, all go to the church to participate in the Mass of the Rooster (*pasterka*).

The religiosity was also an important propagator of the Polish language among the immigrants who started living in Áurea. Initially, liturgical literacy was only performed in Polish language, with immigrant priests who were sent to the parishes of the Polish colonies in Brazil, to maintain the customs and linguistic habits of the Polish homeland. Later, with the purpose of cultural insertion, it was also taught in Portuguese. It was taught in Polish in the morning and in Portuguese in the afternoon. Therefore, liturgical literacy was inserted as an important factor of identity of these immigrants.

Thus, religiosity was not only important for the spiritual support of the first immigrants to withstand the adverse conditions of colonization but also allowed for the cohesion of identity of the group, although with new challenges for its permanence.

LANGUAGE AND DIALECT

The language and the dialect also constitute a cultural code of great importance, which remains alive in the daily life and in the schools of the municipality, which besides Portuguese, also teach Polish. Kokuszka (2001) refers to this fact as an interaction between the school and the society where it is inserted, and the teaching must be directed to the social needs and the integration between both.

In the initial period of the Polish colonization, the immigrants who colonized the municipality of Áurea spoke to each other only in Polish, since they did not know or mastered the Portuguese language. This interaction and learning occurred initially in the form of a dialect and in the mixed communication between the two languages, which was part of a slow process of insertion, since the two languages have deep differences in their roots. This practice of maintaining the Polish language in the community was encouraged mainly by the Polish priests who came from Poland in order to keep alive the linguistic and religious traditions of the European country.

It should be noted that there are differences between language and dialect. Language, like Portuguese and Polish, is a system formed by rules and values present in the minds of speakers of a linguistic community and learned thanks to the innumerable speech acts with which they have contact. A dialect is the name given to linguistic varieties, which can be regional or social.

It is observed that nowadays a large part of the population still communicates orally in the Polish dialect in the city of Áurea, but they do not have a broad command of this dialect as far as the written part is concerned. In addition to the low level of education of some inhabitants, this is explained by the fact that reading and writing are not practiced, since in most cases the Polish language is learned in the family context, from random everyday dialogues, mainly referring to the work in the

field.

The Polish language, although used in the familiar and religious spheres, tends to gradually have less reach across the generations. Today, this dialect is restricted to a few communication channels.

The Polish language and dialect are an important cultural code, imprinted mainly in the immaterial domain, and reverberates throughout the Polish culture among the descendants of immigrants. As a symbol of a people, language is the first trace of territorialization, and it is what still makes these inhabitants feel close to the European country.

DANCE, MUSIC, ART AND TYPICAL COSTUMES

Another important cultural code is the Polish folklore, represented through dances and popular songs, as well as in its artistic manifestations and typical costumes.

As a materialization of culture through music and dance, there is today a folkloric group called *Auresóvia* (a combination of the name of the city and Warsaw, capital of Poland) that does dances and different Polish artistic representations. Founded in 1988, because of the encouragement and organization of religious people linked to the Parish of Our Lady of Monte Claro, the group presents Polish dances with regional characteristics, where the dresses, rhythms and traits are remarkable for understanding their origins and representations.

The dances presented by the group are divided among the cast according to their age group, so that there is a group of children and juvenile, adult and senior groups. The main dances are: *Kokotek*, a Silesian dance performed by the children group; *Kaszuby*, a regional dance from northern Poland, performed by the juvenile cast; *Krakowiak*, a national dance, one of the oldest and most representative for the Poles, where the steps imitate the galloping movements of the horses and which is performed by the adult cast; and *Trojak*, a Silesian folk dance, danced by one man and two women, performed by the senior cast.

What stands out from this cultural code is the clothes-making, since the costumes are produced by the members of the community, carrying, thus, unique characteristics of production and representing the regionalities of Poland. This characteristic makes the Polish clothes worn in the municipality, to a certain extent, a product of the polishness experienced and perpetuated by the descendants of Polish immigrants, carrying and building traits that stand out from other Polish settlement regions and colonies.

Traditional Polish music is perpetuated in Áurea in the form of traditional festivities, through its connection with the country of origin of the immigrants, as well as its representativeness in folk dances, through cultural presentations characterized by traditional dresses and remarkable regional styles.

Art, in its different forms and

manifestations, is one of the main propagators of Polish culture among its descendants. For Bauman (2013), the mission of art is to save us from the forgetfulness of being. In this way, the Polish artistic representations are reflections of their different periods throughout history, which is characterized mainly by the religious worship, through the different colorations in the images, the representation of the periods of oppression lived in the occupations, among other periods that are of fundamental understanding to interpret such constructions.

Among the great variety and great wealth of Polish folk art, the *wycinanka*, an old Polish folk art made with cut-out paper and many colors, occupies a prominent place as decorative art, the result of the manifestation of the artistic temperament of the Polish people, always characterized as being an art represented by the union of several colors.

Painting eggs in Easter celebration remains alive in the tradition of the Polish immigrants, linked directly to the religious rites. For them, the egg is a symbol of life and procreation, being for many Christians, a symbol of the resurrection.

These forms of representation from art, as well as the knowledge of history and the value of the representation that is carried with these artistic manifestations, are cultural traits that are also characterized by being of great importance for the Polish culture among the descendants of immigrants.

ARCHITECTURE

The narrative on Polish architecture is complex as the political trajectory of this part of Europe. The borders of Poland have been changed several times, the partitions and the loss of independence, the destruction during wartime and finally the European funds that stimulate the construction market are factors that contribute to the image of Polish architecture. It is versatile, surprising, modern, but also often very traditional, characterized mainly by elements that go back to the reflections of structures designed to be shelters during the winter.

One of the main characteristics of the Polish buildings is the coloring of their façades, represented by warm colors, and, inside, a structure that borders on simplicity, reflecting the historical economic condition of the country, where its population was limited in relation to acquisition of goods (Figure 2).

Figure 2 - Polish Architecture in Áurea/RS.



Source: Author, 2017.

In Figure 2, some characteristics of the Polish architecture can still be found in the municipality of Áurea. Such representation is characterized by the warm coloration, woodwork with adornments and artistic contours, as well as wood joints with little or almost no use of metal rods.

The Parish Church of Our Lady of Monte Claro is an example of the diffusion of the peculiar Polish architecture. The architecture of this church was influenced by the architectural style of the Polish churches. The ornamental simplicity of both its façade and its interior, and devotion materialized by few religious adornments are simplistic features of Polish architecture.

The Polish architectural style can still be observed in some houses and buildings of the municipality of Áurea, making it an important cultural code. It is noteworthy that Polish-style houses differ from the ones found in Poland, mainly due to the climatic conditions in Brazil.

What is observed, based on the historical documentary analysis, is that the architectural influence concretized by the immigrants took place in the modeling of the houses, realized with wood joints, without the aid of nails and other materials. It is worth mentioning that this can also be considered a characteristic of the German and other European constructions, thus demonstrating the external influence pervaded in the Polish architecture.

This style of construction is characterized by Wenczenovicz (2010). The

author states that at the time of installation in the colonial lot, the construction of the residence was among the most important tasks for the beginning of the enterprise. In general, it was the immigrants themselves who built their houses, using material found on the property: clay, wood, straw and stones. Nails were hardly used in Polish architecture, although occasionally used by German and Italian immigrants. The Poles used, above all, the system of wood joints - *blocause* -, used in Poland for several centuries, mainly in the rural area.

In Áurea, Polish architecture is represented by few houses and buildings that maintain this characteristic structure. The same applies to the furniture of the houses, with much of this inheritance of the immigrants exposed in museums. The structures of sheds and areas for agricultural activities and animal husbandry still exist in some properties, but are degrading over time.

CUISINE

The culture of a territory is expressed in different ways, among them through its cuisine. Cuisine is the set of recipes, techniques and rules shared collectively. It "contains and expresses the culture of those who practice it, it is the depository of traditions and the identities of the groups. It is thus an extraordinary vehicle for self-representation and intercultural communication" (MONTANARI, 2009, p. 11), in addition to showing collective preferences

and reflecting structures of society (CLAVALL, 2014).

The traditional Polish gastronomy is also an important cultural code of Áurea, represented by different dishes and drinks, the Polish cuisine is passed down from generation to generation

The *czarnina* is the most popular dish of the Polish cuisine among its descendants, along with the *pierogi*, being often served together in the meals. The *czarnina* consists of a soup produced with duck meat dipped in its blood, which became popular in Poland and Lithuania in the seventeenth century, and to this day is a dish that is part of the everyday food of the Poles. *Pierogi* is a kind of baked pie, originally from Poland and western Ukraine, where it is called *pyrohy*.

The *Ognizco* (Figure 3) is also a representation that can still be found in Áurea. The rite is characterized by a fire pit, where sausages are individually roasted with a piece of wood, usually a piece of guadua bamboo. *Ognizco* means "fire/bonfire", and is performed as a form of representation of the union between celebrations of the June party with the Polish traditions, aiming to remember the customs of the old shepherds of Poland, that fed and celebrated around the fire during the harsh European winter.

Traditional Polish cuisine remains a strong cultural tie with the European country as it perpetuates itself among families in their daily meals. This cuisine is also characterized by its mutability and adherence of new ingredients from Brazil, such as yerba mate,

barbecue and other gastronomic habits and traditions incorporated mainly from the influence of the indigenous and the gauchos.

Figure 3 – *Ognizco*



Source: Author, 2017.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Almost a century after the arrival of the first Polish settlers, Áurea remains predominantly tied to the ethnic origin of the inhabitants and it is still identified as "Polish." This polishness, experienced mainly by the generations closest to the immigrants of the early twentieth century, is still perpetuated in the different cultural codes that are present in the daily life of Áurea, as in religious rites, in the Polish dialect, in the fields of the arts, architecture, music and dance as well as cooking

The colonization of Áurea meant for the Polish immigrants a political issue of autonomy, where the territory is closely linked to the perpetuation of its culture. This reality is preserved in the present day, since the municipality of Áurea is configured as a specific area, in the north of Rio Grande do Sul, which keeps the Polish traditions.

The Polishness is expressed as the culture perpetuated by the descendants of

Polish immigrants and materializes itself as a hybrid culture of habits linked directly to immigrants and Brazilian customs and traditions, represented by *gauchos* and indians. It is not possible to isolate the Polish culture that currently exists in the municipality, without understanding its external influences acquired after the migratory period.

In this way, it can be seen that the Polish culture, represented by its different cultural codes, is still significant in the spatial organization of the municipality of Áurea, making it receive the title of "Polish Capital of Brazilians", evidencing the reinvigoration of local Polish identities through its symbols and cultural codes, as well as through the different remaining customs and traditions.

The cultural codes are manifestations that play a role of favoring the identity of the group. The relevance of these issues as elements of cultural identity demonstrates the importance of such symbols for the geographical studies of groups that have strong socio-territorial ties or of those which participate in migratory events.

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