

Serge Cipko. *Ukrainians in Argentina, 1897–1950: The Making of a Community*. CIUS P, 2011. xxviii, 272 pp. Illustrations. Maps. Tables. Bibliography. Index. \$29.95, paper.

Serge Cipko's book is a thorough and informative study of three successive waves of Ukrainian immigration to Argentina. The author provides an accessible overview of the subject and uses a remarkable variety of examples from individual stories to depict the reality of the settlement process. He takes the reader on an evocative tour of Argentina by way of a number of acute commentaries as well as analyses of the social, political, and economic circumstances that influenced the development of the Ukrainian community in that country.

The book has six main chapters, which are organized in such a way that the reader can easily sense the transition from one wave of Ukrainian immigration to another. To start, official Ukrainian colonization of an area in Argentina called Misiones began in 1897 with fourteen families from Galicia. While the first wave of immigration could be identified as primarily agricultural, the second wave, which occurred after World War I, was more political. During the second wave (1920-39), several organizations were created (for example, the Prosvita Society, the periodical *Ukrains'ke slovo* [*Ukrainian Word*], and the Union of Ukrainian and Belarusian Workers' Organizations). Cipko elaborates on their activities as well as their role in promoting education, encouraging Ukrainians to learn about other cultures, providing information on immigration laws, and so on. The third wave of Ukrainian immigration occurred from 1946 to the 1950s, and despite its small total number, it had a significant impact on the organizational structure of the Ukrainian community and was the most politicized of the three waves. This postwar group of, generally, displaced persons constituted refugees who were "opposed to the Soviet regime in Ukraine" (183).

Cipko discusses the difficulties faced by the settlers, which included a language barrier, nostalgia, and the fact of "being immigrants"—these were "settlers from a densely populated part of Europe carried to a subtropical, inhospitable corner of Argentina" (17). The author explains how the settlers had to adjust to a different climate on an unfamiliar continent. For instance, the first immigrants "brought with them their farming tools, icons, and disassembled carts" (18). With time, they had to switch from mixed farming to a "monoculture concentrated on yerba maté" (19, note 59), which was completely foreign to them. Cipko indicates that the interests of the Ukrainian immigrants continually moved beyond agriculture to include national affairs. Thus, he argues, members of the Ukrainian community, at

least in Misiones, were “embracing the symbols of the national ideal even before the outbreak of the Great War” (from 1910 [49]).

During the interwar period, Ukrainian national consciousness continued to develop through the creation of organizations and educational institutions. The process of the formation of Ukrainian nationhood in Argentina, described in the book, could be compared to similar processes in other countries—for instance, Canada. Cipko argues that the necessity for the unification of the Ukrainian community was critical because “Ukrainians came to Argentina as a stateless people” and had no embassy to which they could turn (102). The years of World War II deepened their plight, designating an “emotional wartime era” (174). For Ukrainians, it was a time of job insecurities, underemployment, unemployment, and unsatisfactory working conditions (141), during which they were also subjected to police and intelligence-agency surveillance owing to the belief that some Ukrainian nationalist groups were pro-Axis (169).

In Cipko's study, the overall dynamics of Ukrainian immigration are revealed through an analysis of how and why organizational institutions differed from one another depending on the time in which they appeared. The connection that the author makes between political and social conditions in Ukraine and how they were reflected within the Ukrainian community in Argentina helps the reader better comprehend the settlers' adaptation context. Furthermore, Cipko enhances the reader's perception of events by recounting individual stories. For instance, he writes about Oleksii Pelypenko, a former Orthodox priest who switched to the Greek Catholic Church and managed to merge politics with religion (128-29).

Cipko's book is enjoyable and easy to follow and is suitable for a student, researcher, or general reader. It is valuable for the richness of its sources, which include archives in both Ukraine and Argentina, uncatalogued papers, personal communications, government publications, a television documentary, periodicals, and more. The footnotes provide plenty of additional sources and links to information, which can complement research on, or general interest in, the topic of immigration. In addition, the book supports existing studies of similar processes of Ukrainian immigration to other countries and serves as a historical study exploring Ukrainian settlement in Argentina. Cipko himself states: “The study offers a record and analysis of the terms in which an immigrant community defined itself, and thus examines the instruments—formal organizations and their press—used to construct community consciousness” (xix). Indeed, a study like this was much needed owing to the inertia of scholarship on Ukrainian immigration

to Argentina, an inertia that the author also connects with the “corresponding political stagnation marking the Brezhnev regime” (xx).

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